

Follow the pull

Fridge Magnets

Name _____

Date _____



Little Wonderer noticed a round magnet on the fridge. It stayed in place without a hand holding it. A magnet is an object that can pull certain metals toward it. Little brought the magnifier closer. "What makes it stick?" Big Wonderer stood beside Little, ready to look for clues.



Big lifted the magnet, then brought it close to the door. Little felt a tug before it touched. The magnet and the steel in this fridge door pulled toward each other. That pull helped it stick, or stay in place. A paper drawing stayed between them, even though the paper itself was not magnetic.



Would the same magnet stick everywhere? Big held up a wood board over a tray. The magnet began to slide, moving down the smooth surface. It did not stick to the plastic lid, paper, or cloth either. Shiny aluminum foil did not hold it. "Metal is not one kind of stuff," Little noticed.

magnet	an object that can pull on certain metals
stick	stay in place against a surface
pull	a force that draws something closer
metal	a kind of material, such as iron, steel, aluminum, or copper
fridge	a machine that keeps food cool
slide	move along a surface

Follow the pull

Fridge Magnets

Name _____

Date _____



Big set a steel paperclip on the tray, then moved the magnet nearer. Little watched the paperclip tip toward it across a small gap. Closer made the pull stronger. Farther away made it weaker. They moved slowly and checked the gap with a ruler. The distance that worked depended on this magnet and this paperclip.



Big brought out a second magnet. One way round, the magnets pulled together with a little snap. Big turned one around. Now their facing ends pushed apart. Little tried to bring them closer and felt the push. The same two magnets could pull or push, depending on how their ends faced.



Little drew the fridge, the wood board, and the paperclip in a notebook. "Some things stick. Some slide. And a pull can cross a gap!" Big nodded. Little left room for one more question: "What sticks, what slides off, and how far can the pull reach?"

1. Why can the magnet hold paper on the fridge but not stick to paper by itself?
2. How did the wood and foil tests help Little change a guess?
3. What evidence showed that the pull was stronger close by?

Your turn

Write one command sentence for the magnet test.

Example: Hold the magnet near the fridge, then slowly pull it away and notice when it lets go.
