

Your brain pounds with anticipation as your hands tremble down to lift the small, seemingly insignificant object. Only you know the time it has taken to construct it out of scraps of cardboard, foam, and paper. The long hours that you took slaving away, snipping and sanding to meet the requirements, are worth it to you now. As you gently dab the last drop of glue onto your glorious piece of work, a smile slowly spreads across your face. You gaze down at your treasure, lifting it gently as you place it onto the magnetic track. Nervously, you adjust your project's sail before switching on the fan, which you hope will send your vehicle zooming swiftly away.

Here at my school, St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, we have a class called Project Lead the Way (PLTW) where we use science and math to build different contraptions such as Rube Goldbergs and Air Racers. Above I described the construction of our Maglev or magnetic levitation vehicle

With a partner, we did blueprinting, construction, and troubleshooting. After weeks of frustration assembling the troublesome parts of the vehicle, the day had finally come to test the model Maglev. Grinning, I remembered all the time it had taken to correctly size down the cardboard base. The moment I finally glued it into place was like a prayer answered by God. As we both stepped to the front of the class, my partner set the Maglev steadily onto the track. I crossed my fingers, hoping it would zoom away. But as I glanced down at our contraption, my heart sank. The Maglev hardly moved.

Though our project didn't travel as far as I hoped, I still had fun constructing it. I love PLTW. The class really gets you to think and use your problem-solving skills

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