Cranberry Investigations...
(STEM, Life Skills)

Grade Range: 2-6 **Time:** 45 Minutes

Synopsis: Students are given two different types of cranberries, along with some other supplies, and asked to do some investigation and some building; this lesson focuses on teambuilding, asking the right types of questions, hypothesizing, and comparing and contrasting

Materials:

- Fresh cranberries – one bag per table
- Craisins
- Plastic cups
- Water
- Toothpicks
- School book
- Plastic knife
- plates

Instructions:

1. Students break into table groups of 4-5 students per mentor
2. Students are asked to investigate the two different types of cranberries on their table – how are they similar? How are they different?
3. Mentors will ask the students which cranberry they think will float – the fresh or the craisin? Why? Hold a vote.
4. Students fill plastic cups with water and drop in first the fresh, and then the dehydrated, cranberry.
5. What happened? Why? Discuss with the children the fact that fresh cranberries are filled with air. Take this time to

cut one open to explore the inside. Explain where cranberries grow and how they are harvested.

6. Why didn't the craisins float? Explain that it is dehydrated and what this means. Cut open the craisin – how does it look different from the fresh cranberry?
7. Students now have a challenge! Use fresh cranberries to build a structure that is strong enough to hold the weight of one of their books!

   Talking Points: How can we determine what sinks vs. what floats? Would craisins work to build a strong enough structure? How well did the fresh cranberries work? Also, encourage the students to give both types of cranberries a try!