

# CURIOSITY AT HOME

## BUBBLE BLAST



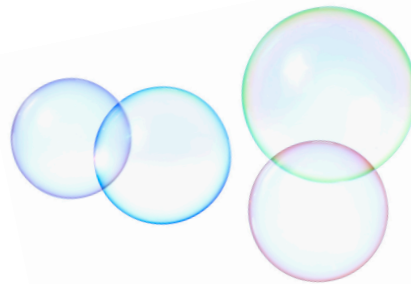
*If you blow air through a straw into a cup of water, what do you get?*

**BUBBLES.** *But do they last?*

*Chemical engineers use their understanding of chemical properties to design and improve products. Can you use the chemical properties of household products to make a better bubble?*

### MATERIALS

- 1 cup measuring cup
- 1 tbsp measuring spoon
- spoon
- water
- liquid dishwashing soap
- light corn syrup
- glycerin (available at most drugstores)
- 1 stopwatch
- 3 plastic cups
- 3 pipe cleaners
- tape and marker for labeling



### PROCEDURE

- Label each cup with 'soap only', 'glycerin' or 'corn syrup.'
- Add 1 cup water and 2 tbsp dishwashing soap to each cup and mix with a spoon.
- Stir 2 tbsp corn syrup into the cup labeled 'corn syrup.'
- Stir 2 tbsp glycerin into the cup labeled 'glycerin.'
- You now have 3 bubble-blowing solutions.
- Twist each pipe cleaner into a bubble wand with a handle and an open circle at the top.

#### Let's Blow Bubbles.

- Go outside and practice blowing bubbles and catching them on your wand.
- When you are ready, catch at least 3 bubbles of each solution and time how long it takes them to pop.
- Which solution makes the longest lasting bubble?

### EXPLORE MORE

- Cover the bubble solutions and let them sit overnight. Blow bubbles with each solution the next day. Do the bubbles pop any faster or slower than before?
- Make bubble wands of different shapes and sizes.
- Make three-dimensional bubble wands using straws and/or pipe cleaners.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING

A molecule is a group of atoms bonded together. A water molecule has 2 hydrogen atoms and 1 oxygen atom, which we write as  $H_2O$ . Water molecules have surface tension, which means they stick together. Adding dishwashing soap reduces the surface tension, allowing bubbles to form. The molecules in corn syrup or glycerin bond with water, slowing down its evaporation and allowing bubbles to last longer before they burst.

*Experiment continued on next page...*



Show us how you're being curious! Share your results with us.



