

Math and Nature

Activity 3 - How do Maple Seeds Travel?

Some seeds have wings that let them fly on their own. The seeds from maple, elm and ash trees have curved wings to let them stay in the air longer. Maple seeds twirl and spin around. Seeds must be light enough and a certain size to fly high in the sky. The wind will pick up the maple seeds and carry them to suitable ground. They will then drop and sprout a new maple tree. Some people call maple seeds “helicopter seeds” because they look like and can spin like a propeller.



In this activity you will learn how to make your own spinner!

You will need: 1 paper clip, scissors, one piece of paper and a ruler.

Activity Instructions:

1. Using a ruler, measure the paper so that it is 9cm by 12cm. Cut two 10cm long slits into the short side of the paper (9cm side). Make the slits 3cm apart.
2. Fold the middle flap in the opposite direction of the other two flaps. Put the paper clip on the end of the middle flap
3. Go outside and find a maple seed spinner. Drop both spinners from the same height and compare how they spin. Does your spinner work as well as nature's?

Can you believe THIS is math?