COOLTOOLS

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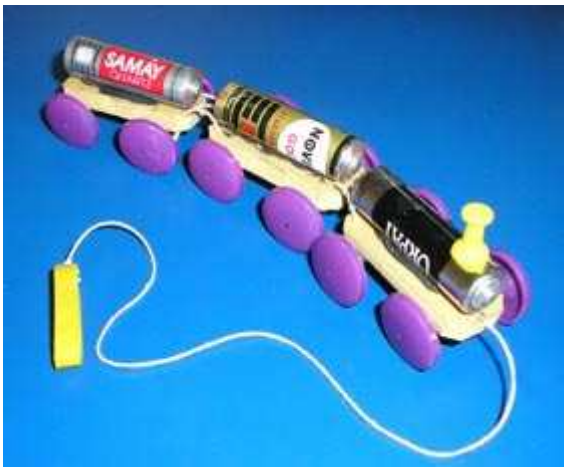
http://www.kk.org/cooltools/archives/003456.php#comments

Guide to building doodads & knickknacks with junk

01-09-09

Toys from Trash



The recycling, reuse and reppropriation of common household goods, trash and miscellany into functional and/or amusing items is something Cool Tools readers know well. No matter where you fall on the spectrum of tinkerers, whether you have children or not, it's near impossible to visit Arvind Gupta's Toys From Trash without wanting to attempt at least one of his many projects.

His web site boasts a fantastic range of educational experiments like how to fashion a potato battery and a bottle barometer, as well as a section called "Pumps from the Dump" which includes a stellar-looking Syringe Pump. Granted there's an array of light experiments akin to the ones you'll find in the previously-reviewed Science Toys You Can Make

With Your Kids. But in addition to the nerdy, educational stuff, Gupta's site features quick and easy one-offs that aren't the least bit science-y, like how to fold six types of newspaper hat.

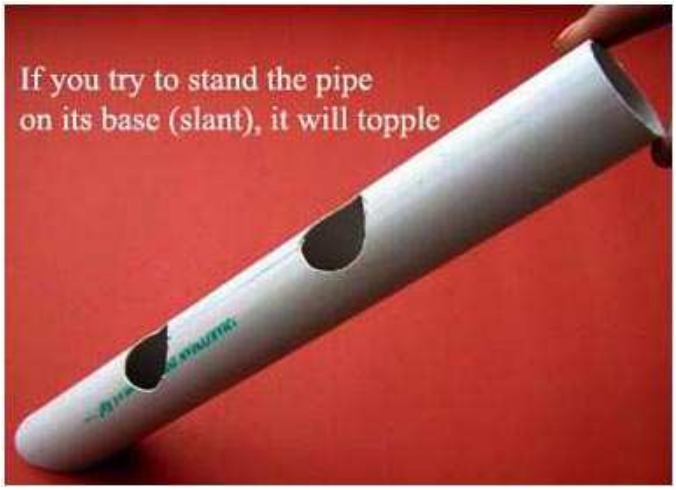
I first perused Toys From Trash a couple years ago, but found myself diving back in recently after a friend reminded me just how much cool stuff Gupta's published. Many of us already tinker, create, deconstruct and build stuff back up for fun, work, education, etc. -- or at the very least we're partial to blogs and publications which show us what's possible. I'm guessing one of the biproducts of the economic downturn in the U.S. will be an increase in DIY and, therefore, even more kids raised on transforming what could be discarded into treasures.

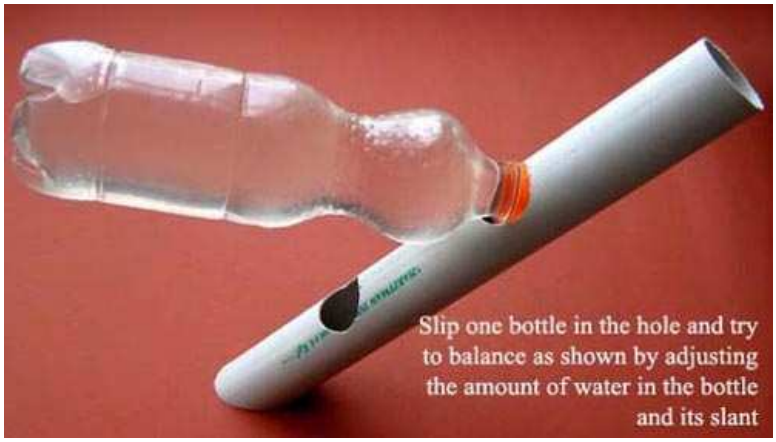
-- Steven Leckart

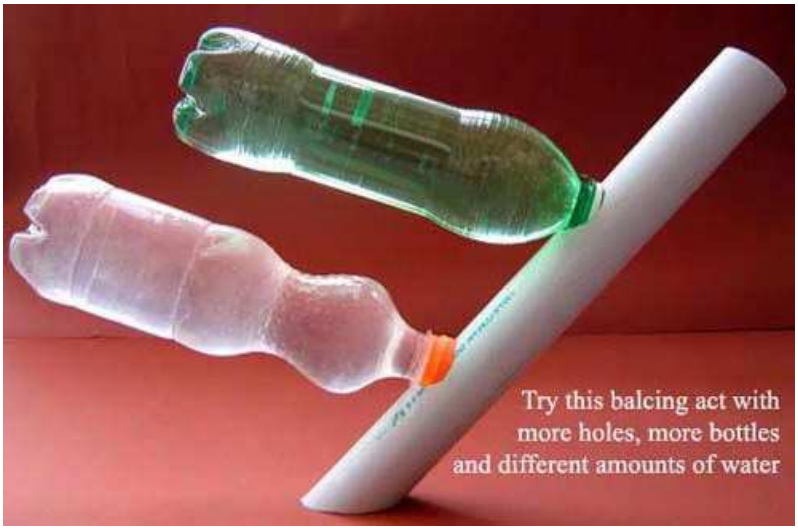
Toys From Trash

Sample Excerpts:

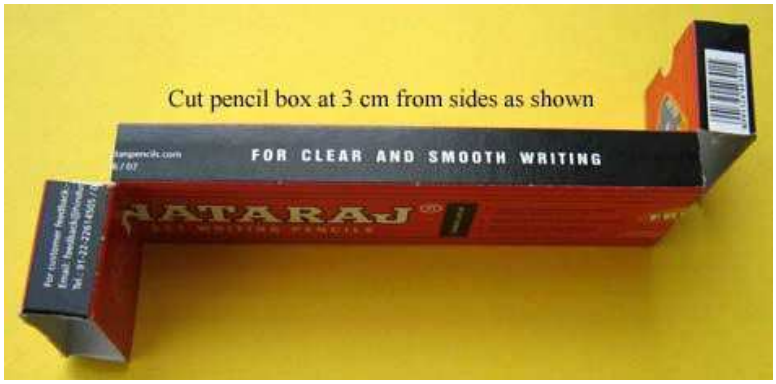
Balancing Act

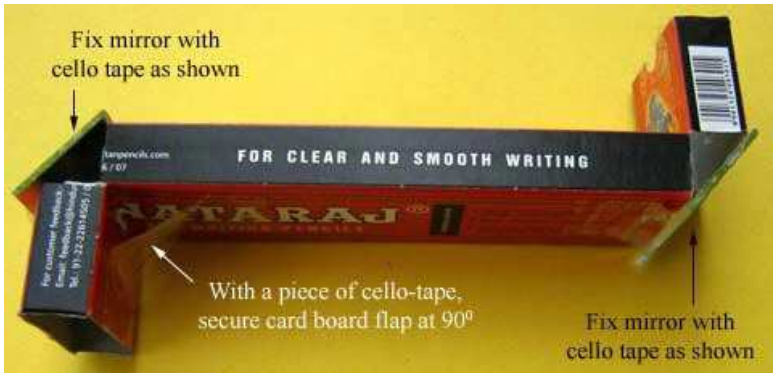

If you try to stand the pipe
on its base (slant), it will topple


Slip one bottle in the hole and try
to balance as shown by adjusting
the amount of water in the bottle
and its slant


Try this balcing act with
more holes, more bottles
and different amounts of water


NATARAJ
621 WRITING PENCILS
FREE
Empty card board pencil box
Two mirror pieces
Cello-tape


Cut pencil box at 3 cm from sides as shown
FOR CLEAR AND SMOOTH WRITING
NATARAJ


Fix mirror with cello tape as shown
FOR CLEAR AND SMOOTH WRITING
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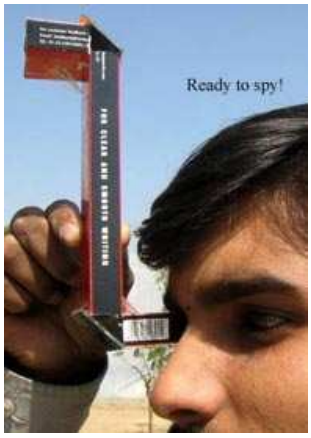
With a piece of cello-tape, secure card board flap at 90⁰
Fix mirror with cello tape as shown


Ready to spy!