Anyone who has seen a three-year-old scold a doll in a disturbingly accurate imitation of Mommy or Daddy knows that toys can stimulate the minds of youngsters as surely as sports can help to develop their bodies. Kites become space shuttles, whistles become marching bands, and sandboxes are transformed into highway networks. But toys are not just for children. Turning a shriveled apple into a Victorian matriarch or building a fast, maneuverable box kite from sticks and paper is a challenge no matter what your age.

**Apple-Head Doll**

Use a firm apple, such as a not-quite-ripe Delicious, to make an Appalachian apple-head doll. For the head, peel a whole apple; for hands, use two slices from another apple. Dip fruit into lemon juice as soon as it is peeled to keep it from turning brown while you work.

1. Use hobby knife or sharp paring knife to carve eyes, nose, ears, and mouth in whole peeled apple. After carving, dip apple into lemon juice, insert thin stick through center, and tie string to stick. Hang apple in a warm, dry, draft-free place until it is dry and shriveled (about four weeks).

2. Carve the apple slices into mitten shapes for hands. Insert toothpicks at wrists, tie string to toothpicks, and dip in lemon juice. Allow to dry four days, then cut slits in each mitt to make fingers. Hang hands with head to finish drying. Make extras, so you can select the best.

3. For the body bend 24-in.-long wire in half and set 12-in. wire across it for arms. Wrap masking tape, adhesive tape, or strips of cloth around wires. Insert wire through head, and tape toothpick ends of hands to arm wires. Dress the doll in clothing made from scraps of fabric.