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Notes to the Future

Persistence of Vision

The tubes:

Buy two+ poster-packing tubes from a mailing store, for example the UPS store. Cut the tubes in half so the experiment works better and the vision is more clear. Wrap the tubes with bright wrapping paper, or with wrapping paper with pictures suitable for the younger students. You can also add ribbons hanging off the sides so when the children move the tubes back and forth the ribbons move around. In one end of the tube's cap, cut a slit one quarter inch wide and make it as tall as it can be made without making the cap too weak. Try it out yourself to make sure the pictures can be seen with ease. If it is too difficult, increase the dimensions of the slit.

The exhibit:

Then, print out or draw several pictures for the children to look at. Make them large and colorful. Even glue them onto colored construction paper to make them even more appealing. They should be age appropriate and something that gets children excited. We ended up making the exhibit into a game. We flipped over all the pictures and asked the kids to pick one, not knowing what it was. We then showed them how to look through to tube and try to guess what the picture was.

The kids loved trying to guess the pictures correctly before their friends.

The presentation:

Hold the tubes in your hands and wave kids over with the tubes to get them interested. Be sure to

smile and greet them. Don't do anything to frighten the kids and be very welcoming. Show the kids how to look through the tube and move it left to right before you give it to them. Many kids got confused and were shaking it the wrong way. If you show them first while explaining it to them, it is easier for the kids to understand. Also explain to them what you read in the worksheet that was handed out to you about the similarity between the experiment and movie clips or television images. The children and parents love to know why this exhibit is relative to everyday life.