

# SUMMERTIME SNOWPLOWS

An activity to do after reading *Katy and the Big Snow* by Virginia Lee Burton

## Description

A snow storm in the summer?! It's true, a blizzard of your own making is coming to Chicago. Experiment and test your own recipe for fake snow and experience the challenges that snowplows face in this activity inspired by *Katy and the Big Snow* by Virginia Lee Burton.

## Audience

3–6 years, with adult supervision

## Time

60 minutes

## Materials

- White plastic tablecloth
- Tape
- Marker
- Baking soda (1 lb)  
Fake snow recipe can be altered depending on how much baking soda is on hand
- Shaving cream (1 can)
- Large container for mixing
- Toy car, or your own hands!

## Guiding questions

- Why is it important for Highway Departments, like the Highway Department of Geopolis, to keep roads cleared in the wintertime?
- What is a map? What does it look like? Why do we use maps?

## Instructions

- 1 Find a table or open, flat space to be your worksite. Place a white plastic tablecloth or other type of protective covering that you can draw on over your worksite, and secure it with tape to keep it from sliding or moving.
- 2 Take a moment to brainstorm an imaginary city. How big is this city? Are the streets curvy or straight? Are there big open areas, or small areas? Where do people live? Think of some of the important city services from *Katy and the Big Snow*. Which ones will you include? And don't forget, give your town a name!
- 3 Using a marker, draw out a map of the city you brainstormed onto your plastic sheet. Make sure you label your streets and the different buildings you imagined during your brainstorm.
- 4 Next, in a large plastic container, mix together the baking soda and can of shaving cream, slowly adding the shaving cream until your fake snow reaches the desired consistency.
- 5 With adult supervision, participants should knead the baking soda and shaving cream together until they completely combine. If you want, feel free to add an essential oil, like peppermint, to make your snow have a more "wintery" scent.

- 6 Once the mixture has fully combined, sprinkle your snow across your map until you cannot see any parts of the map you drew.
- 7 Now, it's time to save the city! Plan and make decisions about how you will clear paths so that the most important city services can get through. How will firefighters get to people's homes? How will the mail get delivered? Use a toy car, a toy snowplow or your own hands to carve out paths and make sure the city stays safe during the storm.

## Share

We'd love to see your work! Share your creation with the Chicago Architecture Center on Facebook or Instagram, using the hashtag #ChiArchitecture

## Take it a step further!

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