

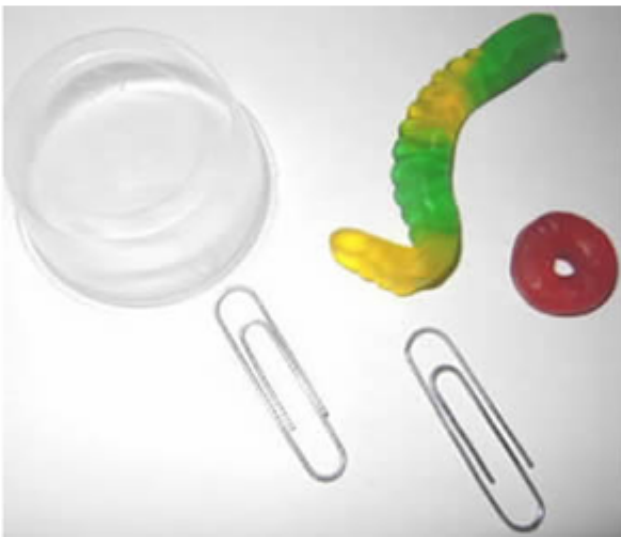
Saving Sam

This is an activity for the first day or as an introduction to the scientific method or to just allow students to work in groups so that you can get to know them better. I usually do all instructions verbally and don't require any written documents for turning in.

Setting Up the Scenario

Sam is stuck on a boat, and how he got there is not important, but Sam can't swim and the boat is capsized. To get to shore, Sam needs to retrieve a life jacket from underneath the boat so that he can float to shore. You and your partner's job is to save Sam by retrieving the life jacket from under the boat and putting it on Sam. Unfortunately, the only tools you can use to accomplish this task are paperclips. (1 per person, or you can give them 2 per person). You cannot touch Sam, the boat, or the life preserver with your bare hands.

A gummy worm is used to represent Sam, a gummy life saver is the life preserver and an overturned cup represents the boat. *It also may enhance the activity to mention that worms are hermaphrodites, and Sam is technically both boy and girl, which makes the name rather appropriate.



Some Uses For this Activity:

1. Problem solving, cooperative learning, scientific method
2. Getting to know kids at the beginning of school, watching how they work together to solve a problem

Discussion Questions

1. How did you and your partner figure out how to save Sam?
2. Would it have been easier if you were working alone? Why or why not?
3. Was there a clear leader in your group? Did someone call the shots or make decisions about how to save Sam.
4. Could Sam be saved if you had only one paperclip?