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## Quick View

Students change the mass of a straw rocket to increase the rocket's range.

## Standards Addressed

### NSTA 9-12

Students develop the abilities to do scientific inquiry.

- Students design and conduct scientific investigations.
- Students formulate and revise scientific explanations and models using logic and evidence.
- Students communicate and defend a scientific argument.

### NCTM 9-12

Students understand measurement attributes of objects and the units, systems, and processes of measurement.

- Students make decisions about units and scales that are appropriate for problem situations involving measurement.

Students formulate questions that can be addressed with data collect, organize, and display relevant data.

- Students understand the meaning of measurement data and categorical data, of univariate and bivariate data, and of the term variable.

### ITEA 9-12

Students develop the abilities to do scientific inquiry.

- Students learn to evaluate final solution and communicate observation, processes, and results of the entire design process, using verbal, graphic, quantitative, virtual, and written means, in addition to three-dimensional models.

## Time Required

90-180 minutes (will vary with class size)

## Content Areas

Primary: Science

Secondary: Math; technology; language arts

## Vocabulary

- control
- hypothesis
- nose cone
- variable
- weight
- mass

# Materials

- Pitsco Straw Rocket Launcher
- Precision Straws
- Index cards
- Modeling clay
- Ruler or measuring tape
- Scissors
- Transparent tape
- Balance or scales
- Pencil
- "Mass vs. Range Data Sheet"



## Procedure

1 Locate the “Mass vs. Range Data Sheet” and write a hypothesis stating how you think variations in the rocket mass will affect the rocket’s range.

2 Construct one 15-centimeter-long straw rocket with a minimum of two fins and a maximum of five fins.

3 Add a one-gram clay nose cone to the rocket.

*The difference between weight and mass can be found in the glossary.*

4 Perform three launches at a 45-degree launch angle and a calibration mark of five. Record the ranges on the data sheet.

5 Remove the one-gram nose cone and replace it with a two-gram nose cone. Perform three launches with the same launch angle and calibration mark. Record the results.

6 Repeat the process with three-gram, four-gram, and five-gram nose cones, keeping the angle and calibration mark the same. Record all results.

7 Analyze the data generated from your tests and write a conclusion explaining how the difference in mass affects the rocket’s range. Make a recommendation concerning mass and rocket range. Support your recommendation for future rocket scientists with a graph of your experimental data.

*Conclusions should be supported by data.*



## Quick View

Change the mass of a straw rocket to increase the rocket's range.

## Materials

- Pitsco Straw Rocket Launcher
- Precision Straws
- Index cards
- Modeling clay
- Ruler or measuring tape
- Scissors
- Transparent tape
- Balance or scales
- Pencil
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- 1 Locate the “Mass vs. Range Data Sheet” and write a hypothesis stating how you think variations in the rocket mass will affect the rocket’s range.
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- 5 Remove the one-gram nose cone and replace it with a two-gram nose cone. Perform three launches with the same launch angle and calibration mark. Record the results.
- 6 Repeat the process with three-gram, four-gram, and five-gram nose cones, keeping the angle and calibration mark the same. Record all results.
- 7 Analyze the data generated from your tests and write a conclusion explaining how the difference in mass affects the rocket’s range. Make a recommendation concerning mass and rocket range. Support your recommendation for future rocket scientists with a graph of your experimental data.



# Mass vs. Range Data Sheet

**Hypothesis**

How do you think mass will affect the straw rocket? Record your hypothesis, describing how you think mass will affect the range achieved by the rocket. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Design Description**

Describe the controls of your design including all numerical values and dimensions. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Experiment Description**

Describe the controls of your experiment including all numerical values and dimensions. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Data**

Record your data in the appropriate area of the table below.

	Nose Cone Mass	Range Launch 1	Range Launch 2	Range Launch 3
Rocket 1				
Rocket 2				
Rocket 3				
Rocket 4				
Rocket 5				

**Conclusion**

What conclusion can you make about the relationship between the rocket's mass and the range achieved? How does this conclusion compare to your original hypothesis? \_\_\_\_\_

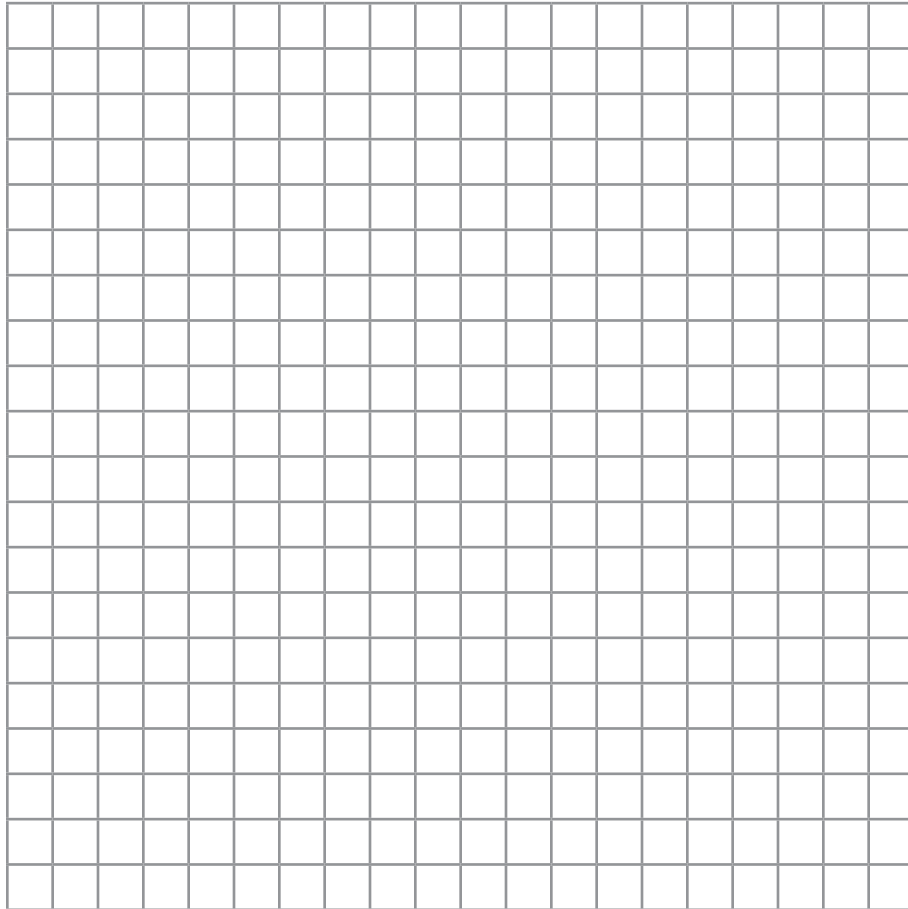
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**Graph**

Use the data on the previous page to create a graph showing the relationship between mass and distance.

**Recommendations**

What recommendations would you make to future rocket scientists concerning mass and range?

Refer to the graph above in your recommendations. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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