

BRIGHT IDEAS

Make-It-Myself Magnets

Materials:

- bar magnet
- several paper clips

Procedure:

1. Place the paper clips close together on a table.
2. Hold the bar magnet over the paper clips, picking up as many as you can. How many paper clips were you able to pick up? Are they all touching the magnet? How many paper clips are being held up without directly touching the magnet?
3. Remove all the paper clips from the bar magnet.
4. Take one paper clip and place it near the bar magnet, allowing it to hold on.
5. Carefully add one paper clip at a time, holding each new paper clip near the previously placed paper clip.
6. Build your paper clip chain as long as the magnetic force will allow.
7. Remove the bar magnet. Did the other paper clips continue to hold onto each other, or did they fall?

Explanation:

The paper clips become temporary magnets as the magnetic force from the bar magnet travels through them. When the bar magnet is removed, the magnetic force is lost and this causes the paper clips to drop off.