

# Straws and Tennis Balls

**Purpose:** While working in teams, students will explore the importance of teamwork in a competitive setting.

**Equipment:**

- Straws
- One tennis ball per team
- Prizes (optional)

**Directions:**

1. Divide the class into groups of three to four members. Each team will need a supply of straws and one tennis ball.
2. Their challenge is to build the tallest structure that will support a tennis ball. (Consider allowing students to use other materials such as tape, paper clips, etc.)
3. Give the teams 20-30 minutes to complete the task and award the winning team a prize.
4. After the completion of the competition, lead students into a discussion on teambuilding. Questions can include:
  - a. Would you have preferred to work alone on this activity?
  - b. Was it a team effort?
  - c. What are the advantages of working in a team?
  - d. Were there disagreements? If so, how did you compromise?

**Follow Up:**

Working in teams is not always easy and sometimes compromises must be made in order to accomplish the task. The value of teamwork, however, outweighs the disadvantages by allowing people's creativity to be inspired by other team members.