

## RICHMOND/DELTA BRANCH POPSICLE STICK BRIDGE CONTEST

LANSDOWNE PARK SHOPPING CENTRE  
MARCH 7, 2009

Category/Event	Event Start
Check in (for all)	12:00 pm
Elementary* (under 13 years old)	1:00 pm
Secondary (14 to 18 years old)	2:00 pm
Open and Teacher Challenge	2:30 pm

\* Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

### Prizes:

- All Participants receive a Certificate of Achievement
- The first 30 Participants registered in each of the Elementary and Secondary categories receives a book prize. Register early!
- Prizes will be awarded for First and Second Place in each Category. Prizes will include a trophy and cash award.

**Special Participation Challenge:** The Group, School or Community organization with the highest participation will receive a \$500 donation towards their library fund or other science based resource/learning activity.

**New for 2009! The Teacher Challenge!** Teachers do you think you can build a better bridge than your student? Kids do you think your teacher is the best? Students put your teacher/leader to the test and you could win a visit from Science World to your School or Community Group.

- ❖ **Winners must be present to claim prizes.**
- ❖ Category prizes to be awarded following completion of each class.

The goal of the contest is to construct the strongest bridge possible with 100 Popsicle sticks and white glue. The bridge must span a 500 mm gap with a maximum height of 150mm, and a matchbox car must be able to traverse the bridge on a construction paper deck; otherwise, the design of the bridge is left up to the competitor. Specifications are included on the following page.

**Everyone is welcome to participate.**

Participants are encouraged to start building the bridge early. Contestants may participate as individuals or as teams. For more information, please email us at [rd@apeg.bc.ca](mailto:rd@apeg.bc.ca) or visit our website at [www.apeg.bc.ca/rd/](http://www.apeg.bc.ca/rd/)

For ideas and general information about bridges, check out [www.bridgesite.com/funand.htm](http://www.bridgesite.com/funand.htm)  
Also check out <http://bridgecontest.usma.edu/> for a free bridge design program.





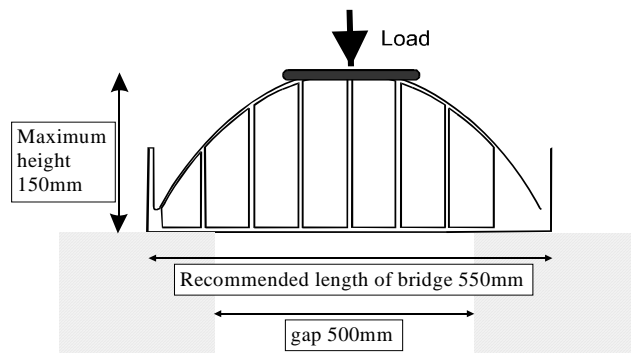
## OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES

### Pre-Registration:

1. Each bridge built by a team or an individual contestant is considered as 1 entry. All entry must be registered in advanced. Registration will be accepted on the day of the contest, however those registrants will receive their certificate of achievement in the mail.
2. **Email requested information on the registration form back to [rd@apeg.bc.ca](mailto:rd@apeg.bc.ca) by the deadline shown on the registration.**
3. Only a limited number of construction kits will be available this year at the Richmond Library in February 2009. Each kit consists of about 125 Popsicle sticks and a sheet of construction paper. Participants can also their own material from craft stores or dollar stores. Standard Popsicle sticks 11.3 cm long and 1 cm wide should be used.
4. Kits will **not** be available on the day of the contest.
5. Start early, as you will have to build the bridge in steps. It would be difficult to build it before letting previous joints dry due to the varying orientations of surfaces to be glued.

### Construction:

1. The bridge must be built with a maximum of 100 Popsicle sticks and **white all-purpose glue or white wood glue. No other glues are acceptable.** Popsicle stick used should be 11.3cm long and 1 cm wide. Popsicle sticks with different dimensions are not allowed. Popsicle sticks may be trimmed or cut to length, however grinding or shredding is not permitted.
2. A deck made from construction paper must be wide enough for a matchbox car to roll across the bridge.
3. The bridge must span a 500mm gap. We recommend that the bridge be at least 550mm long to ensure that bridge does not fall through the 500mm span when the load is applied (please see the diagram below).
4. **The bridge must not be taller than 150mm.** (new rule for this year)
5. The highest centre portion of the bridge should be designed to support a 10cm wide loading plate.
6. The bridge must bear a minimum load of a 2kg weight.
7. Bridges will be inspected at registration. Any violations of the rules outlined above will result in disqualification from the official results. The contestant(s) will still be allowed to unofficially load the bridge.



### Testing the Bridges:

1. Bridges will be weighed before being loaded. In the event of a tie, the lightest bridge wins.
2. Bridges will be loaded from the top with a loading plate and hanger connected to a jack located below the bridge. The load is applied by operating the jack to put pressure on the loading plate. The amount of load carried is measured electronically.
3. All contestants and officials within the loading area must wear protective eyewear (provided).
4. The contestant (or a parent in the elementary class) will load their own bridges. The winner is the bridge that holds the largest load prior to failure.
5. All bridges will be destroyed during testing unless the contestant decide not to continue with incremental loads before the failure occurs (to save their bridge)!

**Teams:**

1. The oldest team member will determine the team's age category.
2. **ALL** members of the team must be signed up on the registration form. Otherwise certificates may not be issued to team members who are not identified prior to the deadline.

## **BRIDGE BUILDING GUIDELINES**

- 1 **Please email the registration information by the deadline.** Include your name(s) using the spelling that you want to appear on certificate for entries. Note: Registration will be available on the day of the contest, however certificates will have to be mailed at a later date.
- 2 Give yourself plenty of time; don't wait until the last minute to build your bridge. The glue will need at least 24 hours to dry and will get stronger if allowed to dry for 2 days or more. Also, wood joints are always stronger if you clamp them tight while the glue dries - try using big paper clips to clamp the sticks together (clamps must be removed before testing).
- 3 The gap that your bridge has to span across is 500 mm. **We recommend the overall length of the structure to be at least 550 mm. The maximum height of the bridge is 150mm.**
- 4 For bridge ideas look around at real bridges. A Popsicle stick bridge is of course much smaller, but the same principles apply (remember that for a real bridge, the important part is not the deck that the cars drive on, but the steel or concrete structure that supports the deck). Look particularly at railway truss bridges, but also at bridges like the Port Mann Bridge, the Second Narrows Bridge, and the Queensborough Bridge. The Lions Gate Bridge and Alex Fraser Bridge are not good examples to follow because they rely on cables.
- 5 Your bridge needs to have a solid, stiff shape in all 3 dimensions. Engineers call this "maximizing the moment of inertia" of your structure. For example, take a Popsicle stick on its flat side and have it overhang from the edge of a table. Then, apply a bit of force with your fingers at the loose end and notice the deflection of the stick. Now, try the same thing; but, this time place the stick on its edge and try to bend the stick now. Notice how the stick is much stiffer and stronger when on its edge?
- 6 A bunch of sticks glued together flat, like a raft, has very little strength and will sag during testing under very little load.
- 7 The strongest structural shape is the triangle. A bridge which is made of a series of triangles will be very strong.
- 8 A bridge that is symmetrical is less likely to twist when loaded and hence will probably carry more load.
- 9 Bridges which are built too tall will have a high moment of inertia (which increases stiffness and strength - a good thing); however, they may become unstable under a load (a bad thing). This may cause your bridge to twist or topple to one side and...well, you can guess. If you aren't sure if your bridge will be stable, test it yourself - span it across two tables set about 500 mm apart, and press down on the top of the bridge in the middle of the span. How stiff does it feel? Does it want to twist sideways and fall over?
- 10 Research the Internet and your local library for excellent bridge reference information to help you design your bridge.
- 11 **In past years winning bridges at this competition held over 300 kg (660 pounds). The record for a bridge with only 100 sticks is 321.9 kg (710 pounds)!**

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## REGISTRATION FORM

<b>TEAM/BRIDGE NAME</b>		
<b>CATEGORY</b> (CIRCLE 1)	<b>ELEMENTARY SECONDARY OPEN TEACHER</b>	
<b>TEAM MEMBER</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
<b>SCHOOL OR GROUP</b>		
<b>TEACHER/SUPERVISOR'S NAME</b>		<b>N/A</b>

Please ensure names are provided as they should appear on certificates of achievement. Please print clearly. Please indicate your school or group affiliation as this is important for the Participation Challenge.

Please fax or e-mail this form to [rd@apeg.bc.ca](mailto:rd@apeg.bc.ca) or 604-738-1107 Attention: Philip Parker. Early Registration Deadline is March 5, 2009.