

MARYLAND

Chesapeake Bay is the largest fresh water estuary in the world. It is about 200 miles long. At the widest part, it is 30 miles across, but only 4 miles across at its narrowest. Over 150 rivers and streams drain into this huge bay. But there are only two bridges across this waterway! Actually, the mice don't mind; they'd rather go for a sail anyway. Can you build them a boat?

Set-Up: Mark a six-inch launch area on one short end of a dish pan or a large roasting pan and then mark a six-inch landing area on the opposite end. Fill the container mostly full of cold water.

Challenge: Design and build a sailboat that can carry a mouse across the water.

Time: Part One: You will have 6 minutes to construct a sailboat that can be blown across a body of water and carry the mouse to the other side. Remember that the mouse doesn't like to swim in cold water!

Part Two: You will have 2 minutes to place your boat in the water, load the mouse passenger and then blow on the vessel to move it from the launch area to the landing area. Team members may not touch the boat or the mouse after the boat leaves the launch area.

Materials: one tiny toy mouse (like a cat toy)
four file cards
one square foot of aluminum foil
two straws
eight toothpicks
dish pan or large roasting pan of water (the "estuary")

Scoring: 15 points if the boat floats
15 more points if the boat floats with the mouse in it
25 points if the boat crosses the pan moved only by air gusts
20 points if the mouse isn't wet at the end of Part Two
up to 25 points for positive team work