Talking String

**What to do:** Thread the string through the holes of the button and knot the ends together. Center the button. Loop the string on each side of the button on your index fingers. Swing the button around a number of times, either toward you or away from you, but always in the same direction. When the string is "wound up," separate your hands, pulling the string taut. Then bring your hands together, releasing it. Alternate pulling and releasing until the string unwinds.

**What happens:** The button spins very fast until it twists in the opposite direction. If you spin it fast enough, you hear a whirring sound.

**Why:** The law of inertia is at work again: A body in motion tends to continue in motion. The sound comes from the vibration of the air around the string.

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One of the oldest traditional toys in South Africa is the spinning button or whirling toy better known as a “woer-woer.” However, it seems as if this simple little toy has not only been used to keep kids entertained in South Africa, but all over the world for many, many centuries, so it can be seen as a traditional toy in many countries.

Simple whirling toys were mentioned in English literature as early as 1686.