



DESIGNING A CREW EXPLORATION VEHICLE

Student Section _____

Student Name _____

Lesson Objective

To design and build a model of a Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV).

During this lesson, you will

- design a model CEV for future space exploration.
- develop a conclusion based upon the results of this design.
- compare your results to class results looking for patterns.

Problem

Can I design and build a Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) that will be a model for future space exploration?

Observation

The space shuttle is the world's first reusable spacecraft and the first spacecraft in history that can carry large satellites both to and from orbit. The space shuttle is designed for low-Earth orbit. It cannot go to the moon or to Mars. Since we hope to send people to these places soon, we need to design a new space vehicle.

NASA scientists and engineers are working on a space vehicle that can take astronauts to the moon, Mars, and beyond. This spacecraft is called the Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV). The CEV is a vehicle to transport human crews beyond low-Earth orbit and back again. The CEV must be designed to serve multiple functions and operate in a variety of environments.

Development of the CEV will take place in stages and will require many support systems. Support systems will include launch vehicles, in-space transportation, navigation and communication, life support, extravehicular activity (the ability to leave the spacecraft), and mission operations support.

Using recyclable materials, you will design and build a CEV model.

Use the first column of this KWL chart to organize your observations about spacecraft design.

Brainstorm with your group what you want to know about spacecraft design, then list in the second column of this KWL chart.

KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED

Hypothesis

Based on your observations, answer the “problem question” with your best guess. (Can I design and build a Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) that will be a model for future space exploration?) Your hypothesis should be written as a statement.

My hypothesis: _____

Materials

Per group

- an assortment of household recyclables such as paper plates, plastic containers, milk jugs or cartons, craft sticks, etc.
- assorted fasteners such as tapes, brads, staples, rubber bands
- graph paper
- scissors
- markers

Safety

Review your classroom and lab safety rules.

Test Procedure

1. Design your CEV on graph paper. Be sure you include these items:
 - a place for the crew
 - fuel tank
 - rocket boosters
 - storage space for life support (air, water, food and waste)
 - storage place for cargo
 - power source (fuel cells)
 - landing system
 - other items if you can explain why

Make sure your drawing is complete:

- label all parts
 - create a materials list
 - name the spacecraft
 - list all group members names
2. Explain your drawing to your teacher and classmates. You may make changes based upon their suggestions.
 3. Gather building materials. You may want to use paper towel rolls, yogurt cups, empty 2-liter bottles, jar lids, wire, empty cereal boxes, etc.
 4. Collect data by making notes on your design paper as you build. Indicate changes in your plans.
 5. When your CEV is complete, write a short statement to convince NASA that your CEV is worthy of future space exploration.
 6. Make improvements to your model and draw conclusions by answering the Study Data questions. Does your design support or refute your hypothesis?

Study Data

1. Did your CEV design change as you built your model? How?
2. Why was your drawing helpful? How would your drawings and notes help other CEV builders?
3. Does this data support your hypothesis? Why or why not?
4. Compare all of the CEV models in your class to look for similarities and differences.
5. Based on what you did in this CEV design activity, what would your recommendations be to NASA on designing a new CEV?

Conclusion

- Update the LEARNED column in your KWL chart.
- Restate your hypothesis and explain what happened during testing.