

Kids: Lingokids. **Speaker:** Billy, Cowy, watch this.

Kelly: Okay.

Speaker: Here comes Mr. Mighty car right down the basement stairs. That was so cool.

Speaker: Billy did not like that. He says you crashed a special thing.

Speaker: It's just a toy, Billy.

Speaker: Billy disagrees. He says it is not a toy.

Speaker: Then what is it?

Speaker: It's a work of engineering genius.

Speaker: What? Genius?

Kelly: What does that mean?

Speaker: Lingokids listeners, is it a toy car or a work of engineering genius? What is engineering? Let's find out. Welcome to Storytime by Lingokids, where we discover fascinating facts about the world around us and the fun of play learning. Today, we will consider some of the items in our everyday lives. Who thinks of them? Who makes them? It all starts with seeing a problem, asking questions, and trying out ideas. Here we go.

Speaker: What is engineering genius?

Speaker: Yes, Billy. Engineering is making something that solves a problem, and a genius is someone who's very smart. Yes, Billy, like you. A person who practices engineering is called an engineer.

Kelly: Engineer.

Speaker: You got it. Engineer.

Speaker: Engineers make things and solve problems?

Speaker: Yes.

Kelly: That sounds like fun.

Speaker: What kind of things do engineers make?

Speaker: Engineers make a lot of different kinds of things.

Speaker: Like a toy car to help me have fun?

Speaker: Well, yes.

Speaker: Do engineers make all the best things? Did an engineer make [gasps] ice cream?

Speaker: No. An engineer did not make ice cream. We can thank cooks for that. An engineer inventor did make something we use with ice cream.

Speaker: They did?

Speaker: Yes, the ice cream scoop. It was invented by a clever person named Alfred L. Cralle.

Kids: Wow.

Speaker: He was trying to solve a problem when he thought of the ice cream scoop.

Kelly: What was his problem?

Speaker: Ice cream always got stuck to the spoon.

Speaker: Oh.

Speaker: True, Billy, engineers also make machines.

Speaker: Machines? Like this washing machine in the basement?

Speaker: Yes.

Speaker: Does a washing machine solve a problem?

Kelly: Dirty clothes.

Speaker: Oh. A washing machine solves the problem of dirty clothes.

Kelly: A blender?

Speaker: Yes. Engineers also make blenders so people can have smoothies. Engineers make some wonderful things.

Lisa: Hi, everyone. Are you talking about engineers?

Speaker: Hi, Lisa. Yes, we are.

Lisa: Because I know exactly what engineers do, they make bridges, big, beautiful bridges over water.

Speaker: A bridge isn't a machine.

Speaker: Engineers don't just make machines. They make many other things too. Let's think about bridges. Lingokids listeners, can you remember any times you have crossed a bridge?

Speaker: I remember a bridge I got to walk over. It had a big river underneath.

Speaker: That's right. A lot of bridges have rivers underneath them. What problem do you think a bridge solves?

Lisa: I know. The problem is how to get across the water.

Speaker: Yes, and a bridge is a great solution.

Lisa: Thank you, engineers.

Speaker: How do they do it? How do the engineers know what to think of?

Speaker: Engineers practice some things when they're solving a problem. They ask questions and then try out an idea. Then they work to make it even better.

Lisa: Ask questions, try out an idea, then try to make it better. Sounds fun.

Speaker: Yes, it is fun. Guess what? Anyone can be an engineer.

Kelly: Really?

Speaker: Yes. Let's be engineers right now. How about if everyone thinks of a problem, then we'll engineer solutions?

Kids: Yes.

Speaker: First, everyone think of a problem, then think of a solution to try.

Lisa: I know. My problem is I want to hold hot chocolate while also jumping up and down, and I don't want it to spill.

Speaker: What will you engineer?

Lisa: A sippy cup for hot drinks. Yes.

Speaker: Great idea.

Kelly: I'm going to engineer paintbrushes for cows, but cows don't have hands.

Speaker: That's interesting, Kelly. How will the cows hold the paintbrushes?

Kelly: With their mouths.

Speaker: Oh, you're going to design paintbrushes, so cows can paint with their mouths.

Kelly: Yes. Cool. Wow.

Speaker: Billy wants to make a voice changer for birds. He says he will now show us how it works.

Kelly: That's so fun.

Speaker: It is. It reminds me of someone we spoke to on our podcast Growing Up. He is a wonderful inventor and engineer named Alex Deans. Alex started inventing things when he was nine years old. By 13, he invented something called the iAid, to help blind people navigate. Let's listen to a sneak peek of what Alex shared.

Alex: When I was nine years old, I started in science fair in my local town in Windsor, Canada. The first thing I did was I took starch from potatoes. I extracted from the potatoes, and I made a new type of plastic to hold plastic bags. That was my first big type of invention that I did. Then from there I started creating other new things.

Lisa: Oh, I am definitely going to listen to that.

Speaker: Engineering is exciting.

Kelly: Yes. I didn't know engineers made big things and little things. They make bridges, but also cups, and paintbrushes, and all new kinds of plastic.

Speaker: Yes, Billy, and toy cars.

Speaker: Mr. Mighty Car, you are a work of engineering genius. [laughter]

Speaker: Lingokids listeners, thank you for exploring engineering with us. We learned some big, small, and silly things that engineers create. Next time you're trying to solve a problem, think like an engineer. Ask questions, try out an idea, and then work to make it even better. Good luck. If you are ready for interactive play learning time, explore our Lingokids App. It offers fun and educational songs and games to help kids ages two and older, learn and develop important skills, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. That's the power of play learning. See you in our next episode.

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