

Year Four Education Week Challenge

The Year Four students read the fairy-tale *The Gingerbread Man*. They revised the story by changing the ending in order to save the Gingerbread Man from being eaten by the fox. In the new version, the Gingerbread Man decided to build a bridge from materials found nearby.

The challenge was to build a bridge to span the river that could withstand the weight of the Gingerbread Man and his car. The bridge had to be 30cm in length and wide enough to accommodate the car. The students were only allowed to use up to 1m of masking tape, up to 30 paddle pop sticks or up to 20 straws. They were able to use as much paper as they liked but were not allowed to tape the sticks or straws side by side. See diagram below.

Students used a template to plan and design their bridge before creating it. They tested the strength of their bridge by increasing the amount of weight in the car to see how much weight the bridge could withstand before it showed signs of deterioration. In their teams they discussed how they could improve their bridge to have a more solid foundation.

