

Learning Partners

Let's Do Science!

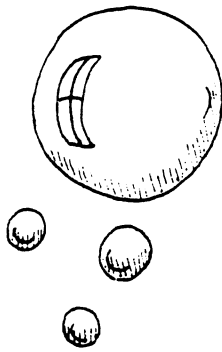


When you learn science you build on what you already know. Children need to start learning early, at home, so that they have a firm base of knowledge to build on when they get to school. As parents, what's important is that we share the knowledge we have with our children. Science is in everyday activities: cooking, washing dishes, growing plants. So, look around the house and out the windows and see that science is everywhere.

Here are some things you can do:

- Ask your children questions: How do you think the clock works? Why does a bird make a nest and what is the nest made of? How does electricity help us everyday?
- Have children look at what's happening around them and have them write down what they see.
- Have your children make predictions about the weather or how fast a plant will grow or how high a piece of paper will fly with the wind. Have your children then test to see if their hunches are correct.
- Remind your child that it may take many tries before you get an answer. Keep trying.
- Have your children start collections of shells, rocks, or bugs, so that they can see similarities and patterns.
- Have your child look at how things are different. He or she can look around the neighborhood to see the different animals and plants that live and grow there.
- Help your child look at what causes things to change. What happens when a plant doesn't have water or sunlight?

Science Activities



Bubbles

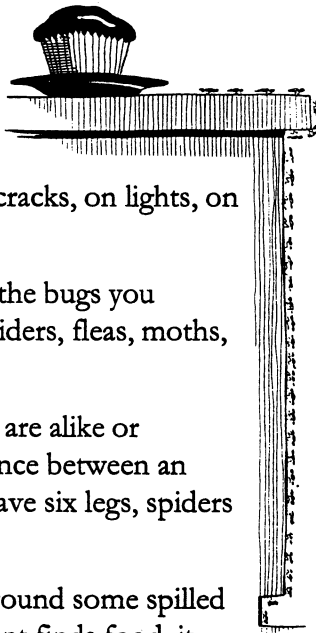
for young children

1. Mix 8 tablespoons of dishwashing liquid in 1 quart of water in a shallow pan.
2. Blow through a straw as you move it slowly across the top of the liquid.
3. When you've made a bubble, touch it gently with a wet finger. What happens? Touch another bubble with a dry finger. What happens?
4. Look at the bubbles. How many colors do you see? What do the colors remind you of?

Creepy Crawlies!

for beginning scientists

1. Search for bugs: in sidewalk cracks, on lights, on animals, or on plants.
2. Tell your child the names of the bugs you found. Did you find: ants, spiders, fleas, moths, flies, ladybugs?
3. Ask your child how the bugs are alike or different. Explain the difference between an insect and a spider (insects have six legs, spiders have eight), for example.
4. Watch ants in an anthill or around some spilled food. Explain that when an ant finds food, it runs back to the hill to "tell" the others. As it runs, it leaves a trail that other ants in the hill can smell. The ants find the food by smelling their way along the trail.



Plants and Light

for more advanced scientists

1. Cut 3 paper shapes about 2 inches large. Circles and triangles work well, but you can use other shapes, too.
2. Clip these shapes with paper clips to 3 leaves of either an indoor or an outdoor plant, being careful not to tear the leaves.
3. Keep 1 piece of paper on the leaf for 1 day, a second on for 2 days, and the third on for one week.
4. Watch to see what happens to the leaves. Do they change color? What effect does the lack of light have on them? What effect does the length of time the leaves are covered have on them?

Note: Plants use sunlight to turn carbon dioxide (in the air) and water into food.



Resources: Information was based on *Helping Your Child Learn Science*. For more information, please contact the National Library of Education, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208, telephone 1-800-424-1616.

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