



#FontanaTogether

## A Candle Seesaw Balancing Act

When the days grow shorter and it gets dark early in the evening many people enjoy candlelight. Candles are also a great tool for doing science—so why not combine both and add a little light to your science? In this activity you will use candles to investigate the balancing forces of a seesaw.

### Materials:

- 2 identical birthday candles
- 2 identical glasses
- A sewing pin that is longer than the candles diameter
- Strong tape
- Aluminum foil
- Knife
- Matches

### Instructions:

1. Tape the candles together at their bases
  2. Push the sewing pin through the side of the candles exactly where the ends meet
  3. Put a piece of aluminum foil on your work area. Set two glasses next to each other in the middle of the foil
  4. Place the candles in the gap between the glasses
  5. Make sure the candles are balanced. Adjust the position of the sewing pin if necessary
  6. Light both ends
  7. Observe what happens
  8. Extinguish both flames, then shorten one side so that one candle is shorter than the other
  9. Try to balance the cut candles between the glasses
  10. Light both ends
- Let go of the candles
  - What did you notice?
  - Keep both ends burning
  - What happens over time?
  - How is the candle seesaw and a playground seesaw similar?

