Paper Airplane Aerodynamics

WHAT YOU NEED:
- piece of printer paper
- tape
- paperclip
- tape measure or ruler

HOW TO:
1. Fold your paper to make a paper airplane.
2. Try it out. Throw your airplane and measure how far it flew.
3. Make some modifications. Add tape or a paperclip to the nose to see if you can get it to fly farther. Measure how far it flew.
4. Try making a different paper airplane fold design with a different piece of paper.
5. Which design flies better? Further? Does it fly smoother or further than your first airplane?

WHAT’S HAPPENING?
Four forces affect an airplane while it is flying: weight, thrust, drag and lift. When you throw the paper airplane, you are seeing all four of these forces and how they make the plane go.

If you need help finding a design, there are many available online.
Check out one of the books below at the library.

Related Books:
- Amazing Paper Airplanes by Kyong Hwa Lee
- Paper Planes by David Mitchell
- My First Guide to Paper Airplanes by Christopher L. Harbo

FUN FACT
The record distance for a paper airplane to be thrown is 290 feet!