

Catch the Wind

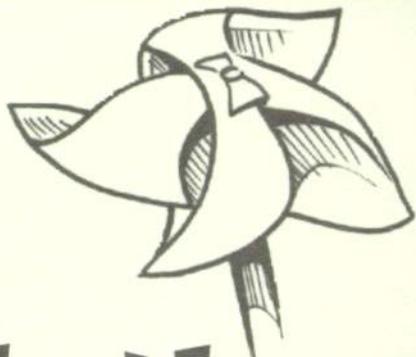
Make simple pinwheels to explore the power of wind.

What you need

Thin cardboard or file folders, Straws (regular and jumbo), Scissors, Pinwheel patterns (page 37), Hole punchers

Time

30 minutes



Get Ready! Make copies of the pinwheel design on page 34 ahead of time. Practice assembling a pinwheel.

1 Get Started by challenging children to describe the wind. Is it windy out today? How can they find out? What's it like when a strong wind is blowing? What happens to their clothes and hair? Do they see leaves and twigs blow by?

2 Tell children they're going to make wind-powered pinwheels. Have them tape the pinwheel design to a piece of cardboard or manila folder. Then, cut the paper along the dotted lines. (See page 37 for detailed instructions.)



HOW FAST IS THE WIND BLOWING?

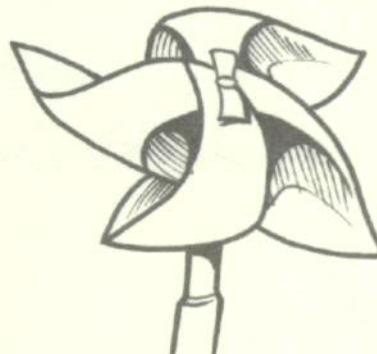
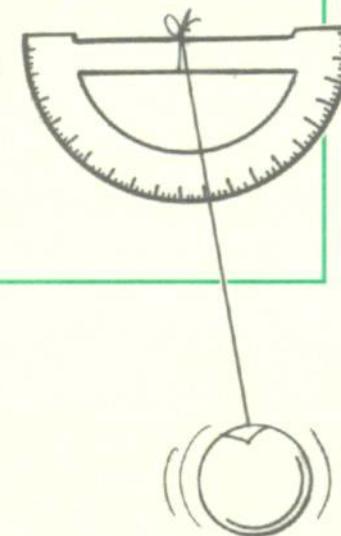
Older children can construct wind gauges to measure how fast the wind is blowing. Glue a length of string (about 10 in.) to a table tennis ball. Then tie the other end of the string to the center of a protractor. Take the gauge outside and hold it parallel to the wind so that the string rests at 90 degrees. By reading the angle that the ball is blown, children can estimate the wind speed. When the string hits 75 degrees the wind is about 6 mph, at 60 degrees it equals 15 mph, and at 25 degrees it equals about 30 mph—a very windy day!



Encourage children to take home their wind gauges and teach other family members how to use it.

Materials: Protractor, string, table tennis ball, glue

Try following this activity with activity 1 (Woodsy's World Scavenger Hunt).



Wind can move huge clouds across the sky and scatter tiny seeds of trees and other plants.

3 Take the pinwheels outside. Is a light or strong wind blowing? Hold up the pinwheels to catch the wind. If it's not windy enough, try other ways to make pinwheels spin.

4 Close by talking about ways that people can use the wind's power to make energy. If possible, show children pictures of a modern windmill farm. Try standing the pinwheels in front of an open window in your activity area.

