

PAPER AIRPLANES

DISCOVERY PLAY ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

Every child is different, and these are only suggested adaptations and activities. Do what works best for encouraging your child's independent exploration during this suggested play activity. Consult your pediatrician, physical therapist (PT), and/or occupational therapist (OT) first.



STEM Concept(s): Force & Motion, Design, Evaluate, Spatial Positioning

Learning how to make a paper airplane is a great way for your child to learn about **forces and motion, testing and improving designs**, and how to solve problems. Grab a piece of paper, fold a paper airplane! Try different ways to fold the paper and see which one flies **faster/higher/further!** Provide a variety of papers of **different sizes, textures, and weights/thickness** for the child to **investigate building** paper airplanes.

STEM IDEAS/WORDS

- Plane
- Paper
- High/Low
- Fast/Slow
- Improve; Test
- Close/Far

MATERIALS

- Papers of various sizes, textures, and/or weights/thickness

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- *What would happen if we fold the paper airplane in a different way?*
- *Which type of paper do you think will fly faster? Higher? Why?*
- *Which design can make the paper airplane fly further? Why?*
- *How can you design the paper airplane's wings so it can land over there?*



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ENVIRONMENT

- If possible, limit background noise & distractions
- If outside, wear sunglasses/hat if sensitive to bright light
- Use assistive devices (e.g., power wheelchair, walkers, crutches), to help the child move around
- Place objects within reach
- Use a reacher or grabber to pick up the airplane off the ground

MATERIALS

- Have child's assistive technology ready and available, including augmentative & alternative communication (AAC) device
- Draw the folding lines or arrows to help the child determine the location of the folds

INSTRUCTION

- Use a variety of methods of communication (e.g., sign language, gestures) to meaningfully engage children
- Use pictures and/or icons to signal next steps (see following card)
- Make the fold and the child makes the crease
- Model and demonstrate how to hold a paper airplane



Follow your child's lead and interests. Enthusiastically ask your child questions about what they are doing and what they like.



Answer your child's questions. If you do not know the answer, work together with your child to discover the answer.



Encourage your child to participate in the activity as much as possible. Praise your child's efforts and successes.

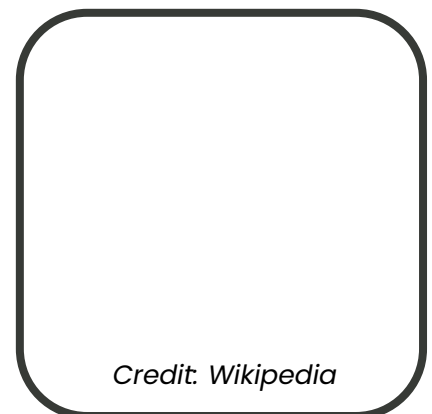
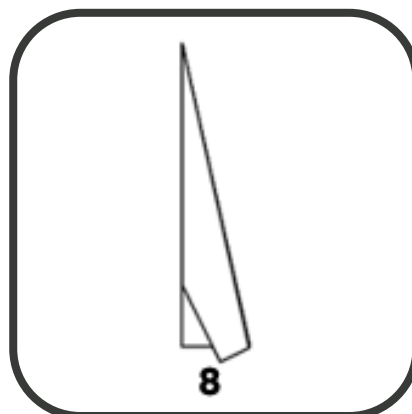
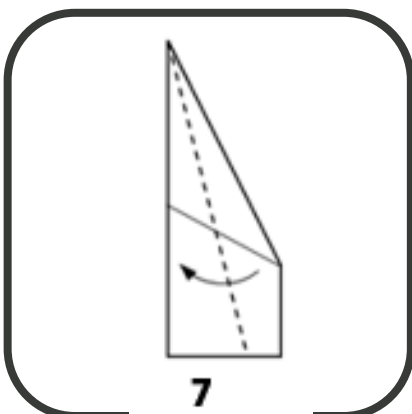
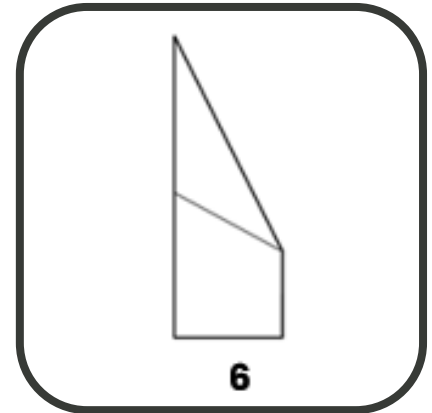
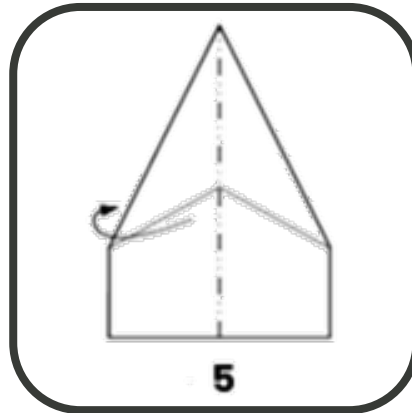
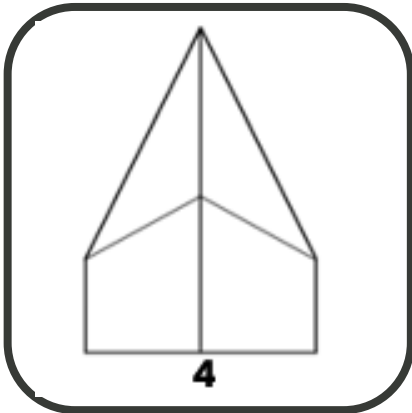
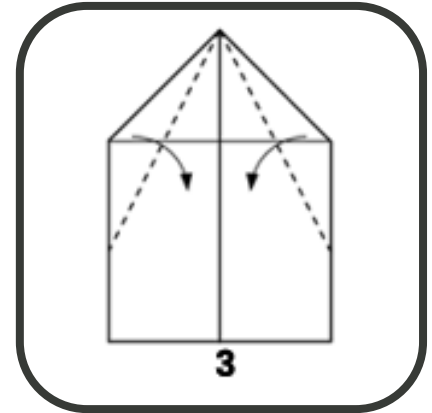
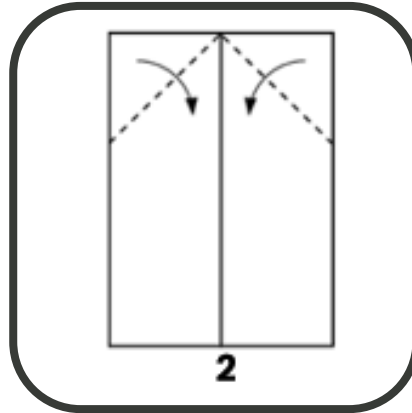
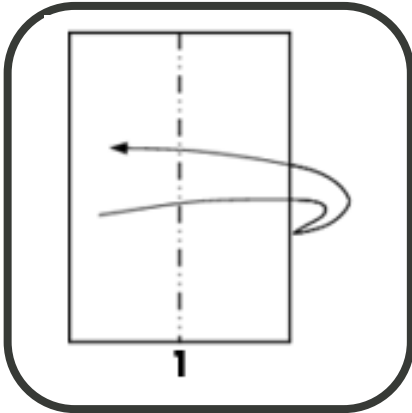


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VISUAL CUES: USE TO SIGNAL NEXT STEPS



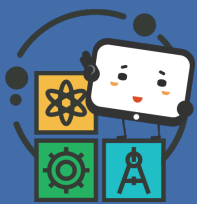
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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

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- Set up a start and finish line to test flight distance
- Decorate the paper with paint, crayons, coloring pencils, etc. before folding into a paper airplane
- Talk with the child about what happened each time the plane flies and how they might be able to change it. Encourage the child to document their plans in some way.
- Visit your local airport observation deck
- Check out these great books about planes:
 - *The Big Book of Airplanes* by DK
 - *Amazing Airplanes* by Tony Mitton & Ant Parker
 - *Airplanes: Soaring! Diving! Turning!* By Patricia Hubbell

