

ACTIVITY 8.16**Which Takes Longer?**

Students work in pairs. Two activities are specified and the students predict which of the two activities will take longer. One student times the other doing each of two activities and then the roles are reversed. A few tasks that might be compared are:

- Stacking 10 blocks one at a time and then removing them one at a time.
- Printing your name.
- Walking slowly around a designated path.
- Making a bar of 15 Unifix cubes.
- Copying a simple drawing such as a house.

The water timer shown in Figure 8.14 has the advantage of being continuous—there are no units to count. A tennis ball suspended on a long string from the ceiling makes a slowly swinging pendulum that will keep the counts manageable. If a 10-second sand timer is available, a unit can consist of emptying the timer and then turning it over for the next unit.

Be sure students understand how to do each of the two tasks they are comparing. Because only one student does each task, there is no competition or racing.

From Van de Walle, J. A. & Lovin, L.H. (2006). *Teaching Student-Centered Mathematics Grades K – 3*. Toronto: Pearson Education, Inc. (p. 243).