

Spotting Simple Machines

Discover that simple machines are used every day in the world around us.

Big Idea

Simple machines make common tasks easier.

Illinois Early Learning Standards

11.A.ECc Plan and carry out simple investigations.	Children will find simple machines and investigate their uses on different objects.
11.A.ECd Collect, describe, compare and record information from observations and investigations.	Children will record what they notice about simple machines on their clipboards, and make inferences and observations given that information.
12.C.ECa Identify, describe, and compare the physical properties of objects.	Children will compare the same simple machine used in different tools, toys, or objects.

Materials

- Clipboard
- Paper
- Pencils

Setup

Gather your materials for a simple machine hunt. See which simple machines you can find around you.

Directions

1. With the clipboard set up for observational drawings, search your space for simple machines. Choose one first to look for - for example, the wheel and axle. Children can find one on a bike, a toy car, a real car, or find one of their own, and make observational drawings of the ones they can find.
2. Repeat this activity with other simple machines.

Investigation Questions:

- What is a wheel?
- What are simple machines used for?
- How do they work?
- How do they help us?

- What are you noticing?
- What is the difference between the same simple machine, but used on different objects? (for example, a gear used on a bike versus a gear used inside a toy)
- Can you find any objects that use two or more different simple machines?