

## Prediction Game

Did you hear? The world was supposed to end already -- on December 21, 2012. That silly and ultimately false end-of-the-world date was based on interpretations of Mayan prophecies, or predictions. Nobody even knows if that's what the Maya really believed! Teach this important and often comical historical lesson with a prediction game that teaches youngsters about the fallibility of word-of-mouth talk.

### What You Need:

- 2 plastic or paper cups
- Bamboo skewer
- Sewing needle
- Heavy string
- 2 bandanas



### What You Do:

1. Get the kids to help you make a traditional cup and string telephone. First poke a hole in the bottom center of each cup.
2. Have one of the kids pull the string through the hole
3. Tie the string into a knot so that it can't slip through the hole again.
4. Make sure everyone knows how to use a cup phone. It won't work if they don't make sure the string is pulled tight. Put one child on each end of the phone and have them practice. How quietly can they speak and still be heard?
5. It's time to pass a message. Tell the group that they'll be making predictions about the future. It's okay if they don't *really* know anything about the future -- most of the people making predictions never do!
6. Have the first child very quietly whisper his prediction into the cup phone. Make sure there is one child on the other end of the phone to receive the message. The string must be pulled tightly, or the message won't work.
7. Now the second child is ready to deliver the message to someone new. Put a child who hasn't heard the message on the other end of the phone line.
8. Keep passing the message in this manner until every child has heard it.
9. Let the last child say the prediction out loud. How close was that final prediction to the first one?

In the grand and hilarious tradition of classic "telephone games," it's doubtful the message was properly transmitted. Keep sending predictions around and see how close the children can get to successfully passing a message around.