

# 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