

BEN'S KITE

January 17, 2006 was the 300th anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's birthday. Dr. Franklin was a very creative man. He would have been right at home on a Destination Imagination team! One of his most important discoveries was that lightning is a form of electricity. As I'm sure you know, he did this by using a kite, a key, some silk string and a very simple type of battery called a Leyden jar. He earned world-wide fame for his experiments with electricity!

Challenge: Honor Ben Franklin by making a kite. Because he is a very famous man, make a BIG kite! However, your kite must also be quite rigid. Your construction should be able to stand upright by itself when a team member holds it by the bottom edge.

Time: Part One: You will have 5 minutes to build a big, stiff kite.
Part Two: One team member will grasp the kite at its lowest point and hold it at a right angle to the floor. The kite may not be supported in any other way. The appraisers will have 1 minute to measure its dimensions and evaluate the creativity of its construction.

Materials: 20 straws
10 sheets of typing paper
3 sheets of newspaper
10 paper clips
10 mailing labels
6 wooden sticks
6 feet of string

Scoring: 1 point for each inch of width, measured horizontally
1 point for each inch of height, measured vertically
up to 20 points for creative use of materials
up to 20 points for positive team work

Important Safety Note: Do not fly your kite outside in a thunderstorm unless you have a Leyden Jar and know how to use it!