Reaction Time Lesson

Plan

Amount of time Demo takes: under a min.
Try this at home!

Materials

- Ruler with cm marks
- Small white board and marker
- Removable sticky notes (small enough to fit on ruler)
- Small bin

Set-up Instructions

1. Set up poster to show results.

SAFETY! Safe Demo

Lesson’s Big Idea

- Test and compare reaction time in humans.

Instructional Procedure

1. Have the student sit in a chair with arm resting on a table so that their wrist hangs off the edge.
2. Hold the ruler so that it dangles between their thumb and finger.
3. Let go of the ruler and have them catch it with their thumb and finger as fast as they can.
4. Compare the distance from where the fingers started to where they caught the ruler. Can then compare the distance to a reaction time chart.
5. Explain reaction time. Reaction time is how long it took for their eyes to tell their brain that the ruler was falling and then for their brain to tell their fingers to catch it.
6. Make a mark on the white board showing their results.

Clean Up

- Clean up between demos if needed. When completely finished gather all materials listed for this demo and make sure everything is accounted for. If something was used up, broken, or damaged. Let someone know so it can get replaced or fixed.
Next Generation Science Standards

- K-5
  - 3-LS4-3
  - 4-LS1-2
- 6-8
  - MS-LS1-8