

All About Laundry!

Washing machines are a pretty new invention. The first fully electric washing machine was invented in the early 1900s, but not until after World War II (1945) did the modern washer become common in homes.

Many people in early Arizona used to wash their clothes in rivers and hang them to dry on bushes. Here's some information about three inventions that helped to make laundry easier.



The Washboard –

The first patent on a washboard with ribbed metal was issued in New York in 1833. Before that people used river rocks, ribbed boards or ribbed paddles to rub clothing.

The Wringer –

Before clothes dryers, the wringer helped to get excess water out of clothing. Small wringers for household use appeared in the late 1800s. Before that, most wringers were large and used in laundry businesses.



The Clothespin –

Prior to formal clothes pins, people would hold their clothes in place using sticks. One piece clothespins were produced by the 1700s. The two piece clothespin with a spring mechanism was invented in 1853.

Learn about your History

1. Ask your grandparents when they first got a washing machine.
2. Ask your grandparents about their first clothes dryer.
3. Do you know anyone who hangs their clothes to dry outside?

Clothespin Craft Activity

This activity teaches children about how people in the United States used to do laundry through the creation of a dragonfly using a clothespin as the base.

Materials

- 1 clothespin
- Paint or food coloring
- Scrap of construction paper or patterned scrapbook paper
- Sequins, buttons, feathers or other materials for decoration
- 2 googly eyes (if wanted)
- Craft glue
- Open work space



Steps to make your dragonfly



1. Paint your clothespin whichever color you choose. For a large number of clothespins you may also use food coloring as a dye. Follow directions from the food coloring maker for egg dying and leave the clothespins in the dye for 10 hours.

2. Fold a 3 inch scrap of paper in half



3. Cut a “mitten” shape in the paper. Use the folded edge as the narrowest part of the shape.

4. Unfold your mitten (now they’re wings)

5. Glue the wings onto the upper portion of the clothespin



6. Use your creativity and whatever you have to decorate your dragonfly. Some examples of things you can use include sequins, buttons, markers, pom-poms and feathers.



7. Add googly eyes if you wish.

8. Lastly, write the year or your name on the bottom of the dragonfly.

