Family Flyers Activity

Recommended for 3ʳᵈ–5ᵗʰ grade

You can fly a paper airplane, but can you make it land where you want it to? Youth will have a chance to try two paper airplane patterns and make design changes to figure out what works best when flying and landing an airplane.

Getting Ready

- Use the masking tape to make a landing strip approximately 2' x 6'.
- Practice making planes.

Project Skills

- Making a paper airplane

Life Skills

- Teamwork
- Critical Thinking

What to do

Experiment making paper airplanes

1. Pair youth up and ask each of them to make at least two different kinds of paper airplanes. Have youth print numbers on the airplanes so they can tell them apart.

2. Have youth test fly each of their planes and decide jointly which two planes fly the best.

3. Encourage youth to think critically about their airplane design. How could they use paper clips or masking tape to make their airplanes fly better?

Conduct a runway landing test flight

1. Have teams take turns trying to land their airplane on the runway.

2. Record 5 points on the Runway Record Sheet when an airplane lands on the runway. Score 0 points if the plane does not land on the runway.

3. Record a plane's result each time it is flown.

4. Make certain that everyone has the same number of flight tests.

5. Announce which plane(s) scored the most points. Congratulate your winning design team.

Materials

- 2 - 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of paper per person
- 1 set of markers per 2 youth
- 2-3 small-sized paperclips per person
- Roll of masking tape
- Simple paper airplane template and Dart paper airplane template
- Runway Record sheet

UW–MADISON EXTENSION

Reflect and Apply

1. How did your team change an airplane design to make it fly better? _____

_____

_____

_____

2. How did your team decide which two planes to fly in the official Landing Flight Test? _____
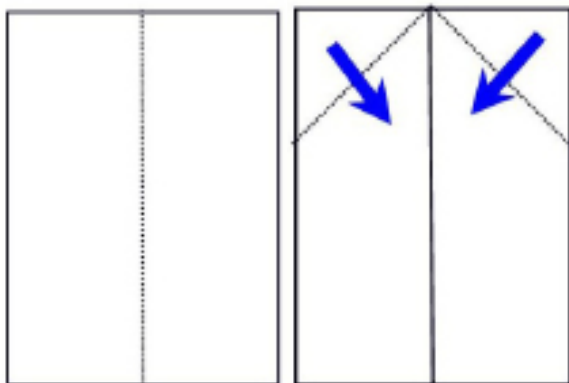
_____

_____

_____

3. When are other times that you have been a member of a team? _____

_____

_____

_____

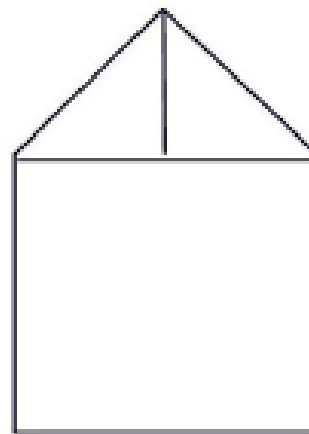4. Next time, what could you do to be a better team member? _____

_____

_____

_____

UW–MADISON EXTENSION

Family Flyers · Simple Template

1

Crease paper in half and fold the top corners down.

Your plane should look like this:

2
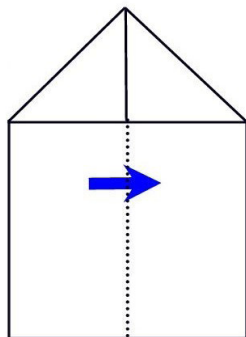
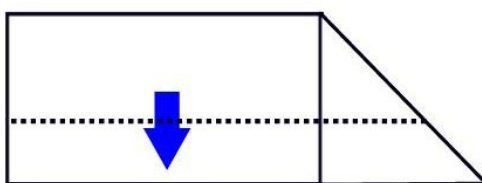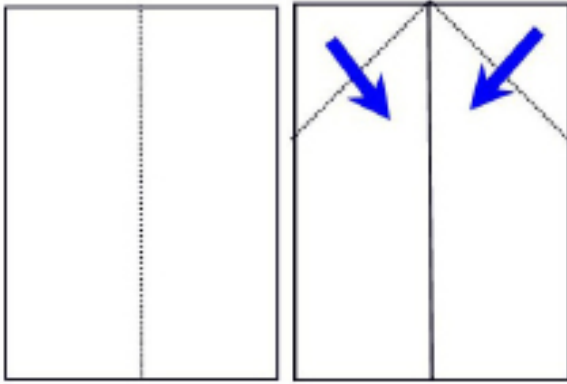Fold the plane in half at the center crease.

3

Fold the wings down.
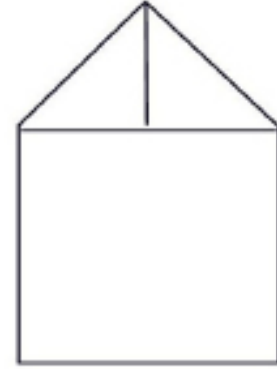
UW–MADISON EXTENSION
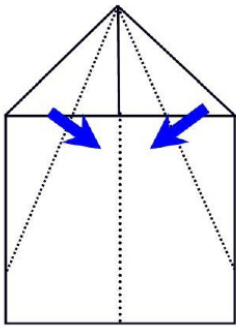
Family Flyers • Dart Template

1

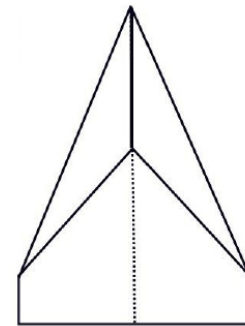Crease paper in half and fold the top corners down.

Your plane should look like this:

2

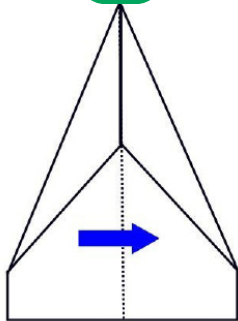Fold the sides into the center crease.

3

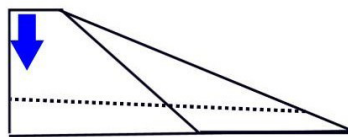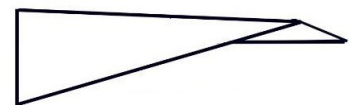Fold the plane in half at the center crease.

4

Fold the wings down.

UW–MADISON EXTENSION

Runaway Record Sheet

Family Flyers

TEAMS		ROUND #1	ROUND #2	ROUND #3	ROUND #4	ROUND #5	ROUND #6	TOTALS
Names	Plane #	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points
Names	Plane #	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points
Names	Plane #	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points
Names	Plane #	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points
Names	Plane #	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points	Points

UW–MADISON EXTENSION