



THE MITTEN
Illustrated
by
Jan Brett

Seven animals managed to fit inside Nicki's white mitten before it bursts open and dumps the animals back on the snow. The mitten is still in one piece, but it has been stretched greatly!

Try to stretch your students' ability to predict using this next activity. Ask them to predict how many paper clips they can drop into a 3 oz bathroom cup filled to the brim with water before it overflows. Because water has a high surface tension and paper clips displace a low volume of water, a great number of paper clips can be added. The record number for my students is 162!

MATERIALS: 3 oz bathroom cup, container of water, 2 boxes of regular paper clips, graph paper

ACTIVITY: Find a flat surface area that can get wet. Fill the 3 oz cup with water until you can see a curve at the top. Now predict how many paper clips you will be able to add. Then, add paper clips, one at a time counting as you add, until the water overflows. Using a bar graph, compare the predictions with the results. For young children graphing isn't necessary, or the teacher could make the graph.

TEACHER NOTES: This activity is a great demonstration when you are working with young children. The paper clips can be used again and again; let them dry before putting them away. To incorporate some math, use unifix cubes or strips of paper representing five unifix cubes. Each time five paper clips are added, a strip could be added the graph.

SOURCE: Lecture given by Catherine Valentino at the 1991 Connecticut Elementary Science Day.

STANDARDS:

BSL: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.11, 1.13, 4.6, 9.7, 12.1, 12.2, 12.4

NCTM: 1a, 4d, 5a, 5b, 5c, 9b

SCS: A1, B1, H3, H4

Brett, Jan. The Mitten. G.P.Putnam's Sons, 1989, ISBN#0-399-21920-X.