

Whitney Water Center Learning from Home

Episode 6: What Will Absorb Water?

Introduction

Have you ever wondered why the paper towels at school do not absorb as much water as the ones you usually use at home? *Absorption* is the ability of a material to take in liquid. How much water a material can absorb is due to the amount and size of holes within the material, the more holes in a material, the more water it can hold. In most cases, the holes in material are very small and cannot be easily seen. We can determine the size of the holes by testing the absorption of different materials. The more water a material can hold, the larger the holes. If the material doesn't absorb any liquid, then it does not have any holes.

Experiment 1: Testing Different Materials

Materials

- Water
- Dropper or straw
- Small pieces of
 - Foil
 - Construction paper
 - Paper towel
 - Writing paper
- Sponge
- *Will It Absorb Water?* worksheet

Link to video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AX2Hvdc5Bc4>

What Will Absorb Water?

1. Predict which materials will absorb water. Circle those objects in **blue**.
2. Predict which materials will not absorb water. Circle those objects in **red**.
3. Drip water onto the real materials on the table.
4. Cut and paste the pictures at the bottom of the page onto the chart below to show the results of your experiment.

These materials absorb water

These materials do not absorb water



Paper



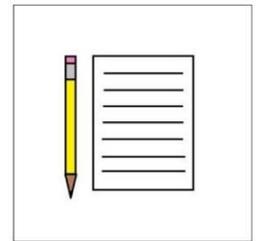
Tin Foil



Sponge



Construction
Paper



Writing
Paper