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# Preschool Pulley Delivery System



*This simple activity allows young children discover how pulleys can be used.*

**Related exhibits:** Pulleys

**Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Ages:** preschool

**Staff:** volunteer- or parent-assisted

**Safety:** none

**Materials:**

- 2 pulleys per set-up
- 2 clamps to attach the pulleys to two tables (for a temporary set-up)
- Clothesline rope
- Clothespins
- Paper or plastic cups
- Treasures or notes to pass back and forth

**Procedure:**

*For a temporary set-up.*

1. Attach the clamps to the sides of two different tables spread about 10-15 feet apart. Attach the pulleys to the clamps.
2. Thread the clothesline through the pulleys and tie the ends together.
3. Adjust the distance between the tables so that the clothesline stays taut.
4. Allow children to use the clothespins to attach messages or cups to the line.
5. Pull gently on the rope to move clothespins to the other side and back again.

**Questions to ask:**

If the message is in the middle, how can they make the message come forward or back?  
Does it matter which side of the rope they pull on?

**Extensions:**

*Flag pole:* Use pulleys to raise and lower a flag. Attach an upper pulley (or a spool on a nail) and loop the rope over it then under the top of a heavy chair. Attach a flag to the bottom and pull it up.

*Crane:* Design a crane system using pulleys and a crank.