PLAYING WITH FIRE
Bet you can burn a handkerchief without hurting it!

THE SETUP
First, check with an adult before you do this and perform it over the kitchen sink.
Take a small handkerchief or, even better, use a three-inch square of clean, old rag. Soak it in a mixture of four tablespoonfuls of rubbing alcohol and four tablespoonfuls of water. Hold the wet cloth over the sink with tongs. Light the bottom of the cloth with a match. Be prepared for a substantial flame that will last a few minutes. When it’s finished burning, your cloth will be undamaged. It won’t even be singed.

INSIDER INFORMATION
The secret is in the mixture of alcohol and water. There is enough alcohol for a flame but enough water to wet the cloth. The heat from the flame must cause the water to evaporate before it can burn the cloth. There is too much water in the mixture for this to happen.