A REALLY BIG SUCKER
Suck through an extremely long straw.

THE SETUP
Find out how big a sucker you are. Can you drink through a one foot straw? A two footer? A five footer? If you’re good, you may have to stand on a chair!

You will need:
• Plastic straws
• Scissors
• Tape
• A beverage, preferably a dark color so you can see it through the straw

To test your pucker power, make a maxi straw by joining plastic straws together. Because it is important that you get an airtight seal, make two half-inch slits in the ends to be joined. Mesh the straws to that they overlap. Then tape the joint securely.

Start testing your lung power with a three-piece straw. Put the straw into your beverage and suck away. If you get a few good swallows, add a straw. Keep adding straws until you reach your limit.

INSIDER INFORMATION
Vicki’s last straw was number six. Kathy was not as big a sucker.

You suck a liquid up a straw by lowering the air pressure in your mouth. You aren’t pulling up the liquid, it is being pushed up the straw by the greater pressure of the atmosphere pushing down on the liquid outside the straw. There’s a limit to the height water can rise. If there were a perfect vacuum above a column of water, that column would rise about thirty feet. You, however, are not a great vacuum pump. You can make only a partial vacuum in your mouth. In order to suck liquid through a three-foot straw, you must lower the atmospheric pressure in your mouth by one tenth. A six - foot straw means you’ve lowered the pressure to four-fifths of an atmosphere. Six feet is probably close to the maximum pressure reduction the human mouth and lungs can make.