



Slimy Stuff

Audience

Activity designed for ages 4 years old and up.

Goal

Students will understand the importance of slime for some animals.

Objective

- To learn about animals that use slime and in what ways.
- To have a sensory experience with slime.

Conservation Message

All animals play vital roles in their ecosystems, even the icky ones. Slimy worms are important decomposers of organic matter. Creepy spiders are a valuable food source in the food web. It is important that we value all wildlife and find ways to educate ourselves to be better conservationists. Little changes in your life, can make a huge impact on the nature world. Try turning off the light when leaving a room, use a refillable water bottle instead of a disposable plastic one and shut off the water when you are brushing your teeth!

Background Information

Many animals across the world produce slime! Hagfish are very slimy animals. They are nicknamed "slime eels" and they produce slime when they feel threatened. The slime comes out of tiny holes that run along the length of their body and is made up of long thread like fibers like spider silk. Another yucky ocean creature that produces slime are sea cucumbers. These invertebrates will discharge a sticky thread-like smile to deter their enemies. Clownfish are another slimy animal. They have a slimy mucus covering that protects them from the sting of the sea anemone that they live in. Not all slimy creatures live in the water; amphibians come with a slimy covering. Tomato frogs will ooze a white milky slime when a predator tries to eat them. The predators' mouth will be full of the white slimy substance!

Materials Needed

- 1 cup of water
- 1-2 cups cornstarch
- Mixing bowl
- Mixing spoon
- Food coloring (optional)

Length of Activity

20 minutes

Procedure

- Pour 1 cup of cornstarch into the mixing bowl and dip your hands into it.
- Slowly pour water into the cornstarch, mix it together as you pour.
- Add water until the mixture starts to thicken, tap on the slime if it feels hard when you tap on it the mixture is ready. Add more cornstarch if it gets too runny, and more water if it becomes too thick.
- If you have it available add a few drops of food coloring to make your slime extra fun!
- Dip your hands into the slime quickly and then slowly.
- Try to hold a handful of the slime in your palm.
- Try squeezing the slime in your fist or rolling it between your hands.
- Move your fingers slowly and then faster in the slime.
- Think of other movements you can do with the slime.
- When finished, be sure to wash your hands and be careful not to get the slime into your mouth or eyes.

Evaluation Questions

- How did the dry cornstarch feel in your in your hands?
- How did it feel when you dipped your hands into the slime quickly? How did it feel when you dipped them in slowly? Was there a difference?
- What happened when you tried to hold a handful of slime?
- How does the slime act when you tried to squeeze it and rolled it through your hands?
- What happened when you moved your fingers slowly and fast through the slime?

Extensions

If you have a large plastic bin or tub, make a big batch of slime. You can multiply the quantity of each ingredient by 10 or more and mix it up. Take off your shoes and socks and try standing in the slime.