



Break a Toy Apart

In this Adventure, Beaver Scouts break apart a toy or a simple appliance to understand how the moving parts work. In the process, they can learn about the functions of simple machines like gears and pulleys.



PREPARATION:

- Planning for this activity should take place a week or two before the implementation so that Beaver Scouts will have time to bring in their toys.
- A couple of weeks in advance, ask each Beaver (and their parents) to look for an old toy to bring to the meeting, to open it up and experiment with it. Each toy should have moving parts which would intrigue Beavers and make them curious to know what is inside. At the same time, toys should not be too complicated for them to understand once they open it up. A wind-up or pull-string toy will work well for this activity. You can also do the activity with simple used/old household items like a toaster, hair dryer, clocks with large gears or a rotary telephone. Parents and Beavers should be made aware that the toys may not function again.
- Ask the parents to bring in the toys and the tools that the Beavers need to open them up to ensure you have everything needed. Toys and tools should be labeled so the Beavers know which are theirs.
- Beavers may need extra support for this activity. It would be ideal to have one adult for every three to four Beavers. If needed, ask parents if they can volunteer to help you out in the meeting.

THE ACTIVITY:

- It is best to gather Beavers in groups of 3-4 for the activities so that they can see each other's work and talk about what they see.

- For Imagine: help Beavers explain their drawings by asking questions like: "What does this part of your drawing do?"; "Which part helps the train to turn?"
- For a working surface, spread tarps on the floor so that at the end of the activity no tiny pieces are left unnoticed.
- For Break the toy apart: help Beavers in their inquiry by asking questions like: "What do you think that piece does?"; "How does it work with other pieces in the toy?"; "Where else do you think we can find this?"
- If you have time, you can ask Beavers to try to put the toys back together or create something new. This activity can encourage them to imagine new ways they can put the materials back together, even if they don't actually work.

REVIEW:

- You can bring in some small appliances that use mechanisms similar to the toys and show them to Beavers (gears, strings, etc.).

SUGGESTED TIMING:

- Discussion about the toys (in the previous meeting): 10 minutes
- Imagining and Drawing the inside of the toy: 15 minutes
- Break the toy apart: 30 minutes
- Review: 10 minutes

