



Angular Momentum

Many of us have seen spinning ice skaters on Earth control their speed by moving their arms or legs in and out. This is possible due to conservation of angular momentum. Richard uses a simple demonstration to show this occurring in space. In this demonstration there is a relatively large rotational inertia around the rotation axis and a relatively small angular speed. As the masses move closer to the rotation axis, the rotational inertia decreases and the angular speed increases. This means that the angular momentum of the system is conserved.