

Levitating Objects

Magic Science | 10-20 minutes

In this activity, students will *magically* levitate objects through the air!

Materials Needed

Per Student:

- 1 latex balloon
- 1-2 coffee filters
- Your own hair!

Enough to share:

- Scissors
 - Markers
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Steps:

1. Cut the coffee filters into shapes and decorate them. They can be whatever objects you want to see floating. (Ghosts are fun at Halloween!)
2. Blow up the balloon and tie it.
3. Rub the balloon on your hair for a few seconds.
4. Hold your balloon near the shapes you cut out. Move the balloon around and over top of them, and watch what happens!

Explanation:

When you rub your balloon in your hair, *electrons* (tiny little negatively charged electric particles) build up on the balloon. We call this *static electricity*. These tiny electrons have enough power that they can pull very light objects towards them. Your tissue objects are just light enough that they can fly through the air!

Try it!

What happens when you hold the balloon above your head close to your hair?

What does it do if you if you hold it against the wall and let go?

What if you set it on your arm?

Can you stick your balloon to somebody else's?

Try holding your balloon next to various objects around the room.

Real World:

Lightning is a dangerous and very powerful form of static electricity.