

Amber experiment

OBJECTIVES

The students will simulate the creation of amber and identify the sequence of amber development and entrapment.

MATERIALS

pancake syrup, twigs, plastic bugs

nail polish with applicator brush or white glue with q-tips/toothpicks/small brushes

aluminum foil or wax paper to place the drying projects on

TEACHER PREP

(Note: This experiment should take place over several days.)

1. Photocopy one Activity Sheet per student.
2. Pour syrup into small paper cups. Have enough so that each 2-3 students can share a cup.

DAY 1: ANTICIPATORY SET

1. Pass out a twig to each student. Allow the students to dip their twigs into the syrup and see the syrup move down the branch. Ask the students to predict what would happen if a bug were to be caught in the syrup.
2. Remove the syrup and twigs. Clean up the area.

DAY 1: PROCEDURE

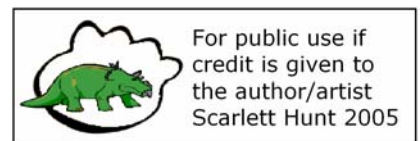
1. Explain to the students that amber is very old (and pressurized) tree sap. Sometimes bugs or other small animals are trapped in the amber when it is runny. Later when the sap hardens they are caught forever inside.
2. Give the students a new twig and a plastic bug. Ask the students to place their plastic bug on a twig. Explain the scenario: the bug happens to be sitting there when all of a sudden, sap from the tree oozes over him and he gets stuck or perhaps he accidentally steps or land in the sap.
3. Give each student a bottle of nail polish or some white glue. Pass out the applicators. Ask the students to cover the trapped animal with pretend sap . Ask them to keep going until the total animal is covered and is stuck onto the twig.
4. Place student names on or beside the twigs. Set project aside and allow them to harden.

DAY 2 and 3 and 4 (if necessary):

Repeat applications of nail polish or white glue. Do a few minutes every day for several days. (If the students go too fast, it will take much longer than necessary to dry.)

CLOSURE

1. Ask the students to complete the worksheet.

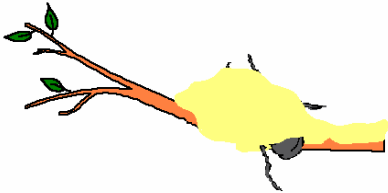


Amber

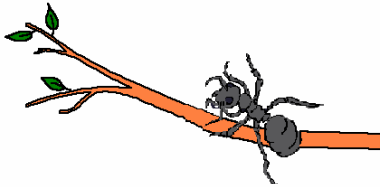
Number the following steps in order from 1 to 6:



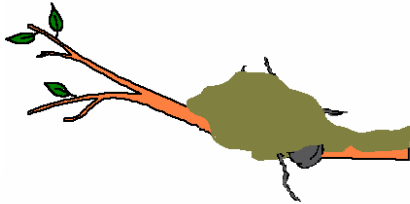
----- The soil and the tree branch
change into rock. They stay buried.



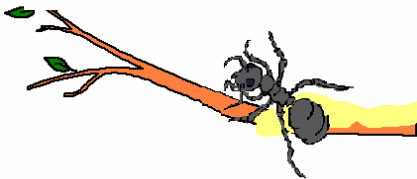
----- Tree sap flows ovetop of the ant
and covers it.



----- The ant walks onto the tree branch.



----- The tree sap hardens.



----- Tree sap gets on the ant's legs.
His legs are stuck.



----- The tree branch falls off the tree. It lands
on the ground. Soil covers it.

Amber can come in different colours. Amber is sometimes yellow, light green or a darkp red. Jewelry makers and geologists can cut the amber into different shapes. They then polish it so that it is shiny and smooth. Draw a bug in amber.

