

Marshmallow Towers— Courtesy of Michigan State Exten-

Did you know that you can use marshmallows and toothpicks to teach youth about teamwork, communication, leadership and so much more? These important topics are considered life skills. Life skills help youth become successful in their everyday life and help them succeed into the future. A simple and fun way to teach life skills is by using marshmallows and toothpicks to build a tower. Check out the instructions below!

Supplies needed: toothpicks (1 box per team) and small marshmallows (1 bag per team)

Preparation: Give each team one box of toothpicks and one bag of marshmallows. You might also want to cover the tables or floors from falling marshmallows.

Do:
Pass out one box of toothpicks and one bag of marshmallows to each team. Make sure they don't open their materials until it's time to start!

Explain that they are going to try and build the tallest, free-standing tower they can with only the marshmallows and toothpicks. They can use no other materials.

The tower must be able to stand on its own without helping hands or other objects (it must be free-standing). This means no holding

the tower or leaning it against another object. It must stand on its own for 10 seconds to be measured.

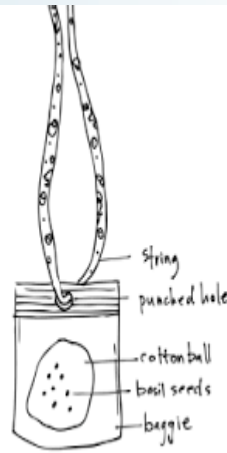
To measure the tower's height, it will be measured from the highest point to the base of the tower.

Once the youth are clear on the instructions, give them a set time to work as a group on their towers. Give them reminders of the amount of time they have left to complete their towers. Then once the time is up, measure the towers!



Seed Germination Necklace

*(found in Soil Solutions
4-H curriculum)*



Give each student a pinch of basil seeds and ask, "What is seed germination?" Having them still hold the seeds, watch a short video clip of a black bean germinating.

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/4hplantandsoils/soilsolutions.html> . What did the students observe? What do

they think seeds need in order to grow? Take a water dropper and squeeze a few drops onto their seeds. Wait a few minutes and the seed coat should start to break down and form what looks like mucous. Tell the students that the basil seeds are starting to germinate. To observe the process of seed germination, make a germination necklace. Give each student a small craft plastic bag with a hole punched in the top, a cotton ball, and a string. Demonstrate dipping the cotton ball into water, gently squeezing the excess water, and putting the basil seeds on the ball and slipping it inside the baggie. Thread the string through and tie around the neck. The germination necklaces will let students observe the basil seed growth. Dried beans also work very well for this exercise. They are readily available at a grocery store and are big enough to observe easily.

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Hop into Spring with 4-H



**Fun, hands on activities
to do at home**

NC State University
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Green Cleaning-

Courtesy of UGA Extension

Why Make and Use Your Own Green Cleaners?

- ◇ Most of the ingredients you may already have in your home.
- ◇ You save money.
- ◇ Generally, green cleaners work as well as those with harsher chemicals.
- ◇ Green cleaning keeps dangerous toxins out of your home.



Floor Cleaner

- ◇ ½ cup white vinegar and 1 gallon warm water
- ◇ Mix ingredients.
- ◇ Avoid over wetting the floor by using a spray bottle to apply the cleaner to floor.
- ◇ Mop as usual.
- ◇ Rinse with clean water.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

- ◇ 1 cup borax and ½ cup vinegar
- ◇ Flush toilet to wet the sides of the bowl.
- ◇ Sprinkle borax around the toilet bowl.
- ◇ Spray vinegar on top of borax.
- ◇ Leave for several hours or overnight.
- ◇ Scrub with a toilet brush.

Glass Cleaner

- ◇ ¼ cup white vinegar, 1 tablespoon cornstarch, and 1 quart warm water
 - ◇ Mix ingredients.
 - ◇ Apply with a sponge or spray bottle.
 - ◇ Wipe off with cotton or microfiber cloth.
- *Hint: For lint-free results, wipe dry with crumbled black and white newspaper.

Household Hazard Hunt

(found in Treasures of 4-H curriculum)

As you begin spring cleaning look out for household hazards with this scavenger hunt. Use the non-toxic alternatives list to see what items you can substitute in order to make your home safe for everyone!

Checklist

Type of Product	Where Was it Found?	Was it Stored Safely?	Non-Toxic Alternative (See Chart)

Non-Toxic Alternative Chart

Type of Product	Non-Toxic Alternative
Air Freshener	Potpourri or scented candles
Aluminum Cleaner	Mix 8 tbsp. Cream of Tartar into 1 gallon hot water. Carefully place aluminum items in water and boil for 10 minutes.
Ant Control	Place lemon juice and peels around ant holes; plant spearmint around the house.
Brass Cleaner	Clean and polish brass with Worcestershire sauce and a soft cloth.
Chemical Fertilizer	Use compost, mulch, dried coffee grounds, bone meal and wood ashes on gardens.
Copper Cleaner	Put baking soda on lemon slice to scrub copper. Wash and dry as usual.
Price Tag Remover	Soak price tags in vinegar for several minutes then rub off.
Drain Cleaner	Pour boiling water into drains once a week.
Fly Control	Use non-toxic adhesive fly paper strips.
Glass & window Cleaner	Mix 3 tbsp. cornstarch, 1/2 cup vinegar and 1 gallon of water. Wipe on glass or windows, then polish.
Gold & Silver Cleaner	Scrub gold or silver items with toothpaste and soft brush or cloth. Rinse and polish dry.
Oven Cleaner	Sprinkle salt on oven spills while they are still warm. Let oven cool, then scrape off spill and wash thoroughly.
Oil-based paint	Use latex based paint instead
Rust Remover	Rub rusty items with a peeled potato dipped in salt or baking soda.
Scouring powder	Scrub items with baking soda, then rinse with water.
Spot remover	Rinse stains with club soda until gone. Wash items as usual.