

Slime Me

Slugs, Fishes, Amphibians

What you need!

- 1/2 cup Elmer's™ White Glue
* be sure to use Elmer's™ only;
not the 'Washable' type
- Water
- 1 tbsp borax powder
- Food colouring
- Zip-lock plastic bag
- Spoon or craft stick
- Jar or large cup
- Bowl

Slime is a common thing in nature. Slugs, fishes, frogs and salamanders can all produce slime. These slimy secretions help these animals in various ways. While humans are not slimy by nature, becoming comfortable with slime can help you appreciate how important it is for some creatures. Celebrate slime!

What you do:

1. In the bowl, mix a 1/2 cup of the Elmer's glue and a 1/2 cup water.
2. Add a few drops of food colouring and mix well with a spoon or craft stick.
3. In the jar combine a tablespoon of borax powder with a 1/2 cup of water.
4. Screw on the lid and shake the mixture well. Keep adding borax until it no longer dissolves (saturated solution).
5. Slowly add about two tablespoons of the saturated borax solution to the glue and water mixture and stir quickly. Add more borax solution as needed.
6. The resulting mixture should be slimy and gooey.
7. Play with the slime, feel it in your hands, on your arms, and your face. (Caution - do not eat the slime; it's only for wearing).
8. You can save your slime for a long time by putting the ooze into a zip-lock plastic bag.



Ask yourself

- What would it be like to live your life coated in slime?
- Do your hands feel warmer or cooler? Why?
- What would be the advantages of being covered in slime?
- What might be some disadvantages?
- Some animals are coated in slime. What kind of environments do you think they live in?
- What is the purpose of the slime that animals produce?

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What did you find out?

Slime is fun to play with, but it also serves an important purpose for many animals. Human skin protects us in many ways. It is pretty tough, it doesn't puncture or tear easily and it wears well even if it is in contact with shoes or a keyboard all day long. Our skin is also very good at retaining our body's moisture; we usually don't leak.

The slime secreted by animals provides them with a means of defense, thermoregulation and hydration. These animals really depend on their slime in order to survive. The slime layer provides a cushion against things that would otherwise puncture their thin skin. Slime can also be a defense from predators because being slimy makes creature hard to catch and hold onto. Just as the slime on your hands feels cool, animals' slimy coatings help to keep them cool in hot weather. Slime is also a great barrier against moisture loss. Think of it as the ultimate moisturizer - slime keeps slugs, salamanders, and fish from drying out.

Specific Learner Expectations (SLE)

Grade 5 Topic E: Wetland Ecosystems.

SLE 5: Identify and describe adaptations that make certain plants and animals suited for life in a wetland.