

Activity 4 – Conversation

Make and use a cup telephone

What to do

- Make a small hole in the base of each cup, small enough to allow the string through.
- Thread the string through each cup and knot it to hold it in place. The knot should sit inside each cup, the cups joined by the string and the drinking rims pointing in opposite directions.
- To speak, gently pull the string taut between the cups. One person speaks into their cup while the other person puts an ear to theirs.
- Have fun holding a conversation at a distance!

What you need

2 paper or plastic cups (tin cans can also be used but take more adult preparation)

String

A pencil/skewer for making holes



Extension

Tell jokes, give instructions, and ask quiz questions using the cup telephone. Explore how the sound travels down the string and what happens if the string is limp or someone holds it when you speak. Try changing the size of the cups or length of the string.

Questions to ask

How could we use these cups to help us have a conversation?
Is your voice louder or quieter when you speak into a cup?
What happens if I speak in this cup and you listen with yours? What can you hear?
What if we both speak/listen at the same time?
Can we use it round a corner?