

Making the Best Airplane

Materials

Plastic drinking straws
Strips of paper
Clear tape

Procedure

1. Cut strips of paper approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the same number of strips approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
2. Attach one of each size strip of paper to each straw, forming the strips into loops or "chains" and taping them.
3. Experiment to find out which locations and distances of the strips make the best flying "airplane". For example, make one with the strips positioned at the extreme ends of the straw, one with the strips together in the center, and varying distances between. Test each airplane to see which flies the best.

This experiment allows children to discover some of the physics of aerodynamics for themselves. Beware! Paper plane flying can be addictive, and children may wish to use other materials and weights to make new planes and test new hypotheses!

