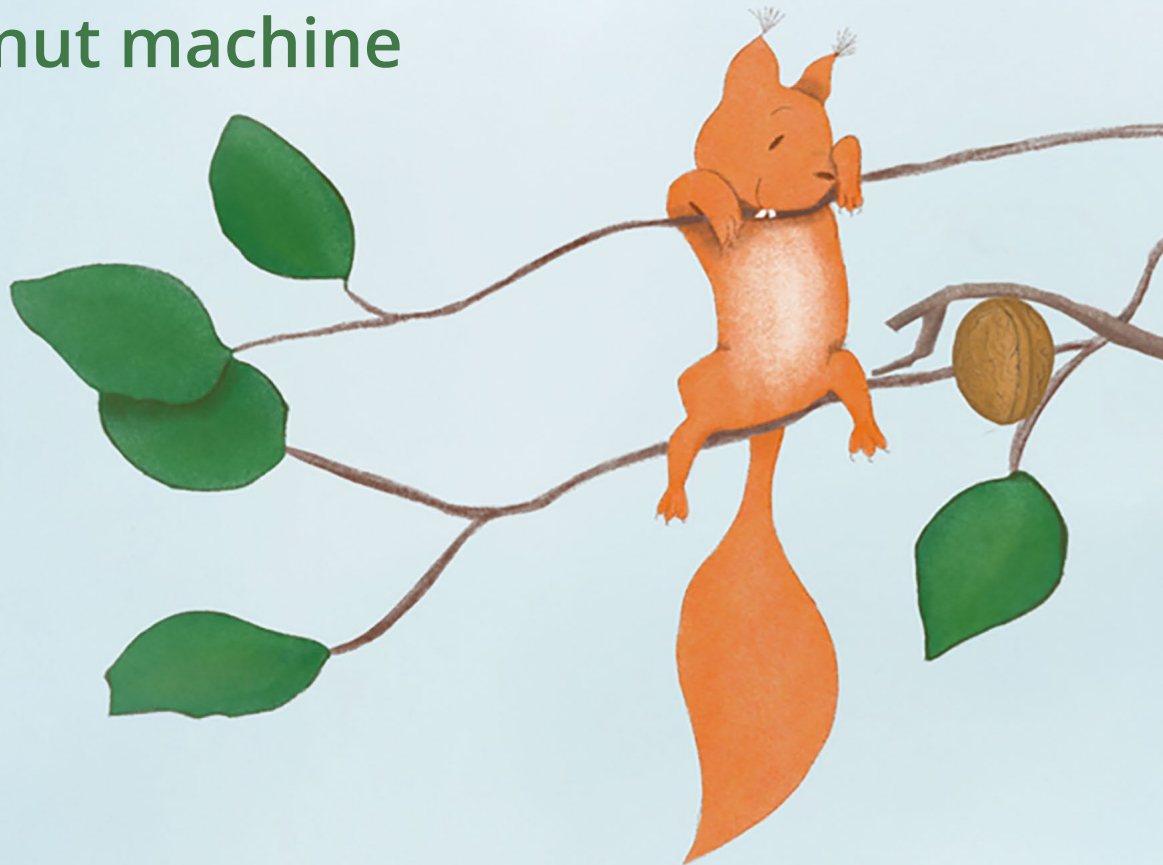


# Toni

and the  
nut machine



Franziska Lethmaier \* Nina Gutmann

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# Toni and the nut machine

Franziska Lethmaier \* Nina Gutmann

# This is Toni.

The young squirrel lives  
with its mother in a tree  
in the technology forest.



Toni likes to play with other squirrel children, and most of all with

Kim and  
Chrissi.

They love to romp and play together in the technology forest and continually discover

new  
places.



One day,

Toni, Kim and Chrissi are exploring the technology forest once again. Suddenly, they discover a big old walnut tree.

The squirrel children are overjoyed to see how many nuts this tree has dropped. They carry as many nuts as they can back home.




# Kim and Chrissi

crack one nut after the other.  
They are so happy that they  
get to have this super snack.

# Toni

also tries to crack the nuts...





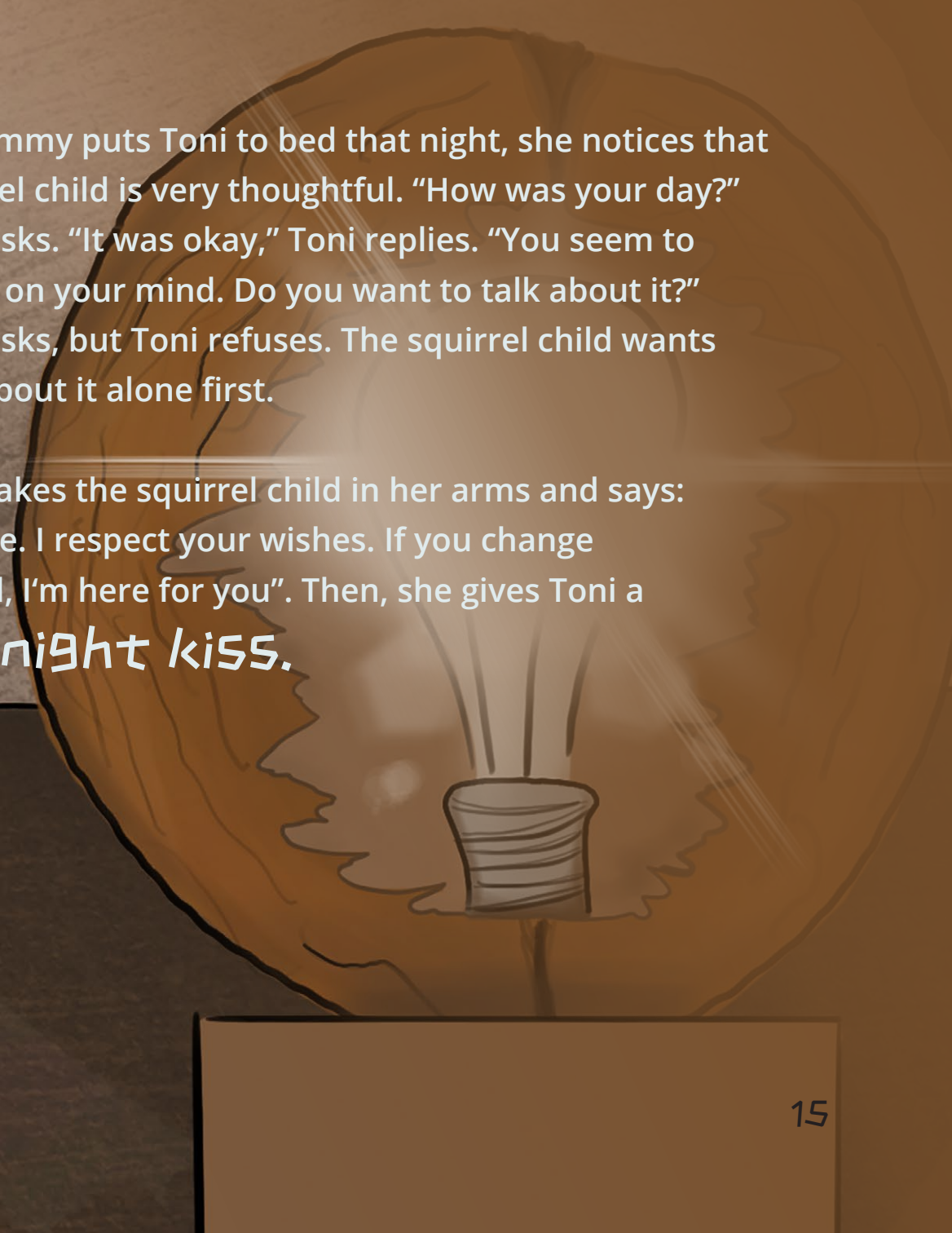
...but because Toni has one tooth that is longer than the other, Toni can't crack the nuts so well or as quickly as the other squirrel children. As time goes by, it becomes dark, and the children need to go

*to bed.*



When Mummy puts Toni to bed that night, she notices that the squirrel child is very thoughtful. "How was your day?" Mummy asks. "It was okay," Toni replies. "You seem to have a lot on your mind. Do you want to talk about it?" Mummy asks, but Toni refuses. The squirrel child wants to think about it alone first.

Mummy takes the squirrel child in her arms and says: "That's fine. I respect your wishes. If you change your mind, I'm here for you". Then, she gives Toni a *good night kiss.*

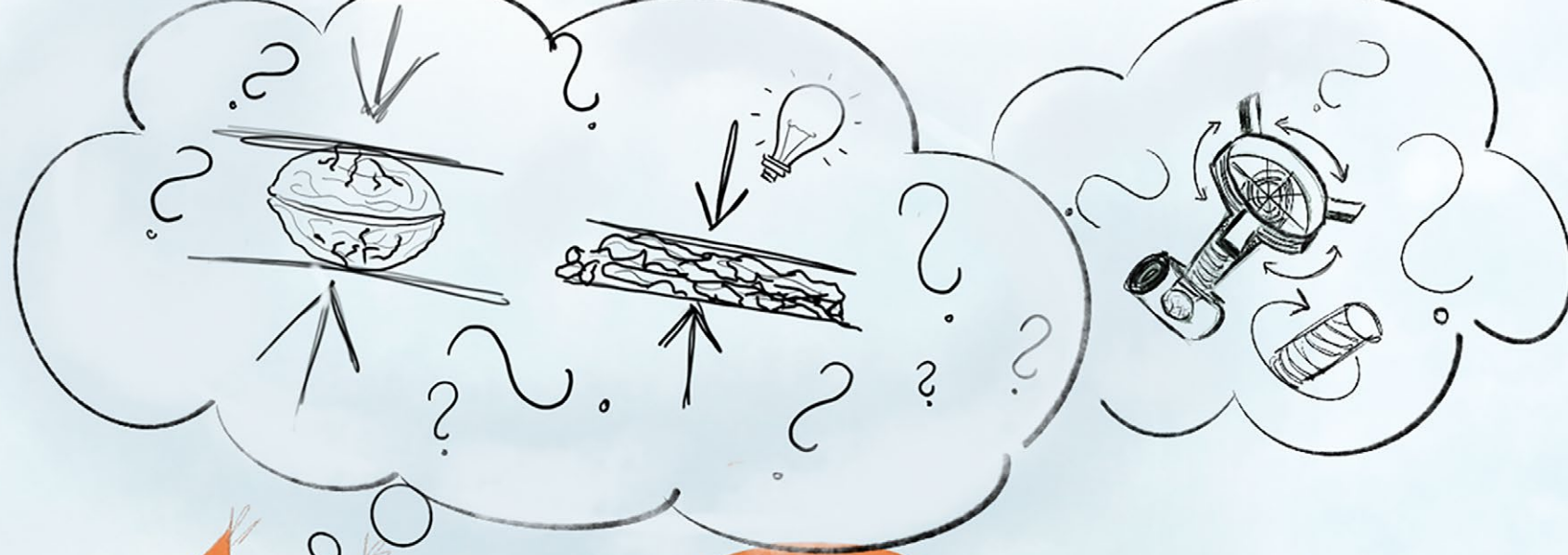




Toni lies awake for a while longer,  
thinking about the problem of  
cracking nuts. "Why do only I have  
to have such crooked teeth?"

Toni  
asks.





The whole next day **Toni** thinks and thinks about the crooked teeth and what could be done to still be good at cracking nuts.

Then Toni suddenly has **an idea.**

Toni *immediately* sets to work and tries to lift up a large, heavy stone. Suddenly Chrissi and Kim come around the corner. The two ask “Where were you today, Toni? We missed you while playing!”

The squirrel child explains the problem of only being able to crack nuts very slowly and the feeling of sadness. Toni tells Kim and Chrissi the idea involving the large stone.





Together, they lift up the heavy stone and then push it over to fall on a nut. "Did it work?" asks Chrissi. "I think so," says Kim. But when they check, the nut is totally squashed. They need a new solution.

The squirrel children think hard and quickly come up with a **new Idea.**



*The three* visit the carpentry workshop of Toni's mummy. As a master carpenter, Mummy will surely be able to help them. Toni tells Mummy about the nut-cracking problem and explained it was due to the crooked teeth. "Do the others make fun of you because of your teeth?" asks Mummy. "No. No one said anything, but it still makes me sad" Toni answers.



The squirrel child also immediately tells Mummy about the idea to solve the problem.

**Toni** would like to build a nut machine with Mummy's help, which can crack many nuts all at once. Chrissi and Kim also want to help Toni. Together, they draw a plan for the nut machine.

And together, they spend a whole week sawing, screwing and gluing the *nut machine*, until it's finally ready.



They are very proud of their work  
and invite some of the other squirrel  
children from the technology forest,  
to try it out and

*to celebrate  
with a nut  
festival.*





Everyone comes and brings something to eat.  
There are nut buns, nut croissants, nut-bread sticks  
and much more.

So **Toni's** ingenuity made it possible  
to crack many nuts, although Toni's crooked teeth  
made this difficult at first.





# Toni

and the  
nut machine



## Toni and the nut machine

Focus areas:  
Gender  
Diversity  
Science  
Technology

### Accompanying text

#### Help and support

Day after day, we learn how to deal with a wide variety of situations. And from time to time, we go through different phases that demand a lot from us. But we do not always find a solution to every problem on our own. Asking for help and support, accepting it, or just helping each other and being there for each other is just as important in the children's everyday lives as eating and drinking. Just like all other skills and key areas, it is also important to recognise and promote these.

## Diversity

“No two things are exactly alike!”, and that’s a good thing. No two children live, learn, or develop the same way. That is why it is important to provide individual support and encouragement in the children’s everyday lives. Just like Toni and Toni’s friends, children also need more or less support at times, depending on the situation or due to various circumstances. Whether this support comes from their peers, the other children in the group, the family members, or caregivers makes little difference here. What is important is that one may, should and can ask for help and accept support at any time.

“If I need help,  
you help me!

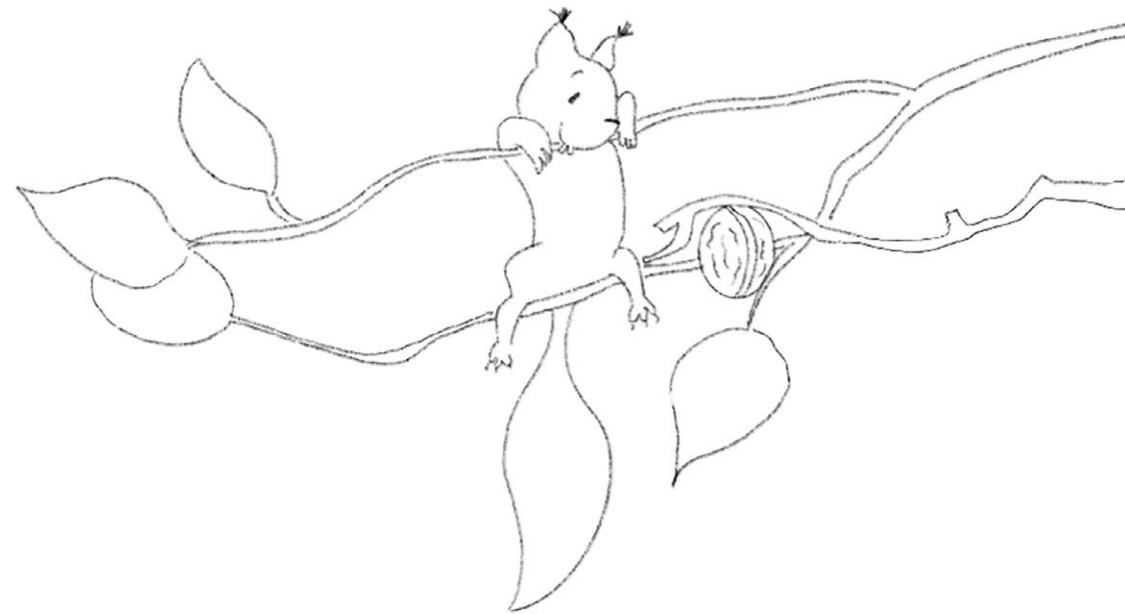
If you ever need me,  
I’ll help you”

## Gender neutrality

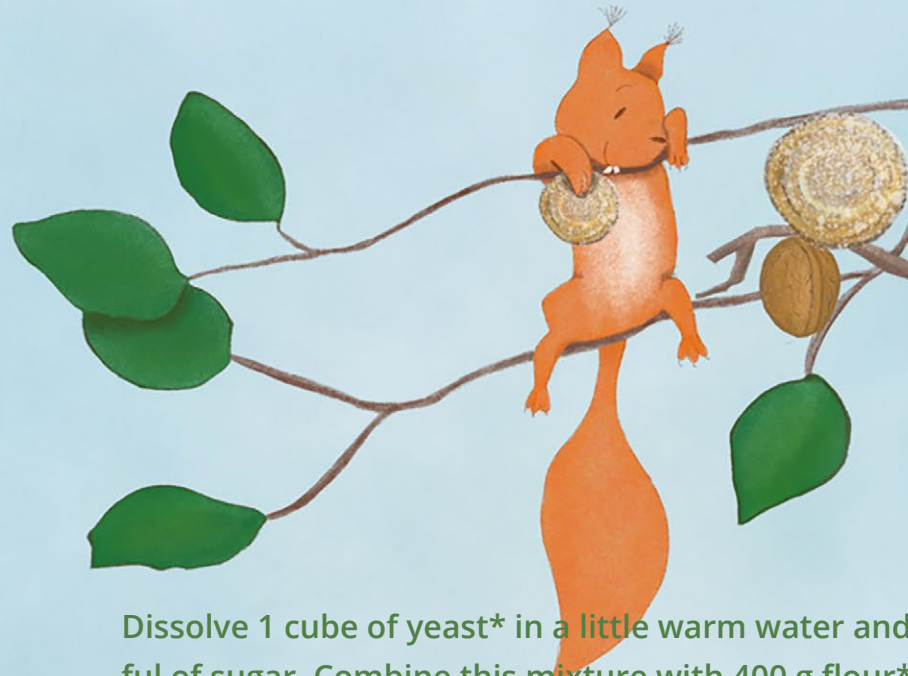
Tolerance, sincerity and respect for fellow human beings are values that have always formed the foundation of childcare offered at TU Graz. These values have now also been incorporated in the form of picture books. Typical boy/typical girl? There is no such thing. Children should be allowed to develop freely, independent of gender classifications that often create barriers. Moreover, more than the two gender identities of male and female exist. The different stories deal with topics related to diversity (gender is just one of many diversity dimensions) but also to science and technology in a child-friendly way, presenting children with a playful approach to these topics.

Toni and the other characters are deliberately not assigned a specific gender in the story. No personal pronouns are used for Toni (for example, instead of he or she, we use Toni or the squirrel) and neither are any possessive pronouns (we use Toni’s forest instead of his or her forest). The children can, if they wish, assign Toni a gender or choose not to. The focus is placed on Toni’s personality, character traits, wishes and needs – because that is what really matters.

# Picture to colour



# Recipe for nut buns



Dissolve 1 cube of yeast\* in a little warm water and add 1 spoonful of sugar. Combine this mixture with 400 g flour\*\*, a pinch of salt, 375 ml water and 3 tbsp sunflower oil and beat the dough by hand with a wooden spoon until it forms bubbles and is smooth. Then cover the dough and let it rise in a warm place for 1 hour.



Now, add another 200 g of flour to the dough and knead it until it no longer sticks to the bowl (keep folding it toward you and then pressing it away from you with the heel of your hand) and can be formed into a ball. Cover and allow to rise for another hour.

In the meantime, prepare the filling: mix 200 g ground walnuts with 8 tbsp maple syrup, 3 tbsp brown sugar, ½ tsp cinnamon and 3 tbsp sunflower oil until the mixture is thoroughly blended.

Roll out the dough in the form of a rectangle. Spread the filling on top, roll up the dough and cut the roll into approx. 16 large pieces (buns). Place these in a circle in an oiled tart tin.

Bake the nut buns in a preheated oven on the middle shelf at 180° Celsius (top and bottom heat) for 30 minutes.

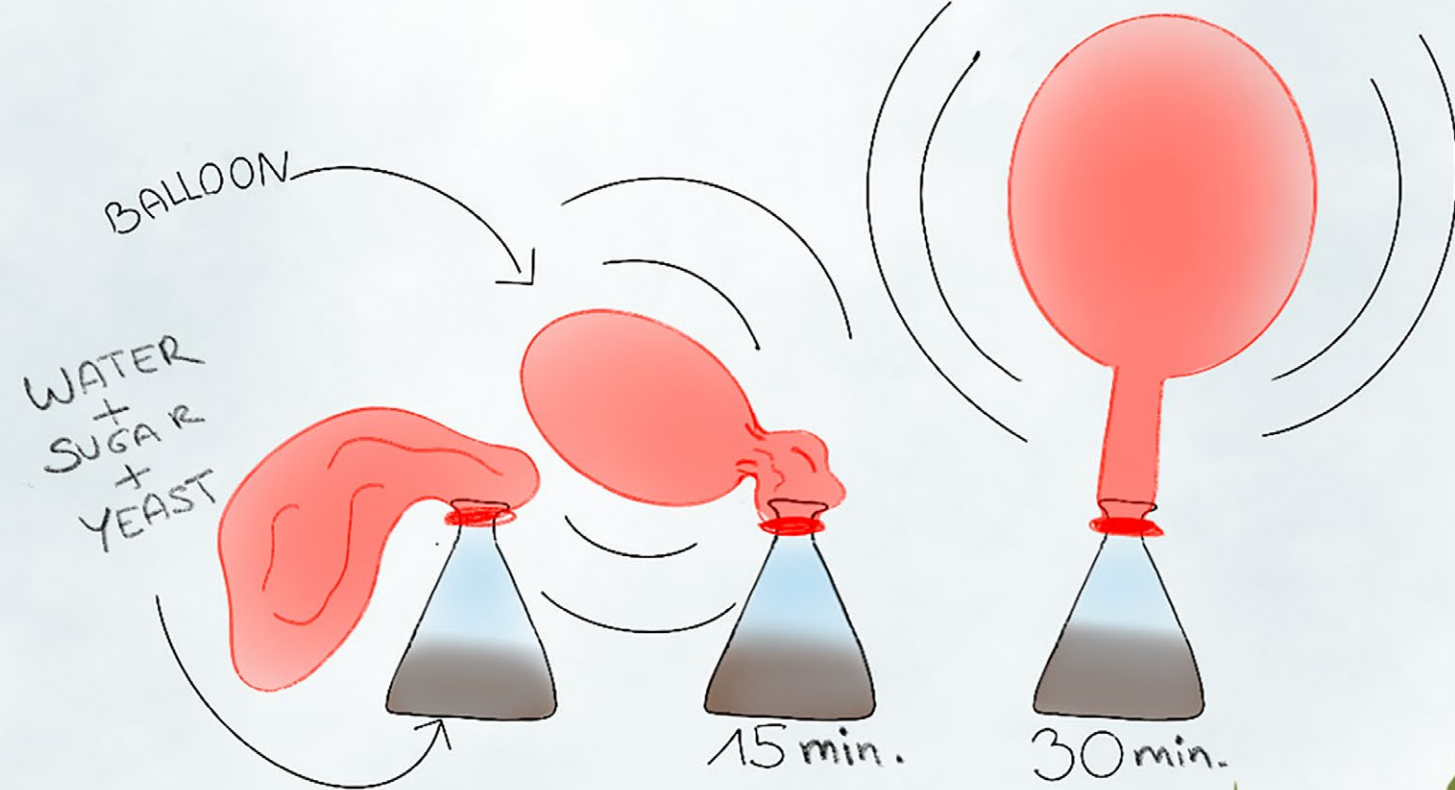


\*Fresh yeast = 42 g, dry yeast = 14 g.  
\*\* Spelt (in German: Dinkel)  
type 630 or wheat (in German:  
Weizen) type 550

# What is yeast?



Yeast is a fungus that feeds on sugar. However, yeast is a very small fungus! Therefore, you cannot see it with the naked eye when picking mushrooms in the forest. Under the microscope, however, you can see the individual yeast cells.



## What is really happening?

The yeast digests the sugar. This produces a gas that fills the balloon!





# Toni and the nut machine

“I can’t do it! - There’s no such thing!”, with the right friends,  
good ideas and enough support, simply anything is possible.

Toni knows that now too.

We join Toni the squirrel and Toni’s friends on a journey that takes them from  
running into problem to finding a solution that ultimately helps everyone.

You will find a short accompanying text in the appendix that provides  
those reading aloud, and especially parents and educators,  
with background information and further suggestions.

This book is one of a series of 6 children’s books published by the Verlag der Technischen Universität Graz.  
The series focuses in particular on those values that form the foundation of the educational  
care of children at Graz University of Technology: tolerance, sincerity and respect for fellow  
human beings, animals, diversity, nature as well as technology and natural sciences.

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