

WOULDN'T IT BE COOL IF...

COOL IDEAS FOR PARENTS

BEFORE THE CONTEST...

- Explore **Step 1: Warm Up** together. Read and discuss each model idea with your child. Ask questions, such as: *Which is your favorite invention idea and why? Which ideas can you relate to, or do you think you could use? Which idea is the coolest? Do these ideas give you any ideas of your own?* Point out and discuss the math and science principles that power each idea.
- Start a discussion about cool ideas that have made your life more awesome. Over a meal, in the car, or whenever, share some stories about life pre-micro-wave, pre-VCR, pre-mobile phone, or pre-Internet. Talk about the impact these cool scientific ideas have had on our life and culture. Think together about the math and science that power some of these ideas. Check out the website www.howstuffworks.com to find out more what makes these everyday awesome ideas do what they do.
- Talk about where in your own community you might find inspiration for cool ideas. What are some of the local problems, issues, burdens, or resources? For example, maybe biking as a means of transportation is very popular in your town in the summer, but the winters are just too cold. *Wouldn't it be cool if there was a biking suit, kind of like a wet suit, that was super warm and waterproof, and allowed people to commute by bike in the winter? Now that's an idea that would really make life in our community more awesome.* Then talk about the math and science that would be needed to power such an idea. What would you need to learn about, and what kinds of professionals could help you? *We'd probably need to know something about chemistry in order to create this super thin, super warm, waterproof fabric. I think some physics would also help too in terms of how the fabric behaves under certain temperatures and at certain speeds. An engineer could help us design the actual suit so that it's flexible and comfortable.*
- Share cool ideas that you hear about in the news. What's the latest? I just heard a story about the Mars Rover "Curiosity." *Now that's certainly a cool idea—part vehicle, part robot, part science lab. I went online to find out more and came across a great Blog called Light Years at www.cnn.com. It's all about science and discovery and you can get ongoing coverage of Curiosity's journey.* Check out www.engadget.com for other cool science ideas in the news.
- Play the **Ideator Card Game** together. (See page 3 for instructions and cards.)

DURING THE CONTEST...

- Encourage your child to submit his or her own cool idea to *Wouldn't It Be Cool If*. Be available to answer questions and provide feedback in order to support your child through the submission process. Share the link to the contest with other parents in your community.
- Browse through the Idea Gallery together. Again, discuss each entry with your child. Ask questions, such as: *Which ideas can you relate to, or do you think you could use? Which idea do you think is the coolest? How do these ideas compare to the idea you created?*
- Use some of the answers to the questions above to post a comment to the Idea Gallery together. Give a shout out to a great idea!
- Post a comment to your own kid's submission without telling him/her. Let your child find the message the next time he or she visits the Idea Gallery. *I just took another look at your super cool idea, and wow! This is such great thinking!*
- Create your own "Family Idea Gallery." Have each member of the family "submit" an idea to your own family contest. Use a bulletin board or the fridge as a gallery space. Use sticky-notes to post comments on each others' ideas.

AFTER THE CONTEST...

- Visit Time Warner Cable's **Connectory** at Connect a Million Minds (www.connectamillionminds.com/connectory.php) to find ongoing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) opportunities in your own community. Simply enter your zip code and get connected with groups, clubs, and activities that can support your child's interest in STEM.
- Work together on making your kid's idea real. Could you build it? Design it? Try to create it? If that's too much, could you model it or create a prototype? Support your child on this effort by helping to assemble materials and resources.
- **Step 3: Power** references STEM careers related to the principles used in your child's idea. Talk to your child about all of the possible and varied STEM careers out there. Try connecting to STEM professionals in your own community. You might seek out resources at local schools, universities, businesses, or hospitals. Visit www.stemcareer.com to find out more.

THE IDEATOR CARD GAME

Materials

The Ideator Card Game consists of three sets of cards. The cards in Set 1 are possible categories for a cool idea, like transportation or sports. The cards in Set 2 are different ways to come up with an idea, like solving a problem or combining already ideas that already exist. The cards in Set 3 are STEM disciplines, such as biology or engineering.

Set Up

Card sets 1 and 2 are placed face down. Set 3 is placed face up and spread out so that all cards can be seen.

To Play

Each player chooses a card from set 1 and a card from set 2 at random. Players then have to use that particular way to come up with an idea in that category. So, if a player gets sports and fitness from Set 1 and make something easier from Set 2, they might come up with... a computerized, robotic ski boot that makes learning how to ski easier by guiding your feet in the correct motions.

After coming up with an idea, each player then looks at the cards from Set 3 and chooses the STEM principles that could help power the idea. For the computerized ski boots, the player might select physics, robotics, engineering, and biology. The player then explains why these STEM subjects are necessary to power up this idea.

IDEATOR CARDS SET 1

COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY



TRANSPORTATION



NUTRITION & HEALTH



FASHION & BEAUTY



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



NATURE



APPS & GADGETS



SPORTS & FITNESS



IDEATOR CARDS SET 2

SOLVE A **PROBLEM**

2

BE **OBSERVANT**
AND **CURIOUS**

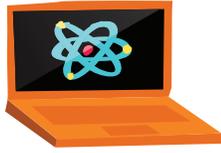
2

MAKE SOMETHING **EASIER**

2

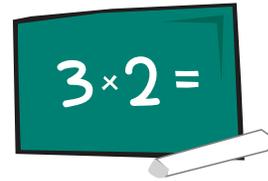
COMBINE OR **IMPROVE**
ON EXISTING IDEAS

2



COMPUTER SCIENCE

}



MATH

}



EARTH SCIENCE

}



ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

}



ZOOLOGY

}



AERONAUTICS

}



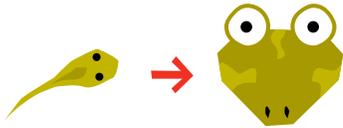
ASTRONOMY

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PHYSICS

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BIOLOGY

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CHEMISTRY

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ELECTRONICS

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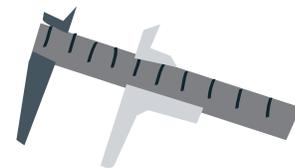
NANOTECHNOLOGY

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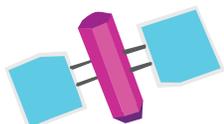
ROBOTICS

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DESIGN & ENGINEERING

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COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY

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OTHER

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