Playthings to Stir Imagination

Costumes

Old jewelry, purses, shoes, jackets
Second hand store - uniforms, halloween costumes
Accessories - walkie talkies, badges, name pins,
hats from any profession, medical scrubs, glasses,
wigs, mustaches, beards, capes, tiaras, colorful toy
weapons (* for safety reasons, just never buy a weapon
that resembles a real one.)

Stuffed Animals

All shapes and sizes and types
Play school, wedding, "work," train station, airport

Household (Safe) Tools

Pots, pans, whisks, wooden spoons, empty food/cereal
boxes, calculators, type writers, measuring tape

Forms

Out of date checks, restaurant order pads, driving logs

Musical Instruments

Keyboards, shakers, tambourines, castanettes, kazoos,
drums, guitars, or any music maker

Art Supplies

Multiple colored paper, paints, markers, crayons,
pipe cleaners, buttons, scissors, glue sticks, stickers, glitter,
old magazines to cut up, grains (corn, beans, pasta),
yarn, leaves for tracing or rubbing

Building Blocks

Classic Legos, Connectagons, Magnatiles, Bristle blocks,
Marble runs, Wooden blocks

"Worlds"

Train tracks, cars, houses, trees, roads, barns, animals,
fences, stores, amusement parks, zoos, cities, ocean,
habitats for animals

All these can be created from a mixture of toys and household
supplies. Use picture books of places and spaces as references.
For example, we used blue painter's tape to create roads. We used
construction paper and toilet paper rolls to create stores, houses
and garages along the way. Another example is we created an
ocean placing a large picture book out to reference. Kids gathered
shells, plastic fish, bath toys, etc.

Tactiles

Sand, play dough, clay, rice, pasta, water in a basin, water with
bubbles, (i.e. place tactile in a bin and hide objects in sand)

Discovery toys

Dinosaur digs, Snap circuits, nature exploration supplies - nets,
binoculars, microscopes, magnifying glass, bug examination
containers, science/chemistry kits

Puzzles
Age-appropriate size, number of pieces (challenging but not too challenging)
Older (8 years and up) - Rubix's Cube

Picture and Nonfiction books

Can set the scene for play, establish characters or settings for play