

Kid's KOrner

Do More, Have More — Make Your Own Toys

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— Not too many years ago, kids did not have Nintendo games, television, and GI Joes to entertain them.

But they certainly did not get bored.

The Itinerant Talesman remembers. As a boy growing up without store-bought toys, he learned to make his own toys.

"The neat thing about making your own toys is that you can easily make another one if it gets broken or lost," he said. "The memory of how to make the toy continues to live in your head."

The Itinerant Talesman does not sell toys or charge money for his ideas. He said, "I want to pass along these ideas to the kids. I do this for the youngsters because I

believe these guys should know about these things."

If you try his ideas, the Itinerant Talesman promises, "You will do more, have more, and it will not cost much money at all."

He believes the most important tool a child can have is a pocketknife.

"If you have a pocketknife, learn to use it properly and take care of it," he said.

"It breaks my heart that more youth use a handgun than a use a pocketknife in a creative way," he said.

One of the first projects the Itinerant Talesman learned to do with a pocketknife when he was a boy was to carve a "windy dittle" (see picture).

He made windy dittles in different sizes and shapes with little propellers that would spin forward and backward.

"Learn to use the right tools," he told the children. "Making mistakes is part of learning. I have lots of scars but I still have all my fingers and thumbs."

With an ordinary soda straw, you can make an oboe. Pinch one end of the straw shut. On the other end, cut from the end of the straw to the middle to form a v-cut.

Blow into the straw without letting the reeds touch your tongue or lips, because the straw must vibrate. To change the sound of the straw oboe, experiment with different lengths. The shorter the straw, the higher the notes. The longer the straw, the lower the notes.

Also, you can punch holes down the side of the straw to play different notes.

You can make your straw oboe longer by fitting straws inside of each other.

Many of the Talesman's ideas use common ordinary things found around your home.

"Making your own toys is a good way to recycle," the Talesman said.

The Talesman holds workshops at places such as the Farm Show and fairs across the state. He shows kids how to make tin can telephones and stilt walkers from large tin cans.

"It's sad that children don't have

the opportunity to discover and play with these things," he said. "But to do so, children need adults to encourage, explain, and show them how to use tools and solve problems."

The Talesman said that his toys do not pollute landfills like dead batteries from toys do.

Try some of these ideas. The more you make your own toys, the more ideas you will discover to make more.



No matter what the age, persons are intrigued by the Talesman's homemade toys.



The Talesman demonstrates how stilt walkers can be made by stringing rope through holes in discarded tin cans.



These are various designs of the windy dittles that can be carved from sticks. Rubbing the cuts along the length of the windy dittles propels the small stick on the end.



The audience experiments with the party-line telephone made from tin cans and ropes.



Sarah Murowski, 2, stacks wooden shapes, which is a homemade toy.