



Create, Test, Improve!

Make a Mobile

When you want to make something, you can use a three-step process: **create, test, improve!** This **computational thinking skill** is a creative way of thinking that can help children solve problems in more organized ways. Try the ideas below to practice this skill with your child.

Total time needed: 20–30 minutes



Watch the Story

Making a Racket Playing Whack-It

Ask your child:

- Why do you think the crab kids were so good at playing Whack-It Ball?
- What did the monkeys learn from them?
- Do you like playing games by yourself or as part of a team? Why?



Do the Activity

Make a Mobile

Follow the directions on the next page to create a mobile. You'll need:

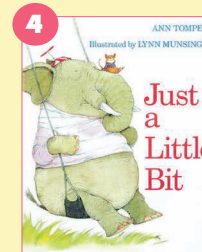
- A clothes hanger
- String
- Toys, photos, drawings, or other small objects that your child likes
- Mobile Art Activity sheet
- Tape (optional)



Watch the Music Video

Make It Better

Watch the monkeys sing as they **create** a musical instrument, **test** it out, and then **improve** it. That's what you did when you **created** your mobile and made it balance!



Read a Book (Optional)

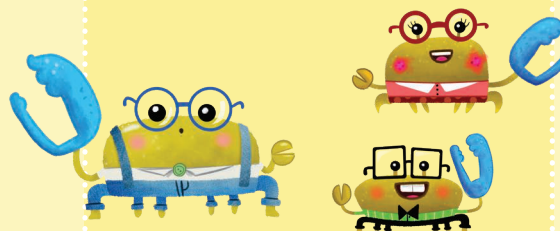
Just a Little Bit

by Ann Tompert

Illustrated by Lynn Munsinger

Ask your child:

- Why do you think Mouse couldn't make the seesaw go down?
- It took a lot of animals to make the seesaw go down. How did they do it?
- Have you ever tried making a seesaw balance? What happened?



Do the Activity

Make a Mobile

Design a mobile that balances by using these three steps: **create, test, improve!**
You can use these steps to make almost anything!

Create!

(see materials on first page)

1. Show your child the pictures on the Mobile Art Activity sheet. Say:
 - *This is what a mobile looks like. It's a decoration with hanging objects that move.*
 - *Let's **create** one!*
2. Point to the pictures of the balanced and the unbalanced mobile on the sheet and say:
 - *Your mobile needs to be balanced so it hangs evenly.*
 - *If your mobile is balanced, the hanger will be straight, not crooked. But if it's not balanced, the hanger will tip to one side, like this.*
3. Have your child imagine what his mobile might look like. Then have him collect things he wants to hang on it.
4. Help your child tie strings around each object. Then attach the other end of the strings to the hanger. You can also use tape.

Test!

1. Tell your child:
 - *How can we **test** the mobile to see if it's balanced?*
2. Help your child **test** it out. Ask:
 - *Is one side higher or lower than the other? What do you think that means?*

TIP: Managing frustration

Tying string is tricky for young children. If your child gets frustrated, say: *Let's try doing it together. Watch what I do. It takes practice, but if you keep trying you'll be able to do it on your own.*

Improve!

1. Depending on the test results, ask:
 - *What can we do to **improve** the mobile so it balances and looks the way you want it to look?*
2. Help your child make **improvements** and **test** them out until the mobile hangs evenly. Your child may need to add, replace, or move the objects around until the mobile is balanced.
3. When your child is satisfied with the mobile, remind him of what he did:
 - *To make the mobile, you **created** it, then you **tested** and **improved** it. You can use these three steps to make almost anything!*

TIP: Try another challenge

Encourage your child to keep improving his mobile or make a second one. He can use string to attach a second hanger to the mobile. Add more objects to the second hanger, but keep the mobile balanced!



AHA! Island is produced by:



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Mobile Art Activity Sheet



A **balanced mobile** hangs straight across.

An **unbalanced mobile** hangs down on one side.



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