Magnetic or Not? Hunt

KIDS HANDS-ON | RUN AT 9:40 | 30 MIN + 10 MIN SECOND CUT

The point

Magnets do not grab "metal." They grab **iron and steel** — and the kids corner that secret themselves.

Materials

- One magnet per child (horseshoe, bar, or large disc)
- Test basket: steel nail · paper clips · aluminum can · copper pennies · **pre-tested non-magnetic** spoon · brass key · wooden block · plastic brick · glass marble · cloth scrap · paper
- Worksheet FRONT + pencils

Steps

1. **Predict first, in pencil** — every object, before any magnet is touched. No changing later.
2. Hand out magnets; **test everything**; mark what really happened.
3. Let the surprises land: can, penny, spoon — metal, **ignored**. The plain nail **leaps**.
4. **Tally** both columns on the sheet.
5. Circle up: **"what do all the grabbed things have in common?"**
6. **Second cut:** re-sort the NO pile — *not metal at all* vs. *metal but not iron*.

> *Say: "The magnet is not a metal-lover. It's an IRON-lover. If the magnet grabs it, there's iron hiding inside."*

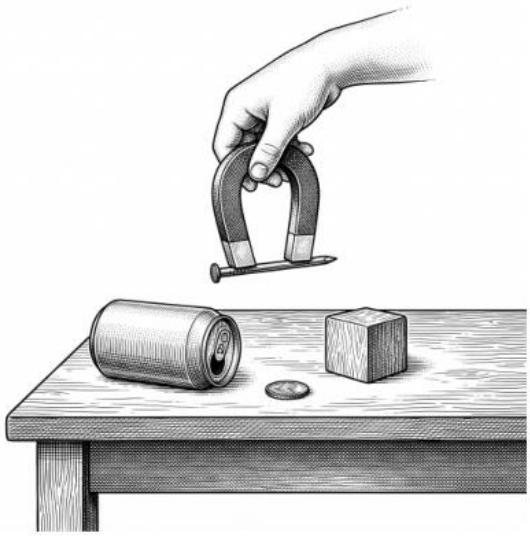


Fig. 1 — the nail leaps; the can and penny never move

TEACHER PREP — THE DAY BEFORE

Pre-test the spoon: if it sticks to a magnet, swap the brass key in and retire the spoon. Assemble the basket exactly as listed — nothing extra.

SAFETY

Magnets never touch electronics — screens, phones, watches, cards. State the rule before handing out magnets. Small neodymium discs are a **swallow hazard**: teacher hands them out, counts them back.

What to watch for

- The gasp at the ignored aluminum can — "but it's metal!"
- A child saying "iron" or "steel" before you do

EXPECTED RESULT

Wood, plastic, glass, cloth, paper — ignored. Aluminum, copper, brass — **also ignored**. Only the iron/steel things attract, every time: **the magnet detects iron**, not metal.