

More Surface Tension Activities

Illustrated by Laurel Aiello

These activities are similar to *The Amazing Paper Boat* activity. For an explanation of surface tension, look at *The Amazing Paper Boat* activity. Each time you repeat one of the three activities below, you have to remove the soap. Empty the bowl, rinse it, and refill it with fresh water.

You Will Need

bowl
water

paper clip

powder or pepper
thread

fork

medicine dropper
liquid soap (detergent)

Are You a Good Observer?

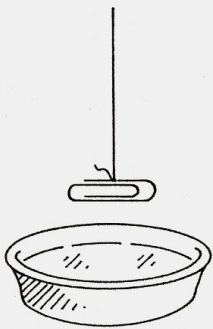
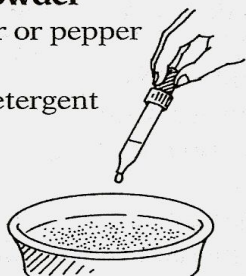
When the paper clip is floating in the first activity, look carefully at it. Observe the surface of the water that surrounds the paper clip. Can you see a dent in the water? Now go to the web site below and look at the photo of an insect called the water strider.

<http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/okwild/misc/images/waterstrider.jpg>

Observe the end of the water strider's six legs. Do you see the dents? The dents are in the "skin" that is on the surface of the water. Although we would never do this, but if soap was added to the water next to the water strider, what would happen to the insect?

Science Strands: SPS1, SPS2, SPS3, SPS4, PS1, PS3

5/10

	Floating a Paper Clip <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tie a piece of thread to one side of a paper clip. Place the knot in the center so the clip balances as shown.2. Slowly lower the clip onto the surface of the water, holding onto the thread. The clip should float. Then let go of the thread.3. While the clip is floating, put a drop of detergent on the water and watch what happens.4. Use a fork to remove the clip if it does not float. Dry the clip and try again.
Watching the Powder <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sprinkle powder or pepper onto the water.2. Add a drop of detergent and observe. 	The Moving Thread <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make a loop of thread and float it on the water.2. Place a drop of detergent in the middle of the thread and watch what happens. 