



Nuclear Mousetraps

Introduction

There is an incredible amount of energy stored in atoms. In this activity, students will set off a series of mousetraps and golf balls, a visual analogy for the split atoms and neutrons in a nuclear fission reaction. Students will see how a single trigger can set a whole system in motion.

Students will explore kinetic energy transfer, the storage of mechanical energy, nuclear fission and mass-energy equivalence. The students will also discuss the similarities and differences between the mousetrap model and an actual nuclear fission reaction.