

Slime & Silly Putty

Who doesn't love slime?

WHAT TO DO

Using a pipette, slowly add borax solution to Elmer's Glue in a small cup while stirring the mixture until it forms a sticky snot. Add more borax and work it with your hands to make homemade Silly Putty.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The slime that you are making is a polymer. Polymers are very long molecules built with lots of smaller repeating units. For example, polyethylene – the polymer that makes up 2 Liter Cola bottles is made up of hundreds to thousands of ethylene molecules all strung together in a line. (Ethylene is a component of natural gas!). There are lots of polymers all around you. Rubber and cornstarch are examples of natural polymers, and polyester, lycra, spandex are all examples of clothing polymers. Hard solid polymers are often called plastics. Your slime is a polymer made by using borax to cross-link or attach many liquid polymer molecules found in Elmer's Glue (called polyvinyl acetate) to form a new polymer that is so big it becomes a solid.