

Build-a-Bridge Challenge

Children will work together to design and build a small bridge using loose materials and testing its strength with toys or blocks. This hands-on challenge encourages teamwork, problem-solving, and creative thinking, showing how big ideas come together one piece at a time.

What you need:

- Popsicle sticks or craft sticks
- Plastic straws
- Pipe cleaners or twist ties
- Rubber bands
- Small blocks or toy cars (to test strength)
- Masking tape or painter's tape
- Optional: cardboard pieces or paper cups (for support)

What to do:

1. Tell children they're engineers building a bridge that can hold a toy car or small blocks. Discuss what a bridge needs (supports, a flat part to cross). Maybe draw a simple plan.
2. Start building using craft sticks, straws, and tape or rubber bands to connect pieces. Encourage children to add and test pieces one at a time. If something falls or doesn't hold, try a new piece or strategy.
3. Once they feel it's ready, place the toy car or blocks on the bridge to see if it holds.
4. Talk about how the bridge grew piece by piece, and how each piece was important.

Activity extension: Read a story such as *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. After building, let the children use small figures or animals to act out crossing their bridges which adds a literacy and dramatic play layer.



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