



TOPPLING TOWERS

Before you try this activity at home, visit Hayley Little Moccasin and her friends Tommy and Marie in the *Build a Tipi* activity at www.wonderville.ca

Natural and man-made structures are generally designed and built to accommodate a specialized need. In this activity, challenge the members of your family to a Toppling Towers showdown on the kitchen table.

The Challenge

Using only the materials provided, and in the time allotted, build the tallest free-standing tower.

Specifications

- The height will be measured from the tabletop to the highest point on the tower.
- Free-standing means that the tower cannot be attached to the table, floor, wall or any other structure. It must be able to stand on its own.
- The tower must stand unsupported for a minimum of one minute.

Materials

- One letter-sized piece of paper (8.5 x 11 inches)
- 30 cm of masking tape

Rules

- Each participant has exactly 15 minutes to plan, build and test their tower design (use an oven timer).
- You can do anything you want to the paper and tape (i.e. fold, cut, rip etc.) as long as you only use the materials listed and nothing else.
- At the end of 15 minutes measure and record the height of the tower.

Reflect

Which tower was the tallest? What characteristics of the tower made it able to stand on its own?

Extend

Challenge your friends and family to more tower building activities. Just change the materials. For example, use toothpicks, uncooked spaghetti, straws, mini marshmallows, paper clips or anything else you can think of.

