

CRAFT STICK CATAPULT

Construct a powerful catapult using craft sticks and everyday items

SUITABLE FOR BEAVERS, CUBS AND SCOUTS

1 Ask the young people to take two craft sticks and place one on top of the other. Join them together at one end with an elastic band, looping it around to secure the sticks together tightly.

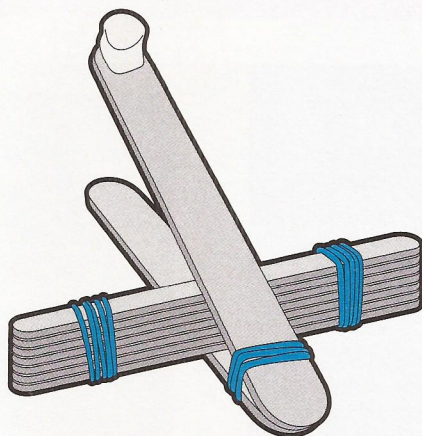
2 Place the remaining eight craft sticks on top of each other, and tie together at each end with elastic bands. Alternatively, tie them with string to practise your knots.

3 Slide the stack of eight sticks in between the two sticks, so that they form a 'V' shape. Press the ends of the 'V' shape towards each other and you'll see how strong the spring is.

4 Glue a bottle top to the end of one of the sticks to use as the catapult bucket. Hold the

bottom stick of the catapult down firmly. Press down the bucket on the other stick, put in place the 'ammunition' (such as a pom-pom or small ball) and let it go.

5 Get the young people to measure how far the ammunition goes and practise their aiming skills.



EXTRA ACTIVITY: With any leftover craft sticks, the group can layer them to create tension, resulting in an explosive 'chain reaction' when they are released. See the illustration on the left for an example of how to layer the sticks correctly.



TIME NEEDED

30 minutes

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- 10 craft sticks per catapult
- Elastic bands
- Plastic lids from soft drink bottles
- Glue
- Pom-poms or small rubber balls

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OUTCOMES

The project will help the young people to understand simple engineering skills and the basics of catapult physics – the use of stored energy to launch a projectile. Once the catapult is created, they can practise their aiming skills.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Get the young people to make a craft stick chain reaction by layering them to create tension, as shown in the diagram (see left). The chain can be as long as you like (the longer the better). When the young people release them, they'll be amazed at what happens! They could also try creating a more powerful catapult using a similar design to the one featured here, but instead using a metal foldback clip inserted into the 'V' and tied to the craft sticks with string.

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