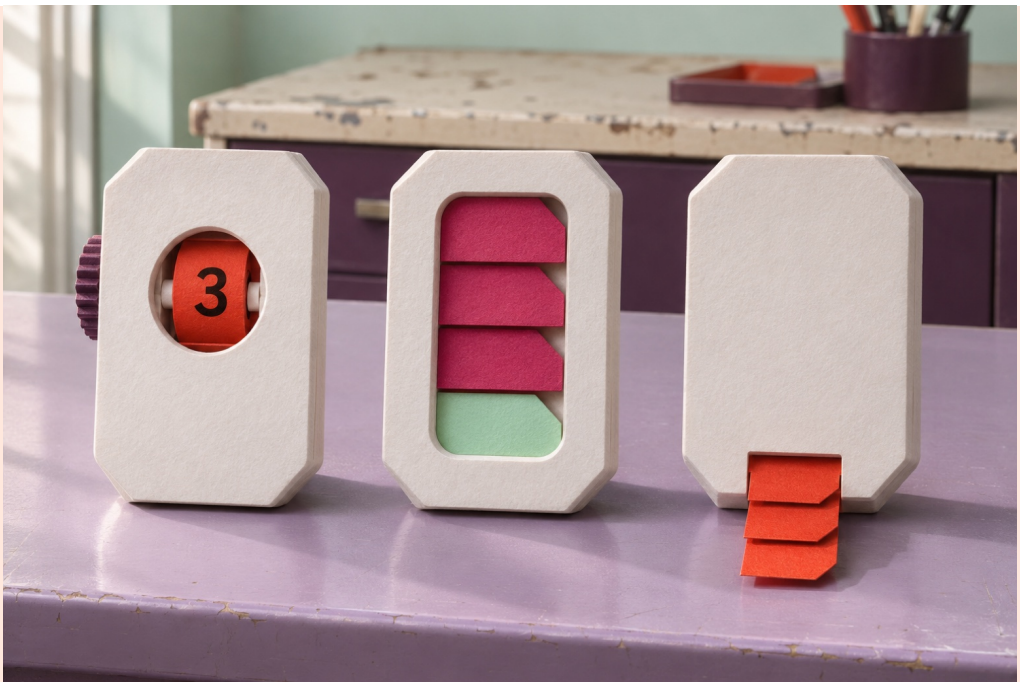
8226 / DESIGN METHODS

The semester project

Start with an unexpected object. Investigate the human situation it exposes. Submit **one process PDF** that shows how research, method choices and prototype trials changed your design decision.



AI-generated teaching example. Three speculative queue-ticket studies. The left-hand counter shows how many people arrived **after** the holder. What does the visitor still need to know?

Read a NONOBJECT

Look at a source case such as Tarati from Branko Lukić and Barry M. Katz's NONOBJECT. Sketch the expected action, then the rule the object changes. Name the relationship between person, object and setting that becomes visible.

Run your own AI prompt studies

Choose an everyday object. Generate three variations, holding the actor, situation and scale steady while changing one rule. Keep the prompt and original outputs, including a version you reject. State why one result opens a question worth investigating. Your research may take you away from the starting object.

NONOBJECT · MIT Press · IDEO.org · The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design · Course workbook · W01

Download The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design · English PDF

INSPIRATION / W02–W04

Find the design question

Turn the provocation into a question you can investigate with people. The ticket is a classroom example. Choose an accessible situation for your own project.

Frame and plan

Write your design challenge in its initial wording. Identify the people affected, the setting and the experience you hope to understand or change. Summarise relevant desk research with sources. Make a research plan covering whom you can reach, how, when and what remains uncertain.

Interview and collect first-hand evidence

Prepare an interview framework with open questions about an actual recent experience. Invite people to replay the moment. Keep an anonymised record of the context, the actions and what was said. Mark your interpretation separately. Begin with one interview, three insights and a problem statement, then investigate the most consequential gap.

TWO ADDITIONAL INSPIRATION METHODS

Choose and apply two further Inspiration methods alongside the framing, desk research and interview work. For each, record the question, why you chose it, what you did, what it produced and the decision it informed.

Two possible choices

A **Guided Tour** could reveal where newcomers hesitate on a workshop route. **Peers Observing Peers** could show how regular visitors help each other while the host is occupied. Choose methods that answer different questions in your setting.

From stories to a question

Tell a short story anchored in evidence. Compare stories, find themes, formulate insights and write several How Might We questions. Select one and show which findings support it. Keep a counterexample or an uncertainty next to your conclusion.

Frame Your Design Challenge · Guided Tour · Peers Observing Peers · How Might We

Original IDEO.org materials

Framing worksheets Frame Your Design Challenge Impact Ladder Ecosystem Mapping

Synthesis Insights Checklist How Might We worksheet · p. 177

Interviews Interview Guide · p. 166 Group Interview Expert Interview

IDEATION & IMPLEMENTATION / W05–W11

Explore, test and plan

Make alternatives and show the journey

Generate and bundle different responses to your How Might We question. Explain which concept you selected and why. Show the existing experience in a **Journey Map**. Use a **storyboard or user journey** to show how someone would experience your proposal, including entry, action and what happens afterwards.

TWO ADDITIONAL IDEATION METHODS

Choose and apply two further Ideation methods alongside the required synthesis, Journey Map and storyboard or user journey. Save a concrete output and explain your rationale for each. For example, use Mash-Ups to open up alternatives and Role Play to explore the handover between a visitor and a host.

Prototype the uncertain moment

Build an artefact or stage an encounter someone can actually try. Give a neutral task. Record what each person did or said, any assistance and the conditions of the trial. Identify one finding that influenced a revision. Show both versions. Repeat the task when feasible and report what remains uncertain.

Plan the work of delivery

Draw a roadmap with milestones, dependencies and a person responsible for each step. Specify materials, space, time, budget assumptions and staffing. Define what counts as success for the people involved and how you would recognise it. Include foreseeable trade-offs and a condition under which you would stop or revise.

Prepare the pitch

Address someone who can make a decision. Show the human situation, your idea, one piece of evidence and an unresolved issue. End with a specific request, such as a short trial with a host at an available station. Include the pitch in the PDF.

Mash-Ups · Role Play · Journey Map · Storyboard · Roadmap for Success · Create a Pitch

Original IDEO.org materials

Map and storyboard Journey Map guide · pp. 90–91 Storyboard template · p. 178

Prototype and test Prototype Mapping Prototype Report Card Get Feedback

Plan and measure Indicators Mad Libs Resource Assessment Matrix · pp. 182–183
Create a Pitch worksheet · p. 185

SUBMISSION / W12

Hand in one process PDF

Organise the document so a reader who missed your presentation can trace a decision from its first question to the evidence, revision and next step.

Opening and research

Identify yourself and the project. Credit the NONOBJECT reference. Include your prompt studies, the chosen design challenge, desk research, audience, research plan, interview framework and findings.

Methods and concept

Document **two additional Inspiration methods and two additional Ideation methods**. Explain the reason and output for all four. Include the stories, insights, How Might We question, alternative concepts, Journey Map and storyboard or user journey.

Prototype, delivery and pitch

Place the prototype versions alongside the trial task, observations and resulting design decision. Include the implementation roadmap, resources, staffing, definition of success and pitch.

END WITH A FIVE- TO TEN-SENTENCE REFLECTION

Name what you expected, what you learned from a particular encounter, which decision changed and what you would try differently. Explain what the AI studies contributed, what you rejected or edited and which questions required first-hand evidence.

Check source credits and AI provenance

Give sources for borrowed text and images. For AI-assisted work record the tool, date, exact prompt, selected and rejected outputs, your edits and how you checked claims. Label a shared class run and distinguish generated scenes, acted rehearsals and genuine research. Keep identifying field notes out of prompts. Open the final PDF on another device and check legibility, links and captions.

Design Methods · Student workbook · IDEO.org · Design Kit methods

Original IDEO.org materials

Evaluate M&E Framework Keep Iterating Keep Getting Feedback