Spinning Toy

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

Spinning button toys have entertained children for thousands of years. Making this toy provides an opportunity for students to experience scientific concepts like pushes and pulls while engaging in collaborative learning.
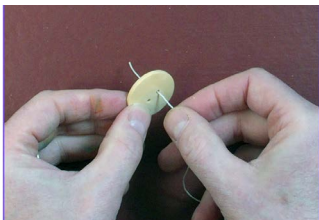
Materials:
• 1 button (¾" in diameter or larger) per student
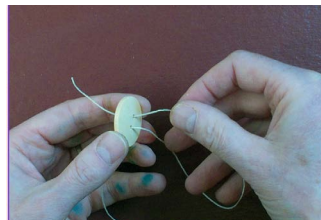• 1 meter of lightweight string per student

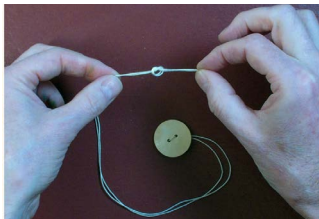## Time:
15–20 minutes

Directions:
First, play the short Spinning 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.
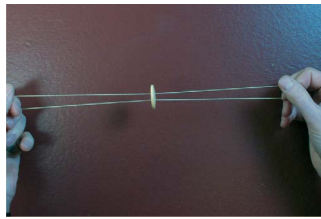

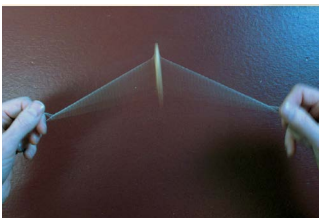1. Poke end of string through one hole in button.

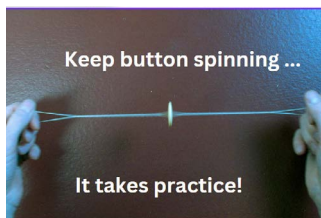2. Poke SAME end of string through other hole.

3. Tie ends together.

4. Hold loop at both ends with button in the middle.

5. Whirl button to wind up string.

Keep button spinning …

It takes practice!

6. Move hands apart and together to spin button.

Learning Connections:

Science:
• Forces: Pushes and Pulls
• Momentum: "Mass in Motion"

Math:
• Measuring: Use a meter stick to measure and cut 1 meter of string. How many meters of string do we need for the whole class?
• Diameter: Test buttons with two different diameters. What differences do you notice with how the toys work with each size?

Social Skills:
• Normally this toy is played by just ONE person. How would it work for TWO people to play with the same toy at the same time?
• How about TWO people playing with TWO toys at the same time?

History/Invention:
• This toy goes back thousands of years, to a time when plastic buttons didn't exist. What materials do you think people used to make this toy back then?
• If you didn't have a button, what recycled or "scrounged" materials could you use to make this toy?

Safety Note
Keep twisting string away from your HAIR–it can tangle up and pull your hair...OUCH!!

SCHOOL OF TOY

www.schooloftoy.com