

# HUMAN TABLE TRICK

★ GRADES 6-8 ★ SCIENCE SKILLS: MAKING HYPOTHESES/PROBLEM SOLVING ★

## What you need:

- Four friends
- Four chairs

## What to do:

1. Call a group of four students to the front of the classroom as volunteers.
2. Set up four chairs in a square. The chairs need to be close enough that a person can lie backwards and have his or her shoulders rest on another chair.
3. Have four students sit sideways in the chairs. The students need to have their feet on the ground and their backs facing one of the other students.
4. Each student needs to lie backwards, resting their shoulders on the legs of the person behind them.
5. One by one, remove the chairs from under each student.
6. Amazingly, the students will remain in their reclined position, despite lacking the support of the chairs.
7. Before your students collapse, replace the chairs and let them sit up. Ta-da!

## How does it work?

That's incredible! Your students create a table that is practically sturdy enough to eat off of... but how does it work? When you remove the chairs from under your students, the expectation is for them to crumble to the floor in a giggling mass. Instead, they remain stable (even if they're still giggling). The secret to this trick is a system of balanced forces. Even though gravity is pulling your students down, each one is supported by the legs of the person behind them. With each person being supported, the only question is when your students' legs give out.

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