

Saving Fred

'Saving Fred' is a fun STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) lab challenge that encourages students to think, collaborate, talk, and work as engineers in a team setting. Mrs. Lisa Wright's 3rd grade class splits into small groups of three to four students. Each group receives a plastic cup, four paper clips, a gummy worm, a gummy lifesaver and a story instructing them to 'Save Fred.'

This is the story:

Fred (the worm) was riding in his boat (the cup) when it tipped over. Fred is on top of the boat and he doesn't know how to swim. Lucky for him, he brought a life preserver (the lifesaver). The problem? The life preserver is stuck under the boat.



Students work together to formulate a plan to get Fred inside the life preserver. They cannot touch the worm, the boat, or the life preserver with their fingers. The only tools they can use to help are the four paperclips.

Throughout the task, the students strategize and work together and, of course, have a lot of fun.

