

# Guide to Prospecting

## Resource & Workbook




ABINGDON  
STUDIOS




Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



# What is M A N ?




Material Arts Network is a group of artists and makers who believe that looking closely at material can tell us more about each other and the world around us.



MAN is an open, accessible space to share work and ideas about material engagement which has an impact on the way we make art.



We think materials soak up information about the people, places and events they come into contact with.



MAN's Guide to Prospecting is a two-part workshop exploring how artists discover and collect materials for making and how this contributes meaning to their work. This workbook is the first part, the second is a live event.



**Materials are:**

Gendered

Communicators

Influential

Social

Political

Fluctuating

Vibrant

Volatile

Add your own:





The finding or  
procuring of materials  
which you might use  
to make something

Discovering more  
about a place and  
the events and  
connected to it

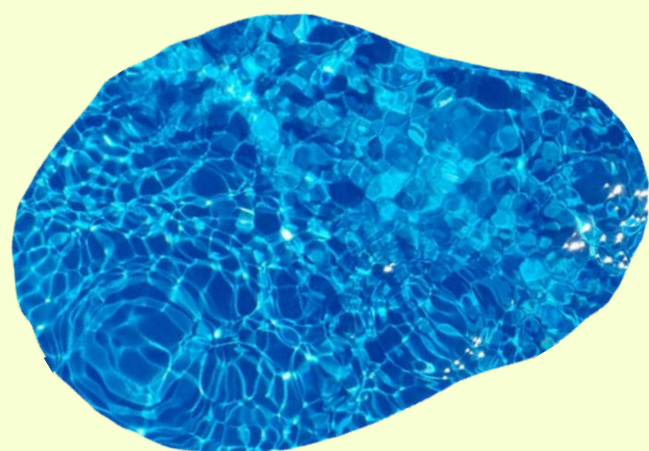
# What is "prospecting" ?

Moving through an  
environment and asking  
questions about the  
creative potential of  
what you might find  
there.

Collecting and cataloging  
materials or images of  
materials which catch  
your eye or communicate  
with you

*Things to think about:*

- What does prospecting mean to you?
- When does prospecting start and when does it stop?
- Is it an active or passive activity for you?





# What do we do when we are prospecting ?

Prospecting for materials is something that can happen absolutely anywhere:

- The supermarket doing your weekly shop
- On your commute to work
- Walking down a street near your home
- On a walk in the hills
- On a visit to a place you know nothing about...

It might be something that you travel to a particular place to do, or it might begin suddenly, when you notice a material out of the corner of your eye which catches your attention.

Do you have a particular place where you think you might find an interesting material?



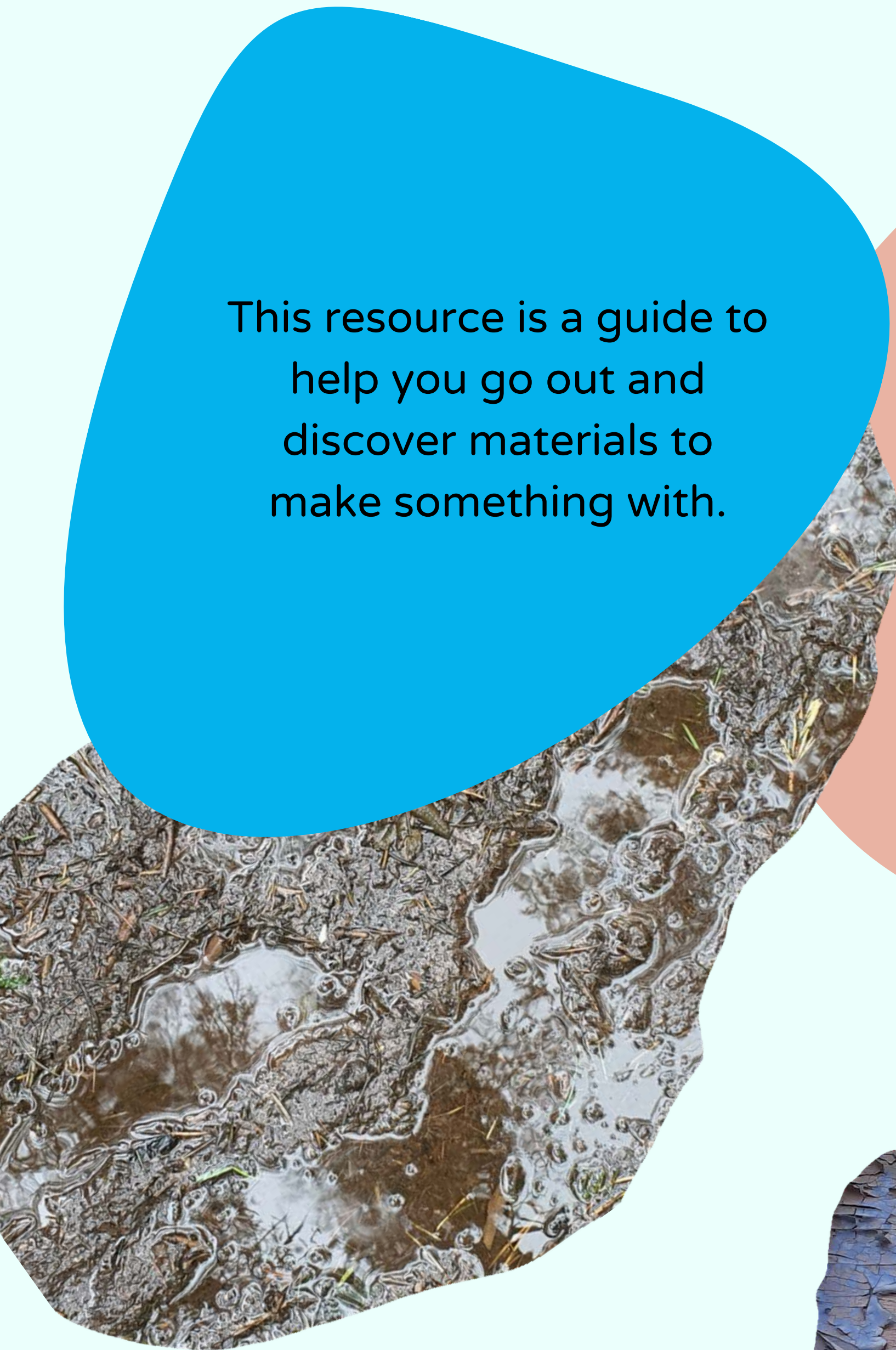


# MAN invite you to go prospecting!

This resource is a guide to help you go out and discover materials to make something with.

Follow the questions, prompts and activities on the next few pages to think about prospecting as a way of exploring material meaning in art making.

Go and find a material to make something with!





Make notes:

## Questions to ask:

Where did you find the material?

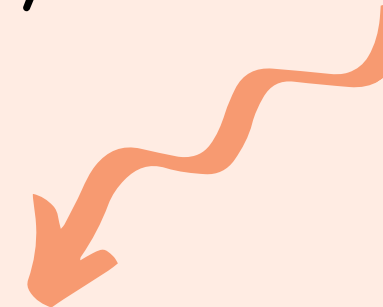


What does this place mean to you?

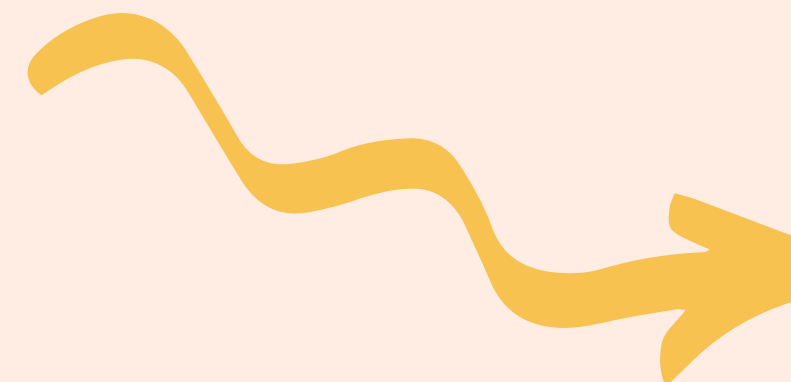


What do you know about it?

What is the material usually used for?



Is there anywhere you could look to find out more about it?





Make notes:

## Questions to ask:

How does the material make you feel?  
Does it remind you of anything?

Do you have any ideas about  
how you might use the material?

How does the material  
behave?

Do your feelings change  
as you work with it?

Could you combine it with another?  
Does this change it?





# What did you find?

Useful words..





**What did you make?**

Draw it!

Describe it!





*Make notes:*

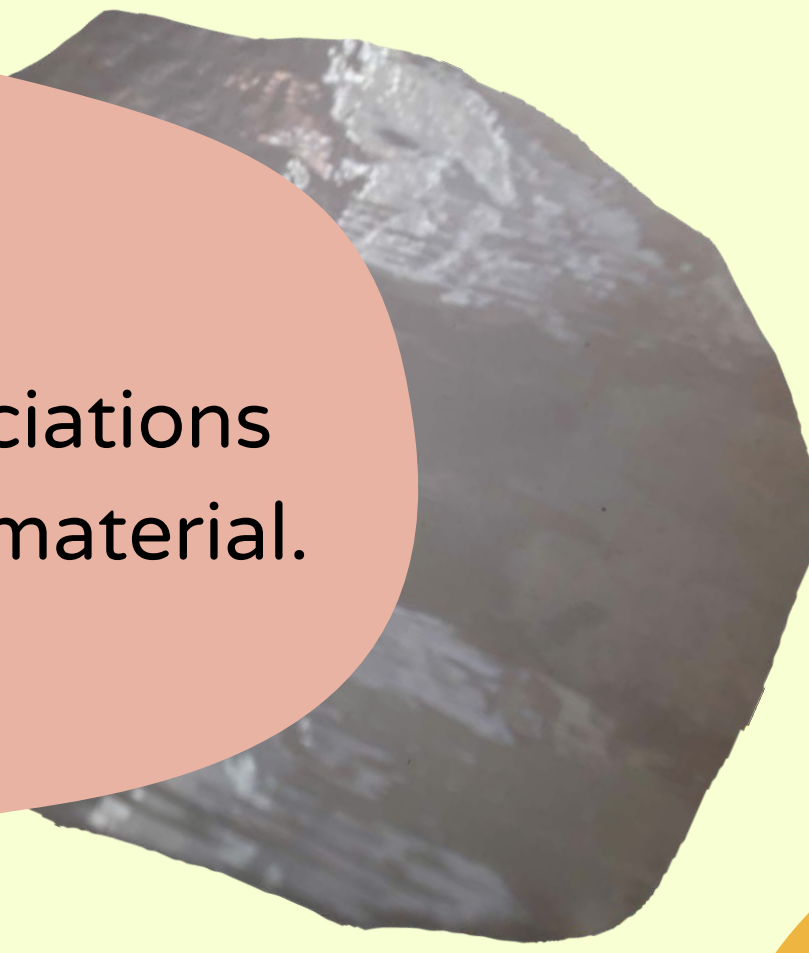

## Reflection

Did this activity help you to see  
material in a different way?

If so, how?

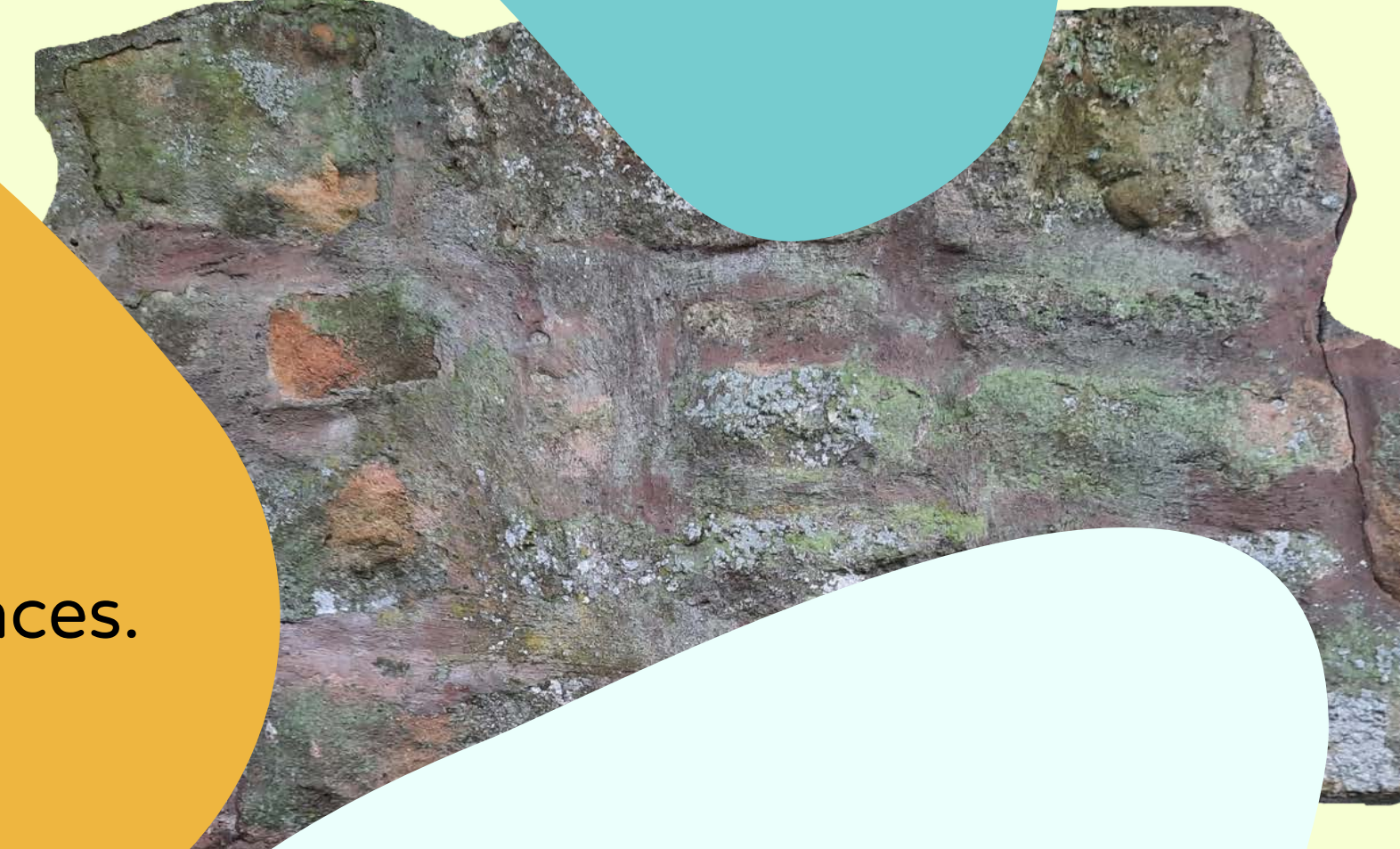


# Ideas for more activities...




Map all of the associations you make with this material.

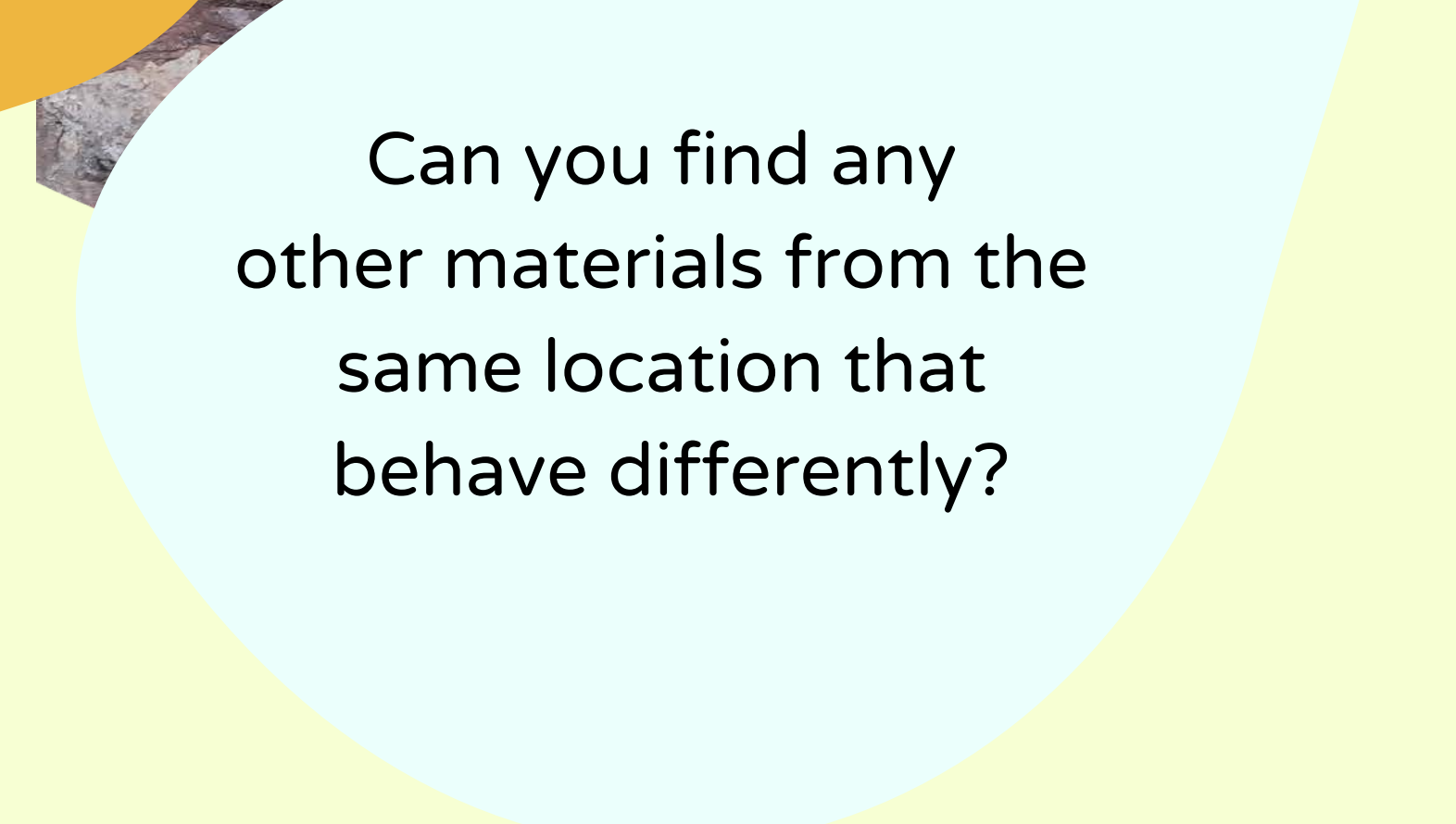
Ask someone else what they would do with the material.



Combine materials you've found from completely different places.



Keep track of the locations you've found particular objects or materials.



Can you find any other materials from the same location that behave differently?



## more about



Material Arts Network (MAN) is a group of artists and makers who believe that looking closely at material can tell us more about each other and the world around us.

MAN is founded by Ellie Barrett and Kerry Tenbey, two artists who explore material meaning in their practice and research. They seek to bring together artists, curators, critics, writers, researchers and makers to discuss and share ideas about material meaning and engagement.

[materialartnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:materialartnetwork@gmail.com)

[@materialartnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/materialartnetwork)

[www.materialartnetwork.hotglue.me](http://www.materialartnetwork.hotglue.me)

MAN's Guide to Prospecting is our first workshop, acting as a starting point to develop and grow our collective.

This resource and workbook (part 1) is accompanied by a live discussion event on zoom (part 2) on 05/03/2021.

If you are interested in attending, please get in touch!

MAN would like to thank Arts Council England, Abingdon Studios Projectspace

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