

Topic	Environment
Phenomenon	Air pollution
Experiment	Making dirt in the air visible
Material to be provided	cream 1 spoon, small
Additional Material	none
Preparation for experiment	none

Researcher question

Can air become dirty?

Description of experiment

Ask the children if they have any suggestions about what can make the air dirty.

Ask the children to coat the spoon with the white cream and place it outdoors in an area protected from the rain. Inspect the coated spoon with the children from time to time and see if there are any changes. When they see dirt in the cream, discuss with the children their ideas as to what the deposits consist of. Get the children to think about where the dirt on the spoon could come from. Perhaps one or more of the children will hit upon the idea that dust from the street, car exhaust fumes, or open fires can cause detectable dark clouds of dirt.

Explanation

Air pollution is also a form of environmental pollution. Pollution occurs as a result of a change in the natural composition of the air, especially due to particles of smoke, soot, dust, and vapors. Natural processes such as biological decomposition (for example the rotting of plant material) can also lead to air pollution.