



Curiosity Guide #502

Simple Machines: Wedge

Accompanies Curious Crew, Season 5, Episode 2 (#502)

Going Up

Investigation #6

Description

Let's find out how to make a lifting job easier!

Materials

- Stack of dictionaries or heavy books
- Wooden shims
- Tape

Procedure

- 1) Tape two wooden shims together on their flat sides. Put the shims aside.
- 2) Try to lift the stack of books by sliding your fingers under the bottom of the stack. Lift!
- 3) Put the point of the shims near the stack of books and slide the shims under the books. Lift!
- 4) Was lifting difficult?
- 5) Could you slide the shims far enough to get your fingers underneath the books?
- 6) What would happen if the shims were wider? Would lifting be easier or harder?

My Results

Explanation

Wedges can be used to lift objects off the ground. Applying a force to the end of the wedge drives the wedge beneath the object and causes the object to rise. A slender wedge will take longer to raise an object but will be easier to push in than a wider one.

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