

Slime Day - Introduction to Stress Management

Overview

This pre-lesson will give the UQUEST scientists a chance to engage in a fun science activity in which they will make slime. They will learn about how playing with slime can help to relax and reduce stress.

Science Objectives:

UQUEST scientists will

- understand the process of mixing ingredients together to make a new substance.

Health Message:

- Squeezing/squishing slime can help manage stress.

Materials:

- 1.5 oz glue (3 tablespoons)
- ⅛ teaspoon of baking soda (pinch)
- 1.5 teaspoons (or ½ tablespoon) of contact solution (little over if too sticky)
- 1 tablespoon of water
- Bowls
- Spoons
- Ziploc bags
- Wipes
- crayons

Preparation:

- At UM:
 - Gather correct quantities of all necessary materials
- At OYC
 - Place ingredients on each group's table

Instructions for UQUEST Guides

1. Introduction

- Introduce the scientists to the topic of stress. Let them know that we've all had times when our bodies react to stress and we can feel it.**
 - Stress is the sensation also known as "flight or fight." Our bodies' natural way of coping with being frightened or challenged is to release certain chemicals into our bloodstream that provide extra short-term energy and*

alertness. Our instincts take over and “tell” us that we are facing danger and we either need to defend ourselves (fight) or get away (flight).

- **Example:** if you found yourself face to face with a bear in the woods your brain and entire body would get into “fight or flight” mode. This means that your brain is sending a message that you either must run away as fast as you can or stand and fight. You are feeling frightened, anxious and on alert. You know you’re in danger and this response is healthy and needed to escape harm. Once you get away from the bear you can calm down.

- ii. When we fight, we confront the thing that is making us stressed
- iii. While flight means that we remove ourselves from the situation
- iv. Sometimes when this happens we do things we didn’t think we could, such as run very fast or lift something heavy. We may also notice that our hearts beating harder and faster, our hands getting sweaty and cold, or our faces feeling flushed and hot.

b. Ask for a few descriptions of what that looks and feels like.

- i. Where in your body do you typically feel stress?

c. Don’t give examples right away, but if they need a little help you can offer these ideas:

- i. heart pounds harder and faster
- ii. hands feel sweaty and cold
- iii. face flushes (gets hot and red)
- iv. “butterflies” in your stomach
- v. dry mouth

d. Then explain that when this happens the options for what a person can do to respond become very limited because instinct takes over and we lose our ability to fully use the part of our brains that makes rational decisions.

- i. Fortunately, by understanding what triggers our “fight or flight” reaction and learning skills to deal with it, we can learn to prevent some stress responses and calm ourselves down from those that do happen.

2. Activity

a. Point out ingredients on the table

- i. What do you think we can make with these ingredients?

b. Introduce slime

- i. What is slime?
- ii. What does slime remind you of?
- iii. How would you describe the texture of slime?

c. Today you’re going to be making your very own glitter slime!

d. Before that, let’s measure our current level of stress

e. Handout worksheet.

- f. Show thermometer and explain how they will color in the thermometer to show their current levels of stress.

i. *Example: If you are not stressed at all, only color the circular part. Color up to this first line if you're feeling a little bit of stress, etc.*

- g. UQUEST scientists will measure their stress after a relaxation activity with the slime they make.



- h. Begin making slime

- i. Slime Instructions

- i. *First get a bowl and a spoon to mix your slime ingredients in*
- ii. *UQUEST guides will pour 3 tablespoons of Elmer's glue into the bowl*
 - **Note: Only the UQUEST guides will be in charge of pouring the glue**
- iii. *Add ⅛ teaspoon of baking soda*
- iv. *Add 1 tablespoon of water*
- v. *Mix the ingredients thoroughly with the spoon until the water is mixed completely with the glue*
- vi. *Add the 1.5 teaspoons (or ½ tablespoon) of contact solution and mix with a spoon until the slime begins to form. Add a little more if too sticky.*
- vii. *Once the slime has some formation, use your hands to knead and stretch the slime to make it less sticky.*
- viii. *Add small amounts of contact solution (about ¼ or ½ a teaspoon) if the slime is still too sticky (be careful to not add too much or it will turn hard)*

- j. Turn off lights to show scientists that the slime glows in the dark.

- k. Clean up materials

- l. Introduce the slime as a way to help deal with stress.

i. *Squeezing the slime in your hand helps reduce tension throughout your body. It may be even more effective if you pay attention to your breath as you squeeze: breathe in as you squeeze the slime, breathe out as you relax your hand.*

- m. *We're now going to do a relaxation activity with your slime.*

- n. UQUEST guide will guide scientists through a mindfulness exercise using the script below
- i. **Note: The exercise will be done altogether as a class**

Mindfulness Script

o. Introduction

- i. *Sit down and get comfortable. Close your eyes. Try to make sure your feet, legs, hands, and arms are relaxed. Squeeze and move the slime in your hands as I talk.*
- ii. *Imagine a bucket of slime. This slime is your favorite color. It also smells really good. See yourself putting your hands in the slime. What does it feel like? Squishy? Sticky? Slippery? What does it look like? Is it glittery? Does it have anything inside of it?*
- iii. *Now, imagine that this is a special puddle of slime that can harden, and become a stiff block. When you take a deep breath in and hold it, the slime turns into the block. When you take a deep breath out and count to 4, it slowly turns back into slime. Let's practice. Take a deep breath in and hold (pause), and let the breath out 1, 2, 3, 4. Now, your slime should be a puddle.*
- iv. *Next, we are going to pretend that your body becomes the slime. We are going to focus on different parts of your body and turn them from a block into a puddle of slime.*

p. Legs and feet

- i. *First, focus on your legs and feet. Take a deep breath in and curl your toes and tense your foot. Hold your breath. Now, breathe out and let your feet and toes slowly melt into slime – 1, 2, 3, 4. Your legs are now two big, relaxed puddles of slime.*

q. Stomach

- i. *Next, tense your stomach (like you have a bellyache). Breathe in and hold. (pause). Now relax. Now breathe out – 1, 2, 3, 4. Your stomach is totally soft now. This should make it easier to take big, deep breaths.*

r. Arms and hands

- i. *Focus on your arms and hands. Take a deep breath and make a fist with both hands. Squeeze and tighten your arms so they are very stiff. (pause). Now, slowly count to 4 in your head and relax your hands. Now let them relax and let them turn into slime– 1, 2, 3, 4. Your fingers, hands, and arms are all completely relaxed.*

s. Shoulders and neck

- i. *Now focus on your shoulders and neck. Breathe in. Pull your shoulders up to your ears (like you're shrugging "I don't know") and squeeze. Now let them relax and let them turn into slime while counting to 4 in your head. (pause)*

t. Wrap up

- i. *Your whole body should be a puddle of slime right now. Think about what color you are as slime, what your body feels like. Your whole body should be sinking and spreading. All of your muscles should be relaxed.*
- ii. *Now, slowly start turning your body back to normal. On the count of 10, imagine the slime leaving your body so that your hands, feet, arms, legs, stomach, shoulders, and neck all go back to normal. They should not be as stiff as the block of slime, but not as gooey as the melted slime. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.*
- iii. *Any time you feel stressed or tense, remember that you can turn that part of your body back into slime by taking a deep breath holding it, and then slowly counting to 4 until you feel relaxed.*

u. Scientists will return to their thermometer worksheet.

v. Explain how they will color in the thermometer to show their current levels of stress, after doing the slime relaxation exercise.



w.

3. Documentation: There is nothing to document today.

4. Discussion

- a. *Now let's discuss what we did today. I will ask some questions, and if you answer, you get a sticker. Let's GO!*
 - i. **Award sticker for every question answered**
- b. *How did your stress level change before and after the slime relaxation?*
- c. *When would you want to use this relaxation exercise?*
 - i. **Have students discuss times when they can use this strategy to manage stress**
- d. **Talk about how children can learn to make choices that help them avoid negative stress, the kind that makes it so they have a hard time making decisions, the kind that feels uncomfortable and maybe even a little bit scary.**

e. Ask the scientists what kind of activities will help them deal with stress. Some examples include:

- i. *taking a walk*
- ii. *talking to a friend*
- iii. *listening to music*
- iv. *Meditation.*

Adapted from:

- Health Powered Kids. <https://healthpoweredkids.org/lessons/stress-no-body-needs-it/>
- Art it Out. <https://www.artitout.com/single-post/2020/04/29/slime-relaxation>
- The Best Ideas for Kids <https://www.thebestideasforkids.com/how-to-make-slime-with-contact-solution/>

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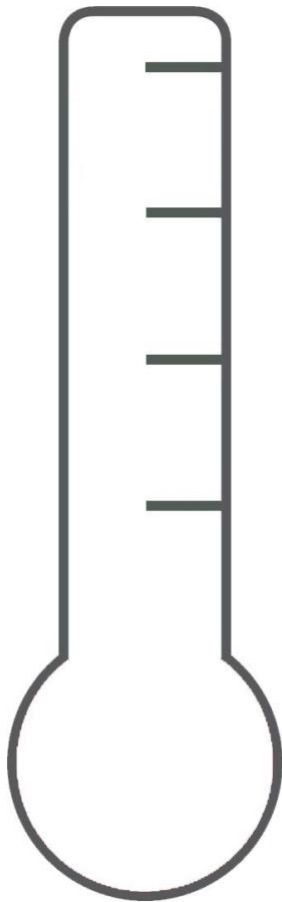
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Slime Activity

Instructions: Color the thermometers below to show your level of stress in the moment. The higher up you color in the thermometer, the more stress you are feeling.

Before Slime Relaxation



After Slime Relaxation

