BC SRC 2020: Explore Our Universe!

Programs - Ages 9-12, Theme 7: Blast off! Astronauts and space exploration

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Introduction (10 min): Weightless Race

- Supplies: bowls, cotton balls, spoons, blindfolds
- Separate the cotton balls by placing 20 in one bowl and 20 in the other bowl. Divide the players into teams and place one empty bowl and one bowl with the 20 cotton balls in front of the first player on each team.
- Demonstrate what the kids will have to do: using a spoon to lift and transfer as many cotton balls as they can to the empty bowl.
- Blindfold one player from each team and give them each a spoon. Set a timer to 30-seconds and when the timer starts, they will try to get as many cotton balls as they can into the empty bowl. It's not as easy as it sounds though because they will only be allowed to use the one spoon they were given. They cannot use their hands for assistance. This will be tricky since the cotton balls are lightweight and they won't be able to feel them on the spoon. When the time is up, they can remove their blindfolds and see how many cotton balls they transferred into the empty bowl. Someone else on the team then repeats the activity. Play continues until all of the cotton balls have been moved.
- Source: https://kidactivities.net/15-outer-space-party-games-and-activities-for-kids/
- Keep in mind that some children might have a hard time with this game if they have a disability or don't like being blindfolded. You might skip this activity if you think it will be too hard for any of the kids in your group.

Activity (10 min): Gravity Drop

- Ask children what they know about gravity. Then hold up a whole apple and half an apple. Ask which apple will hit the ground first when the apples are dropped from the same height at the same time. Drop the apples. They should land at the same time since all objects descend at the same rate.
- Source: Gravity Drop https://study.com/academy/popular/gravity-for-kids-experiments-activities.html

Story (10 min): Gravity is a Mystery by Franklyn M. Branley or Astronaut Handbook by Meghan McCarthy


Activity (20 min): Perfect paper airplane

- Offer all the supplies to make a wide range of paper airplanes: paper in different weights, paper clips, straws, tape, scissors, etc. Don't forget to include books and/or print-out instructions for paper airplane designs to give kids a starting-off point. Mark out a flying course on the floor/ground (masking tape if inside, chalk if outside) so you can see how far planes fly. Encourage kids to modify their designs to produce longer flight distances.
- Source: https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2014/10/thinking-about-steam-as-pop-up-programs/