

# Activity Ideas for Helping Kids Stay Engaged During the School Disruption

Sources are listed in Links  
Activities attached



## Make Your Own Rock Candy

<https://www.happinesishomemade.net/rock-candy-tutorial/>

### SUPPLIES NEEDED TO MAKE ROCK CANDY:

- 6" Wooden Skewers or Candy Sticks
- Pint-Sized Wide-Mouth Mason Jars
- Food Coloring
- Clothespins
- Granulated Sugar
- Candy Flavoring, optional
- 3-Quart Saucepan
- Warm Water

## How to Make Corncob Popcorn

<https://tinkerlab.com/corncob-popcorn-experiment/>

### Supplies for Corn Cob Popcorn

- Farmer's Popcorn Cob (Amazon, pack of 3)
- Paper Bags
- Microwave

## Solar Oven

<https://kidsactivitiesblog.com/15594/solar-oven>

### MATERIALS

- Pizza box {empty}
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic wrap
- Tape
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Paper Plate
- Food to cook

## Melting Ice

<https://artfulparent.com/melting-ice-science-experiment-with-salt-liquid-watercolors/>

### MATERIALS

- Bowls or dishes (for making the ice)
- A large tray with sides
- Salt
- Liquid watercolors or food coloring

- Droppers or a spoon

#### Make a Cloud

<https://www.growingajeweledrose.com/2019/03/cloud-experiment-for-kids.html>

#### Cloud in-a-Jar Materials

- A glass jar
- Boiling water
- Ice
- Hairspray
- A jar-lid or paper plate

#### Dish Soap Silly Puddy

[https://www.smartschoolhouse.com/diy-crafts/dish-soap-silly-putty#\\_a5y\\_p=4048342](https://www.smartschoolhouse.com/diy-crafts/dish-soap-silly-putty#_a5y_p=4048342)

#### You Will Need

- 1.5 tablespoons of dish soap and
- 2 tablespoons of corn starch

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# Rock Candy

Make your own homemade rock candy with this easy recipe!

 Servings

12 Rock Candy Sticks



## Ingredients

- 12 6-inch Wooden Skewers
- 10 cups Granulated Sugar
- 4 cups Warm Water
- Food Coloring, if desired
- 1 dram Candy Flavoring, if desired
- 6 Quart-Sized Mason Jars
- 12 Clothespins

## Instructions

1. Soak sticks briefly in water and roll in sugar to coat. Allow to dry completely.
2. Add warm water to a large saucepan. Stir in sugar until no more will dissolve.
3. Place the saucepan on the stove, and bring to a low boil over medium heat. Add remaining sugar and any additional sugar as needed until you reach a fully saturated solution and no more sugar will dissolve. Allow to cool for 20-30 minutes.
4. Carefully pour the mixture into the mason jars and add food coloring and/or candy flavoring as desired.
5. Add two sugared sticks to each jar, making sure that the sticks don't touch the jar or each other. Use clothespins to hold the sticks in place as needed.
6. Place the jars in a warm and undisturbed location. Wait for 5-10 days until crystals are fully formed. Remove the sticks from the jar and enjoy.



## HOW TO BUILD A SOLAR OVEN

### MATERIALS

- Pizza box {empty}
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic wrap
- Tape
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Paper Plate
- Food to cook

We are making sun-baked s<sup>TM</sup>mores today using: graham crackers, chocolate bars and marshmallows.

Considering the Texas summer temperatures are nearing 100 degrees, I was pretty confident that we could cook almost anything.

This is what we did to make our summertime s<sup>TM</sup>mores:

# SOLAR oven



## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut a flap in the top of the pizza box leaving a 2" border on the sides and front. Wrap the bottom side of the flap and the interior of the pizza box with aluminum foil "shiny side out" and tape in place.
2. Cover the opening created by the flap with plastic wrap and tape into place.

3. Place food to be cooked on a paper plate inside the solar oven. Prop the flap open with a ruler in position to reflect the sun into the oven.
4. Let the sun bake the food. Depending on the time of day, heat and other variables, it may take up to an hour.
5. Be careful removing food {it will be hot!} and then add crackers and chocolate for a yummy s<sup>TM</sup>more.



### **WHY DOES THE SOLAR OVEN WORK?**

*The sun's light rays are collected by the foil flap and concentrated inside the box. The rays are transformed into thermal energy that slowly raises the temperature inside the box, causing the food to cook. " Museum of Science and Industry*

We put a thermometer into our solar oven and found that the cooking temperature of our marshmallows was in excess of 165 degrees. It did bake slower than I expected considering how hot the day felt.

There are quite a few additional activities suggested to expand the solar oven experience in the [Museum of Science and Industry's activity guide](#).

# POPCORN COB: HOW TO POP POPCORN FROM A COB

By Rachelle



Popcorn Cob? Yes, this is a thing! And if you haven't tried this yet, I highly recommend it.

This is a fun activity in the fall months when dry corncobs, also known as Indian Corn, are abundant. We recently visited a local farm. After watching them mill dried corn into animal feed, they sent us home with organic cobs of dried corn to make into popcorn. Amazing, right?

Did you know that it's perfect for popping? I didn't, so for us this was a true, yummy experiment.

*This post contains affiliate links.*

## Where can I find Popcorn on the Cob?

If you don't have a source for dried corn cobs like we did, don't worry! You can find them in some gourmet shops and online.

We've picked dried Indian Corn at farm stands, and Farmer's Popcorn Cobs at Sur La Table and Amazon: [beautiful ears of corn](#), non-GMO + Kansas grown.

## Supplies for Corn Cob Popcorn

[Farmer's Popcorn Cob](#) (Amazon, pack of 3)

Paper Bags

Microwave

## Before you start

To build excitement and curiosity, ask some questions about popcorn and how it's made.

**What happens when we put dried popcorn and oil on the stovetop?**

**What do you think will happen if we put dried popcorn in the microwave?**

**Do you think it would be the same or different if we microwave dried corn cob?**



## How to make Popcorn with a Dried Corn Cob

1. Place the cob in a brown paper lunch bag.
2. Fold the bag up a couple times to keep the steam in
3. Cook the cob in the microwave. Set it to a popcorn setting if you have that.



My little one (with face paint) was so excited when it started popping in the microwave. We cooked it on the popcorn setting, which is about two and half minutes long. As with any other popcorn, open the microwave door when the popping sounds slow down.



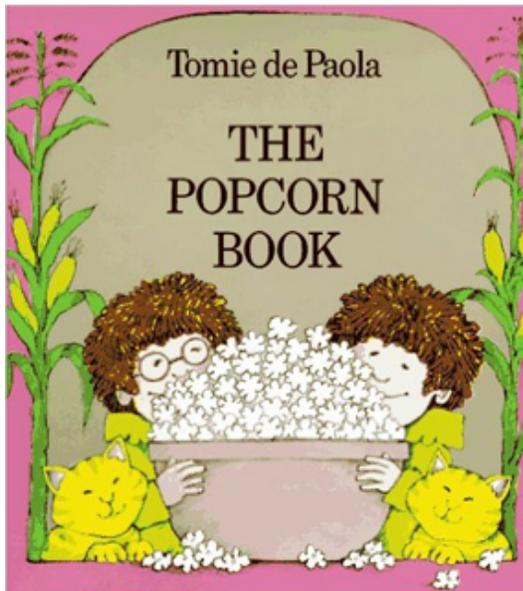
We opened it up for a peek, and it was gorgeous.



Marvel at how much popcorn came off of one little cob!

The ends of this ear didn't pop off and actually singed up a bit. My daughter loved the whole process, right on down to eating the corn.

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*[Click here](#) to get our free downloadable list of 50 fun ways to celebrate fall with kids.*



To extend this into a fun literacy moment, read [The Popcorn Book](#) by Tomie de Paola. It's funny, and an instant childhood favorite. My kids love it.

When we read the book we learned that “The Colonists like it [popcorn] so much that they served popcorn for breakfast with cream poured on it.” Try turning your popcorn into an old fashioned breakfast treat with [Popcorn Cereal](#).

# ***Melting Ice Science Experiment with Salt and Liquid Watercolors***



## **Melting Ice Science Experiment**

### **MATERIALS**

- Bowls or dishes (for making the ice)
- A large tray with sides
- Salt
- [Liquid watercolors](#) or food coloring
- [Droppers](#) or a spoon

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### *Step #1) Make The Ice*

For fun, and for experiment's sake, **I filled many different sizes of bowls with water and left them to freeze overnight.**

I recommend this! Not so much for quantity, but I'd suggest trying at least two or three different sizes. Make at least one of them shallow. The Tupperware container you can barely see in the back of the photo above was great for this.



### *Step #2) Set Up Your Melting Station*

The next morning I loosened the ice from the bowls with a little warm water and set them in a big plastic finger paint tray with a raised edge.

I remembered how much the ice melted last time— that's the point, right?! —and I didn't want a salty, painty mess all over my table. A baking tray with sides would also work. I also set our tray over an old towel for extra protection.



### *Step #3) Add Salt*

I gave them each a bowl of table salt (inexpensive Morton's salt) and they sprinkled it over the tops of the ice domes.

#### **Two notes ::**

1. **Rock salt, or another coarse salt, would be good to try** as well, but we didn't have any. (I did have some sea salt in the kitchen, but felt it was too expensive to use like this.)
2. **Also, I purposely gave them each a modest amount to sprinkle.** I didn't want a repeat of the salt dumping excuse for a science experiment we had last time.



They got excited when they first noticed the little ravines where the salt was melting the side of the ice!

### *Time To Add Color To The Melted Ice*

Once we could tell that the salt was melting the ice, I got out the [liquid watercolors](#). I squeezed a little bit of a few different colors (yellow, pink, purple, turquoise) into jelly jars and added a [dropper](#) to each.



**Note: You can also use food coloring for this project.** The color selection may be more limited, but it works just as well.

The color is beautiful on its own, but **the real reason for adding the liquid watercolors is to highlight the ravines, crevasses, and tunnels that are forming in the ice as the salt melts it.** We talked about how the salt melts the ice, both before and during the science experiment. Since it was a hot summer day, we agreed that the ice would melt anyway.



Then we talked about how salt makes ice melt differently, and that it will melt ice at much cooler temperatures. So, wherever the salt touched the ice it would melt faster than the rest of the ice.

The pooling swirls of liquid watercolors in melted ice water were beautiful, too!



In fact, we had A LOT of melted ice water, so the girls took turns with a turkey baster to suction the water out.

You don't *have* to take the water out, but I thought it would be easier to see all the exciting tunnel action if the ice wasn't swimming in a lake. Also, our handy dandy plastic tray was cracked along the lip and I didn't want the water to reach that level. **Plus the kids thought that using the turkey baster was as much fun as the rest of the project.**



We took a few of our ice pieces out on the porch to look at them in the sunlight. The watercolors really helped to highlight where the ice was melting!

**Look! A colored ice suncatcher!**



From the bottom of the shallower ice pieces, we could see a whole bunch of tiny bubbles of color where the mixed salt and watercolors pooled as they slowly ate away and melted the ice.



After our break to admire the ice in the sunlight, we brought them back in and turned each over.

**We wanted to see what it would be like if we melted tunnels and ravines through both sides of the ice.**

So we added more salt (yes, there was some salt dumping action this time—mostly on Daphne's part), and let it melt awhile. Then we added liquid watercolors.

Note: Some of the salt (especially where it was dumped) had hardened into a solid mass. We chipped those away before adding the liquid watercolors because we really wanted to be able to see the ice tunnels.



Just for variety's sake, we brought out different colors of the liquid watercolors: red, blue, and gold ([the metallic gold paint](#) was pretty amazing!).



I LOVED seeing how into this melting ice science experiment the girls were!

And the results were beautiful and interesting! You can see that the salt ate away at both sides of this ice piece so that there are holes through the middle.



**This melting ice science experiment is one worth doing (and repeating).** I hope you try it! And if you've tried it before, give it another go!

# Cloud Experiment for Kids

March 17, 2019



Learn all about clouds and how they form with the cloud **in-a -jar experiment!**

This is one of the coolest **science experiments** we have ever tried, and it is SO EASY to set up!

This **experiment** is so cool, because you are literally making a cloud inside of a jar! The *clouds* that form in this **experiment** are identical to the ones that form in the sky. Pretty cool, right?

Are you ready to make a cloud in-a-jar?

## Cloud in-a-Jar

### Materials

- A glass jar
- Boiling water
- Ice
- Hairspray

- A jar-lid or paper plate

### Method

- Begin by filling a jar 1-2 inches of the way with boiling water.



- Carefully swirl the water inside of the jar to heat the sides of the glass.
- Then, place the lid upside-down on top of the jar. If you don't have the lid to the jar you can use a paper plate.
- Fill the lid with ice.



- Allow the ice to sit on top of the jar for a minute or two.
- You will have to be quick with this next part, so be ready.
- After a minute quickly lift the lid of ice from the jar and spray a bit of hairspray into the jar.
- Then, *quickly place the lid of ice back onto the jar.*



- You will immediately begin to notice a cloud forming in the jar!



- And within a few moments the entire jar will be a cloud!
- Observe the cloud in the jar for a minute or two.
- Then, when you are ready you can release it!



How cool is that?

My girls had so much fun and wanted to make cloud after cloud!



Note: You may want to release your clouds in front of a black backdrop, as that makes it *much easier* to see the cloud in the air.

### The Science Behind the Fun

What causes the cloud to form inside of the jar?

- Warm, wet air rises from the boiling water inside of the jar.
- That warm air meets with the cool air just below the ice.
- When the warm air meets the cold air it creates water droplets that form together to create an instant *cloud in-a-jar!*

Why the hairspray?

- The hair spray is used to create particles in the air.
- The particles give the water droplets something to form onto, just as dust and other particles in the air do for a real cloud in the sky!



### Ingredients for Dish Soap Silly Putty

- 1.5 tablespoons of *dish soap* and
- 2 tablespoons of corn starch

You already have both of those things, don't you? Well, then you're good to go!



## How to make Silly Putty with Dish Soap

### You Will Need

- 1.5 tablespoons of dish soap and
- 2 tablespoons of corn starch

### Directions

1. Mix the dish soap and corn starch together as best as you can for about 10 seconds.
2. Once it becomes difficult to stir, get your hands in there!
3. Work the putty until all of the ingredients in the bowl are combined thoroughly. This is when you'll see the putty start to come together.
4. TIP: because dish soap formulas can vary, it's ok if you need to add a little more. If the putty is entirely too dry, add a tiny bit more dish soap to it. Or, if the putty is too runny, add a tiny bit more corn starch to it. After adding more of either ingredient, mix the putty by hand for a few moments. Just a little extra of either ingredient is all it takes:)



### How Long Does it Last?

Since this dish soap takes about 2 minutes to make, it doesn't necessarily last very long. Meaning, you won't need to store it in a container. Simply play with it for awhile and clean up the silly putty when you're done (you'll notice some drying of the ingredients, which is typical of handmade stuff, but a little soap and water will wipe it right up!).

Be sure to share this quick and easy craft with your kid-friendly craft loving group of friends! I think it is best suited for kids ages 4+