

Solid or Liquid? Gooney Science

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Topics: [Fifth Grade](#) , [Science](#)

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Did you know that you can change matter? Think about what happens when salt is added to an icy road on a cold winter day. It makes the snow and ice melt faster. What happens when you get a haircut? You look different, but the hair is still made up of the same substance as before the cut- just less of it. How about boiling an egg? Once the egg is cooked it can't be changed back to its original condition. This is called a chemical change and it can also be seen in spoiled food, burning wood or rusted metal. Also, chemical reactions happen when something is broken apart and new matter takes its place. A great way to think of this is when a candle is lit or a cold pack melts.

Now, try to make Oobleck. What, you say? Do you remember the Dr. Seuss book *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*? This recipe will allow you and your child to create this strange substance, and witness the amazingly weird oscillation between solid and liquid that occurs!

What You Need:

- 1 cup cornstarch
- 1 bowl
- 1 glass of water
- plastic container-like an old, empty yogurt tub
- food coloring (optional)
- newspaper to cover the table

Note: This recipe can be very messy, but loads of fun. Wear old clothes and cover the surface

you are working on.

1) Put a cup of cornstarch in a bowl. Slowly stir in small amounts of water until the mixture is thick like syrup. Add a few drops of food coloring, if you choose.

2) Squeeze the gooey mixture between your fingers. What happens? Can you shape it into a ball? Hold the ball on your flat palm. Watch what happens. What happens when you pour the mixture into another container?

Facts About Oobleck:

- It is a solid and liquid at the same time.
- If you make it into a ball, it loses shape when you throw it in the air.
- It can be placed in a container, but will not take on the shape of the container when removed.
- When you leave it in the sun, it loses its color, becomes hard on top and mushy on the bottom.
- It does not bounce.
- It is not edible!

Alicia Danyali, BS Elementary Education, taught primary-level students for four years at the International School of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The last four years of her teaching career, she taught at the Washington International School in Washington, D.C. She recently completed writing a series of children's picture books and is a mother of one young son