Chemical Safety — Make Slime!

Materials

Borax powder (not boric acid)
4 oz. glue (like Elmer's white or gel glue)
Food colouring
Water

Equipment

Medium-sized bowl*
Small bowl or cup
Measuring cups
Spatula*

Note: Always wash your hands before and after playing with your slime. Don't eat the slime – or let anyone else eat it. Be careful to only set your slime down on surfaces that won't absorb the food colouring you added!

Step 1: After getting your parent's permission: Read the instructions, gather your materials and wash your hands. Bowls and mixing equipment can become quite messy*, so disposable options are handy.

Step 2: Mix 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of Borax powder into 1 cup of water (250 ml), creating a *Borax solution*, and set to the side.

Step 3: Empty 4 oz. of glue into a bowl and mix in approximately 4 oz. or ½ a cup of water (~125 ml), creating a *diluted glue mixture*. You could also just refill the glue container to add the water. Put 1-2 drops of food colouring into this mixture, unless you want your slime to be colourless. (Keep your coloured slime away from surfaces that may absorb colour.)

Step 4: Slowly mix small portions of the *Borax solution* into the *diluted glue mixture*. You will be able to observe the change in consistency taking place. Your slime is polymerizing! Keep mixing! You can now pick up the slime mix and knead it with your hands. The more you play with the slime, the less sticky it will become.

Step 5: Clean up! Store your slime in a zipper-lock bag. Toss it out when it begins to look funky.

(From About.com — Chemistry)

This experiment stresses the importance of not mixing chemicals together, even if you think it might be safe or you've seen your parents do it before. In this case, two liquid solutions blended together to create an unfamiliar solid. Thankfully, for this experiment, we know this is a safe combination — but chemicals do not always mix so well! Burns, scalds, explosions, fire, poisonous gases and more can happen!

Learn Safe: Get the training! Ask your parents to explain your house and farm's chemical storage area to you, what each chemical does, what's off limits, what type of protective equipment they use and what to do in an emergency.

If you are old enough to do chores involving chemicals, ask your parents if you could complete the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) course.

Alberta Farm Safety Program — www.agriculture.alberta.ca/