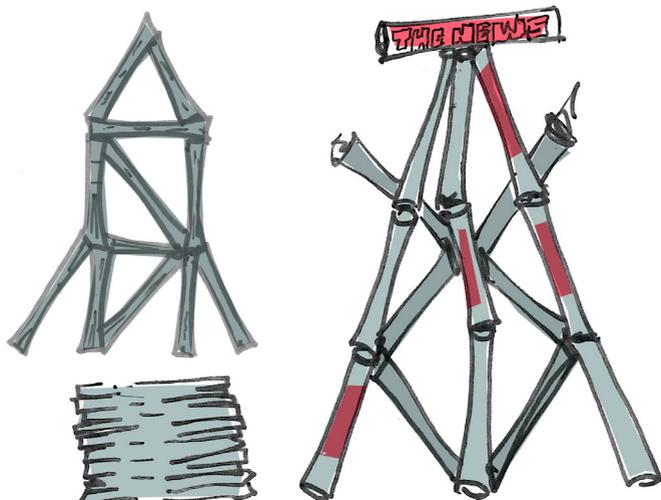


say hello to: tallest towers



Build, design and compete to see who can make the tallest, strongest tower out of newspaper. Work in pairs, teams or on your own. This is an ideal activity to use as part of a festival or family day and is fun for all ages.

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things you will learn

This activity is great if you can compete in teams and against the clock to build the tallest freestanding structure - using only newspaper and tape.

Ideal with small groups of upper primary or community groups.

Learn about:

- the strengths and limitation of materials
- how joints impact on the whole structure
- how height affects stability

what you will need

Loads of old newspapers

Masking tape – it's easiest, you can tear it with your fingers – no need for scissor!

Science Fact:

Triangles are the strongest shape because any added force is evenly spread through all three sides.

Squares or cubes can be strengthened by adding a diagonal piece across the middle, making it two triangles linked together.

steps to follow

- 1 First look at images of tall buildings and structures like the Eiffel Tower. You'll find loads of images online, or look around you if you are in a city.
- 2 Talk about at what shapes they have in common. Discuss what shapes you think are strong shapes. Draw the shapes to remind you whilst your building.
- 3 Split your group into teams of at least two people and give a time limit. 30 minutes is usually enough. Let everyone practice rolling newspaper into long cylinders. These will form the building blocks of your structure. Allow them to try joining these together to make shapes such as triangles and squares.
- 4 Once everyone has had a few minutes practice sound the start and let the teams begin building.
- 5 In this activity everyone learns by trial and error.
- 6 Give teams a countdown to the end of the activity. 10 minutes left, five then one minute to go. Things will be quite frantic by now!
- 7 When the time is up everyone must step away from their structure.
- 8 The team that builds the tallest tower that can stand on its own is the winner.

helpful hints

Joints that overlap are strongest.

You'll need a roll of tape for each team.

If 30 minutes is too long or short (it all depends on the skill level of the group) just add or subtract time – make sure you let the whole group know. You can assess this as you go along.

You need a fair amount of space to complete this project - a hall or project room would work best with larger groups.

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