

Noisy Toy

A toy-building learning activity from Mister Toymaker, Rick Hartman

Students go on a journey around the globe with this toy while also learning about pitch, volume, and optical illusion.



Materials:

- 1 tongue depressor with hole drilled in end per student
- 1 meter of lightweight string per student
- Colored markers, crayons or pencils

Time:

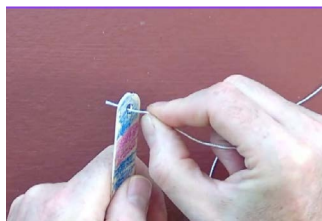
15-20 minutes

Directions:

First, play the short Noisy Toy introductory video that is posted at www.schooloftoy.com/ondemand-power-of-toymaking. Then, walk students through the instructions below to make the toy.



1. Decorate BOTH sides of the tongue depressor.



2. Poke string through hole.



3. Make ends even.



4. Whirl for ROARING sound!



5. Stop and let it spin like a top.

Learning Connections:

Science:

- Sound: Vibration, Pitch, Volume
- Light: Optical Illusions, Persistence of Vision

Language Arts:

- After enjoying the video, read the “Noisy Toy” poem aloud as a class.

Social Studies:

- Look on a world map or globe for some of the countries named in the video and poem: New Zealand, Mali, Greece, Ukraine.

Movement/Creativity:

- Can you discover new ways to play with the toy?

Safety Note

Stand clear of other people and breakable objects when whirling your toy!

Ready to Have More Toy-Building Adventures in Your Classroom?

Check out Mister Toymaker’s 90-minute on-demand workshops for K-6th Grade

Explore Workshops

Noisy Toy

Can I teach you a toy?
It's a very old thing
made from a flat wooden stick
and a string

So simple at first
you might think it's a trick—
"Who'd want to play with
just string and a stick?"

Well it isn't a trick
And I've never been surer
That you will enjoy playing with
the Bullroarer.

Yes, it's called the BULL-ROAR-ER
It's not easy to say
But it's simple to build and
fantastic to play.

Let me teach you to build one
it takes just a minute
Come along and you'll learn how to
build one and spin it.

The Stick

Ever had the sniffles
and you felt kind of "blah"
And the doctor said stick out your tongue
and say "Ahh"

And she used a flat stick
To look back in your throat?
That's the stick that you want!
That size stick gets my vote!

(A popsicle stick
I am sad to report
will not work for this toy—
it's too stubby and short.)

So after your check-up

See if the doc
will spare one or two of
the sticks from her stock.

Or if you are building a
bunch of Bullroarers
Jumbo Craft Sticks
are at many fine store-ers.

The Hole

Have someone drill a hole
Close to the end
This could be mom or dad
or a neighbor or friend

or perhaps even YOU
(Though it's one of my rules
that kids have adult
supervision with tools.)

Drill the hole narrow
or drill the hole wide
Just make sure it's *centered*
Not off to the side

And take your time drilling
Don't drill too quick—
You want to avoid
the Dreaded Cracked Stick.

The String

The string should be thin
keep it lightweight and skinny
Too thick and your toy will not
be very spinny.

Three feet (or one yard)
is the length more or less
you will need if you're
measuring in the U.S.

Or if metric measures
are what you'll be using

Measure one meter—
I know it's confusing!
Poke the string through the hole
and even the ends
You can tie them together
But that just depends

if you like tying knots—
If knot tying's desired
Tie a knot, if not, Knot tying
is not required.

Decorating

You're just about ready
to test your creation
But first I suggest
that you add decoration.

Use markers or crayons
to color designs
draw pictures or patterns
or squiggly lines!

Make rainbows! or planets!
Or flowers! or money!
Or big bolts of lightening–
Or even a bunny!

Decorate both sides–
Side A and Side B
The more colors the better
As we shall soon see...

Playing

And now comes the moment
we've all waited for-er:
The moment you play
with your brand new Bullroarer.

Oh, before I forget
Now's a good time to take
A step back from items
you don't want to break.

And always remember
protecting your eyes
is important so
glasses or goggles are wise

Hold the string tight
And swing your arm round
till you hear the Bullroarer's
signature sound:

Like a hummingbird's hum
Or the buzzing of bees
Like the whoosh of the wind
as it whips through the trees.

Like a race car that's rounding the track
in high gear
Or a pesky mosquito
too close to your ear.

Or Mr. Toymaker sleeping
Man, is he a loud snorer
What do YOU hear when you
hear the Bull Roarer?

Optical Illusions

Once you've experienced
The Bullroarer's SOUND
Let it drop down and spin
like a top round and round.

Colors collide
Pictures will flicker
Shapes overlap
it's a real eyeball tricker:

The bird cage was empty–
Now there's a parrot!
Bunny was hungry–
Now there's a carrot!

You might crack the code
That no one can read
Until your toy spins
at incredible speed!

Experimenting

Roar it over your head!
Roar it down by your toes!
Can you roar on one foot
While you're touching your nose?

Will it roar while you're taking
a stroll through the park?
Will it roar in the wind?
Will it roar in the dark?

Can you roar lying down?
Can you roar in a crouch?
Behind your own back?
never mind–ouch!

Can you roar it around while you're
Running in place?
If you roar fast enough
Can you fly into space?

Roar a big figure 8!
Would it be such a crime
if you tried to get TWO roaring
at the same time?

Geography

When you play with this toy
you are playing with history
Who built the first one?
That's a great mystery

For thousands of years
many peoples have known
the Bullroarer's strange and
mysterious tone

It's a tone that has carried
across countless miles
from ancient Greece
to the British Isles

from Brazil to India
New Zealand, Ukraine
Across Mali's vast
Sarahan plain.

From the first Australians
to the Navajo nation
All over the world
we have heard the vibration

of a flat wooden stick
On the end of a string
Fluttering fast like
a butterfly's wing

Magic

Some people say
It has magic powers
To keep harm away
Or to bring thunder showers

For me it's the magic
of kids having fun
Out on the playground
in the afternoon sun

Buzzing with excitement
Humming with joy—
Having just built
Their new favorite toy.

Join them!
And follow that ancient call
of sticks and strings
that connect us all.

Now that YOU know how to build
a Bull Roarer
It's YOUR turn to be
a Bull Roarer explorer.

The End