

Activity: Constructing Paper Airplanes**Focus:** Essential Employability Skills/SEL (self-management), Job/Career Pathways**Grade Range:** K - 2nd**Time:** 30-40 Minutes**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Share with the students that today they will hear a story called *Jabari Tries*. They will learn about a boy named Jabari and how he wants to build a "flying machine."
2. Read *Jabari Tries* to the students *Note: if teacher approves, you can move the students to a "group" setting (carpet, reading space).
3. After finishing the story, ask a few comprehension questions to the students. Spend about 5 minutes taking responses.
 - What did Jabari do when he wanted to give up?
 - How did Jabari feel when he couldn't get his machine to work? How did he feel about his sister helping him?
 - Have you ever had a time where you couldn't get something to work or something went wrong? How did you feel? Did something or someone help you?
4. After students are finished responding, explain to students that they will become like Jabari today and have the job of creating a paper airplane. The goal is for their airplane to fly, even for just a few seconds. *Note: Your team can decide if you would rather a. Let students create/troubleshoot/fly in their individual groups or b. Come back together as a whole group and see whose plane can fly the farthest (using a predetermined measurement/distance goal). Decide this before you begin making airplanes.
5. Split students into small groups (4-5 students per group) and station at least 1 mentor with each group. Each group will need paper, coloring supplies (either from the classroom or mentor provided), and optional supplies if using.
6. Work with students to design and create their own paper airplanes. Encourage students to try things that they think will help their plane fly. Students may choose to tear or cut parts, tape materials to them, or fold in any way. *Note: some students may not have built a paper airplane before. If possible, mentors may show examples of designs on a device or model options for students.
7. Should students experience any frustration as they work, remind them of how Jabari handled those situations in the story. Prompt them to see if they can make any changes, take a calming breath, or ask for help. Allow students 15-20 minutes for their airplane design and creation; students may choose to decorate their planes by coloring and/or stickers.
8. End the activity by taking 5-10 minutes to allow students to fly their airplanes in the previously decided format (either as a whole group seeing whose can fly the farthest or in individual groups for fun/distance). *Note: this could be done outside if weather permits and teacher allows.

**SYNOPSIS**

Students will become engineers, scientists, and inventors through the construction of paper airplanes. This activity allows students to experience "trial and error" and problem solving when something does not work out.

MATERIALS

- The book *Jabari Tries*
 - Paper (any size/color, recycled or new)
 - Coloring supplies (crayons, markers, colored pencils)--can be provided by the teacher or by mentors
- *Optional: various office/school supplies (tape, paper clips, popsicle sticks, stickers, etc.)

TIPS

- Encourage students to alter or reconstruct an airplane that did not work versus throwing it away and starting over.
- Challenge students to add or take away things from their airplane to see what happens!