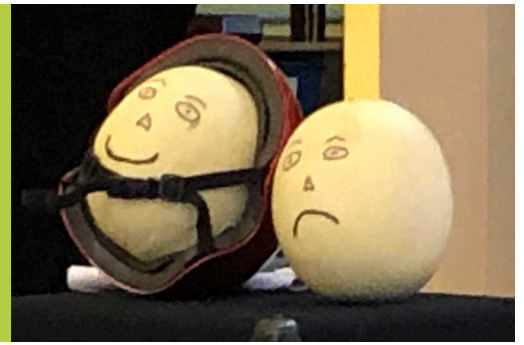


Helmet Safety Instructions

MELON DROP



Supplies

- **Ripe honeydew melons.** These offer the best helmet fit and it's easy to draw faces on their smooth surface. To check for ripeness, shake the melons and listen for the seeds inside; the outer rind should be slightly soft to the touch.
- **Markers or paint** to create the melon's facial expressions. Melons that are to be dropped without helmets should look alarmed; melons dropped wearing helmets should look happy.
- **Helmets** – one for the presenter, one for the melon. Use a rounded toddler helmet for the melon and pad the inside with extra soft padding. The helmet won't ever fit a melon perfectly and this padding just helps ensure a better, more snug fit.
- **Ladder**
- **Supplies for post-activity clean up**

Objective

The objective is to observe the effects on a melon dropped at high velocity with and without a helmet. Draw parallels between the melon and the human head and have kids imagine the drop being equivalent to a bicycle crash at moderate speed.

Directions

1. Introduce students to both the alarmed and happy melons: the alarmed melon is about to take a fall without a helmet; the happy melon will fall too, but its head will be protected by a helmet. If appropriate, ask students what will happen to each melon on impact.
2. The presenter should put on his or her helmet before climbing up the ladder.
3. As the presenter heads up the ladder, explain the importance of helmets; this dialogue should distract students from the presenter, who needs to give the melon a good squeeze/push at the back to ensure the melon will “splat” on impact.
4. Have students count down and then drop the melon.
5. As the presenter comes down from the ladder and examines the smashed melon, he or she should explain that the best neurosurgeons can't put this head back together.
6. Strap the happy melon into its helmet and start up the ladder again.
7. Have students count down again; when ready to drop, ensure the helmeted melon is dropped gently straight down.
8. Don't forget to clean up the mess after the presentation and have fun!