

The 5th Grade Iditarod Sleds

By Chloe C

The fifth grade Iditarod Project involved us fifth graders making sleds that should be able to drag us and carry a certain amount of weight. This project was the start of our Iditarod transdisciplinary unit, and our teachers thought this was a perfect way to involve design and crafting. The class was divided into groups that our teachers chose that would be our “team.” We were supposed to work together and used recycled materials to make the best sled possible. We were also provided with a flat piece of thin wood board to help build the sled.

We started out by planning our sled shape and model. We sketched out the ideas and listed our materials. My team included Jenny, James, Evan and me. After our teams finished drafting and sketching, we moved on to the actual building on the sled.

Our team took the wood board and cut the skis from it. Most of the teams did so too, because the board was flat and thick enough. James and Evan cut out the shapes and smoothed the edges while Jenny and I worked on the sled. Jenny and I took a big cardboard box and waterproofed the outside with cut plastic files. We hot glued everything in place, then added the leftover wood board to the bottom of the sled.

The other teams had different concepts than we did, because they added sides to the flat bare wood on top of the skis, which were supported by long wood beams. There was one team that had permission to use Mr. O’Connor’s snowboard as well.

After we attached everything to the sled, we cut plastic bags and waterproofed the inside of our sled. We took masking tape and duct tape and taped them to the sides of our box. It wasn’t attractive, and we nicknamed it the Recycling Bin. We also drilled holes to create a place for the ropes to drag the sled.

We finished the sled with hours worth of taping, nailing, and hot-gluing. When we were all done, we took the sleds out to the field. We all tested them to see if they would hold and pull fifty kilograms.

The process was tedious: we had to cut the board, nail the wood pieces, hot glue materials, and spend lots of time in our sled. However, we all had fun and all the hard work was worth it.