

Traveling Programs

Bunny Copter Activity

In this activity, students create a helicopter similar to the seeds of maple trees that spiral down slowly when dropped. They can experiment with variations on their copter to see how those variations affect how well the copter works.

Materials

- Bunny Copter template
- Scissors
- Paper Clips

Procedure

1. Print out as many Bunny Copter templates as are needed for the class. Each template page has 3 copters on it. Use scissors or a paper cutter to cut out the individual templates and give one to each student.
2. With scissors, have each student cut along the dotted lines on their template.
3. Once the dotted lines are cut, have the students fold back the “arms” of the bunny along the straight solid lines on his shirt so that just the Museum of Science logo is showing in front.
4. Attach a paper clip at the bottom of the bunny’s shirt both to hold the folds in place and to weigh down the copter so it stays upright.
5. Have the students fold one of the bunny’s ears forward and the other one back.



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6. The copters are ready to fly. Drop them from the highest safe height possible and watch them spin. Stairwells with railings often make good places to test out copters.

Follow up

Now you can have the students try some experiments with their copter. Try folding both ears the same way, or rolling them instead of folding. They can add more paper clips or no paper clip. Try attaching the paper clip in different places. Try different types of paper, using more than one sheet, or even using other materials like fabric or cardboard. Any number of variations can be tried. You could even use a photocopier to change the size of the template so students can try out bigger or smaller copters. Ask the students to figure out how each of these changes affects how the copter flies. Can they find a way to improve the original design?

