Spear a Potato

Would you think an ordinary drinking straw could pierce a potato without destroying itself?

**What to do:** Soak the potato in water for about thirty minutes before trying this experiment. Then, with one fast strong push, thrust the straw straight down into the potato.

**What happens:** The straw pierces the potato without buckling or bending.

**Why:** Inertia is the tendency of objects to continue whatever they are doing. An object at rest (the potato) tends to remain at rest while an object that is moving (the straw) tends to keep moving in the same direction.

Straws that grow in fields have been driven into—and through—planks of wooden barns and houses when propelled by tornado-force winds.

**YOU NEED**
- raw baking potato
- paper drinking straw