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## ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A TOILET? ACTIVITY GUIDE

### LISTEN:

<https://tinkercast.com/podcasts/are-you-smarter-than-a-toilet/>

### EXPERIMENT: THE ABSORBENCY EXPERIMENT

In [this episode](#), Mindy, Guy Raz and Dennis visit the Bathroom Showcase where they learn all about the latest in new toilet technology!

Have you ever wondered which toilet paper has the best absorbency? Absorbency refers to a materials ability to soak up or take in liquids. This simple toilet paper absorbency experiment will help you answer this burning question once and for all.

### MATERIALS:

- 1 roll no-name brand toilet paper
- 1 roll name brand toilet paper (e.g. Charmin)
- 2 jars
- water
- rubber bands
- pennies

### WOW-TO:

1. Tear off a few squares of each brand and set aside.
2. Cover the top of your jars with a few squares and use a rubber band to hold the toilet paper in place.
3. Once both jars are set up, pour some water through the top of each jar (through the toilet paper on top).
4. Gently drop one penny at a time on top of each jar. DO this over and over until the toilet paper breaks.
5. What did you observe? Which paper lasted longer before tearing from the weight of the pennies?

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## ACTIVITY: DIY BIODEGRADABLE SEED STARTER POTS

In [this episode](#), Mindy and Guy Raz investigate the Who, What, When, Where, Why, How, and Wow in the World of SMART TOILETS.

Looking for a fun way to start seedlings? Well than look no further than all those empty toilet paper rolls in the recycling bin! Did you know that they are biodegradable, which makes them perfect to use for seed starter pots. Once the seedlings grow a little, you can go ahead and plant the whole shebang in your planter or garden, seed pot and all.

### MATERIALS:

- empty toilet paper rolls
- scissors
- potting soil
- assorted seeds
- water
- a marker for labeling

### WOW-TO:

1. Gather your materials (if possible set up for this activity outside).
2. Cut the toilet paper tubes in half.
3. Fold the bottom of each piece of tube in two different ways (horizontally and vertically). You should have four fold lines all the way around and it should look like a square after being folded.
4. Cut along each of the four folds, going about an inch in with your scissor on each fold.
5. Fold the resulting four flaps inward so that they overlap. This makes a sturdy bottom for your starter pots. Make as many pots as you like.
6. Fill each starter pot about 2/3 of the way up with fresh soil.
7. Add a few seeds to each pot and cover with a bit more soil.
8. If using a variety of different seeds, at this point you may want to label each pot to indicate the contents.
9. Sprinkle each starter pot with water and they are ready to go.

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### WOWING ME NOW:

While listening to [this episode](#), what made you say, "Wow!"?  
Was it the fact that your poop contains clues to the state of your health?  
Maybe it was something else? Draw a picture of what is wowing you now.

### D.I.WOW: DESIGN YOUR OWN SMART TECHNOLOGY

In [this episode](#), Mindy and Guy Raz get up close and personal with the latest and greatest in smart toilet technology. What wow-worthy SMART invention can you come up with? Please describe and/or draw your invention below.

My wow-worthy invention is : \_\_\_\_\_ .

What is it used for? What is it made from? What does it look like?

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## READ: ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A TOILET? BOOKLIST

What questions came up for you while listening to [this episode](#)? Let your curiosity lead you to a local library or bookstore to explore more about toilets.

[Everyone Poops](#), by Taro Gomi (0-6). A factual classic detailing the byproduct of animal and human digestion. Nonfiction.

[How to Potty Train Your Porcupine](#), by Tom Toro (4-6). Two children can only keep their new pet if it's housetrained, so they set out to potty train the porcupine. Fiction.

[Toilet: How It Works](#), by David Macaulay (4-8). Follow the waste after you flush as it leaves the bathroom and makes its way to a water treatment plant. Nonfiction.

[Toilet Roll Activity Book: Over 30 Wonderful Things to Create](#), by Lauren Farnsworth and John Bigwood (4-8). A no-waste solution to everyone's favorite hot commode-related commodity. Nonfiction.

[Poop Fountain!: The Qwikipick Papers](#), by Tom Angleberger (6-10). Three friends visit a sewage plant before the "poop fountain" closes, the start of a series of unusual and hilarious adventures together. Fiction.

[Death by Toilet Paper](#), by Donna Gephart (8+). Ben enters contests, including one for a toilet paper slogan, to win money to support his widowed mom. Fiction.