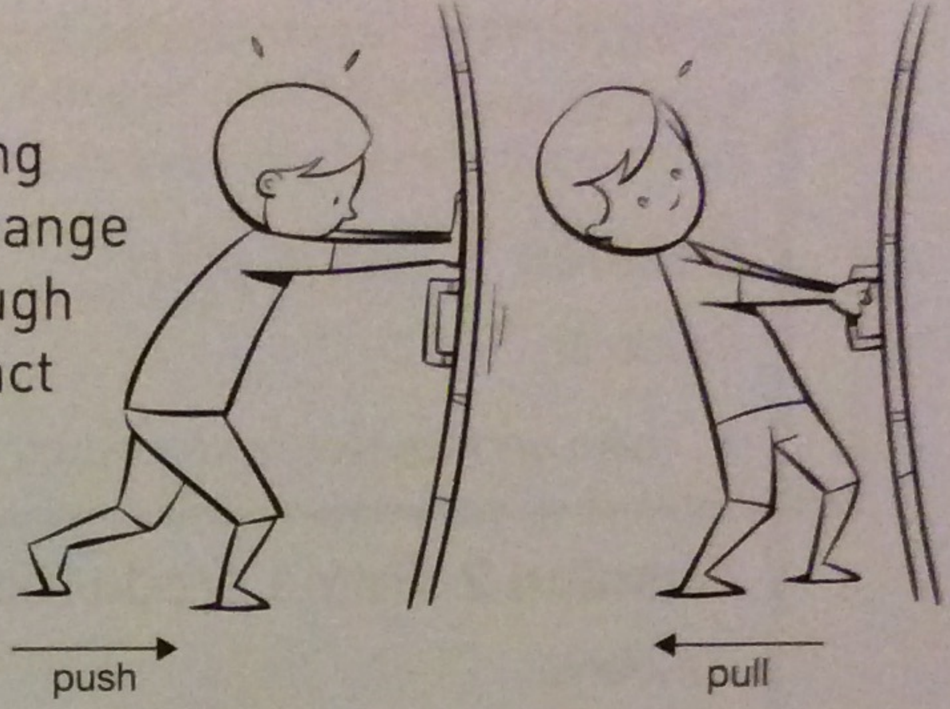
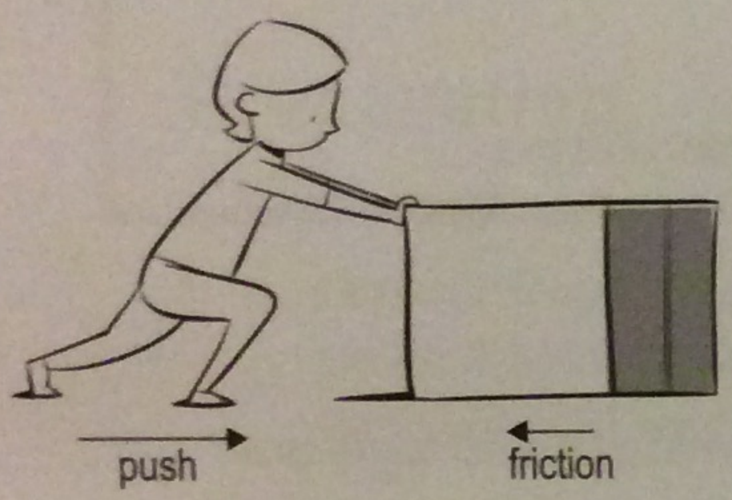
Forces all around

Forces include pushes, pulls, friction, gravity and magnetic force. A force can cause an object to start moving, stop moving or change its speed or direction.

Pushes and pulls are actions you can use to make things move, such as pulling a door open or pushing a door shut. The force of a push or pull can also change the shape of an object, such as pushing on playdough or pulling on chewing gum. You need to be in contact with the object to push or pull it.

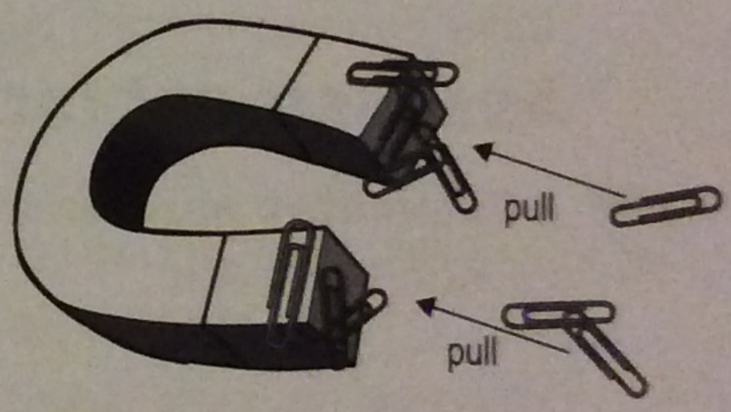




Friction is a force that happens between two surfaces when they come together and 'grip'. Two rough surfaces, like sport shoes on a brick path, have more grip then two smooth surfaces like a cardboard box on a polished wooden floor.

Magnetism is a force that acts at a distance. This means that a magnet does not have to touch an object to attract it. Magnets also react to other magnets from a distance when they either pull towards each other (attract) or push apart (repel).

However, magnets cannot exert a force (push or pull) on an object that is too far away.



Gravity is another force that acts on things at a distance. When we drop something, it doesn't float away, we see gravity pull it down to the ground.

Both magnetism and gravity are forces that act at a distance. Though we cannot see the forces, we can see the effect they have on objects.