

Grow Your Own Mold: Parent Instructions

This hands-on activity is another chance for your child to practice the steps of scientific inquiry: 1) observe, 2) hypothesize, 3) experiment, 4) conclude.

Materials:

- 1 slice of bread (wheat works better than white)
- 1 damp paper towel
- 1 plastic sandwich bag that can be sealed shut

Step 1: Observe

Have your child look at the floors in your house and the ground outside. What does he or she see? What colors can he or she find? What kinds of things are growing on the ground? Have your child write these observations in the the experiment log.

Step 2: Hypothesize

Explain the experiment to your child and read the Kid's Instructions page together. Ask you child what he or she thinks will happen to the bread. Have your child write down his or her answer in the experiment log.

Step 3: Experiment

1. Wipe the piece of bread on the floor
2. Place the bread in a sandwich bag
3. Place a damp paper towel in the bag with the bread
4. Seal the bag and put it somewhere dark, like a closet or cupboard, but not

the refrigerator.

5. Leave the bread for one week.

6. Look at the bread (Do not open the bag). What do you see?

Step 4: Conclude

After your child completes the experiment, ask him or her to describe what happened.

What's Happening? (Read this to you child after he or she finishes the experiment)

Mold is a type of fungus that can be found almost everywhere, but most of the time you can't see it. That's because mold spores (little pieces of mold that act kind of like seeds) are very small. When you wiped the bread in different places around your house, you picked up mold spores. The tiny mold spores grew into big, colorful mold colonies because they like to eat bread.

Molds also like dark, damp places to grow. That's why you put a damp paper towel in the bag with the bread and left the bag in the dark. After you gave the mold everything it likes: food, water, and a dark place, the mold spores were able to grow. The more mold that grew on your bread, and the more colors of mold that you find means there was lots of mold in the place where you wiped that piece of bread.

Grow Your Own Mold: Kid's Instructions

In Station 4 you learned about drugs and how some drugs can be helpful.

Antibiotics are helpful drugs. Sometimes, antibiotics like penicillin are made from mold.

In this experiment, you are going to grow your own mold. **Alert!** The mold you grow will not be safe to use like penicillin. Remember, it is not safe to use the sense of taste in a science experiment.

1) Look at the floors in your house and the ground outside. What do you see? What colors can you find? What kinds of things are growing on the ground? Write what you see and think in your experiment log.

2) Read step 3 with a parent. What do you think will happen to the bread? Write your prediction in your experiment log.

3) Now its time to experiment!

1. Wipe a piece of bread around the floor.
2. Place the bread in a plastic sandwich bag.
3. Put a damp paper towel in the bag.
4. Seal the bag and put it in a dark place.
5. Leave the bag of bread alone for one week.
6. Look at your bread. Do not open the bag! What do you see?
7. Write down what you see in your experiment log.

4) Was your prediction right? Write your answer in your experiment log.

Grow Your Own Mold Hands-On Activity Log Sheet

1) What I observed:

2) My Prediction:

3) What Happened?

4) My Conclusion: