

Make it Sink

What you will learn

- How sinkholes form
- The cause of sinkholes

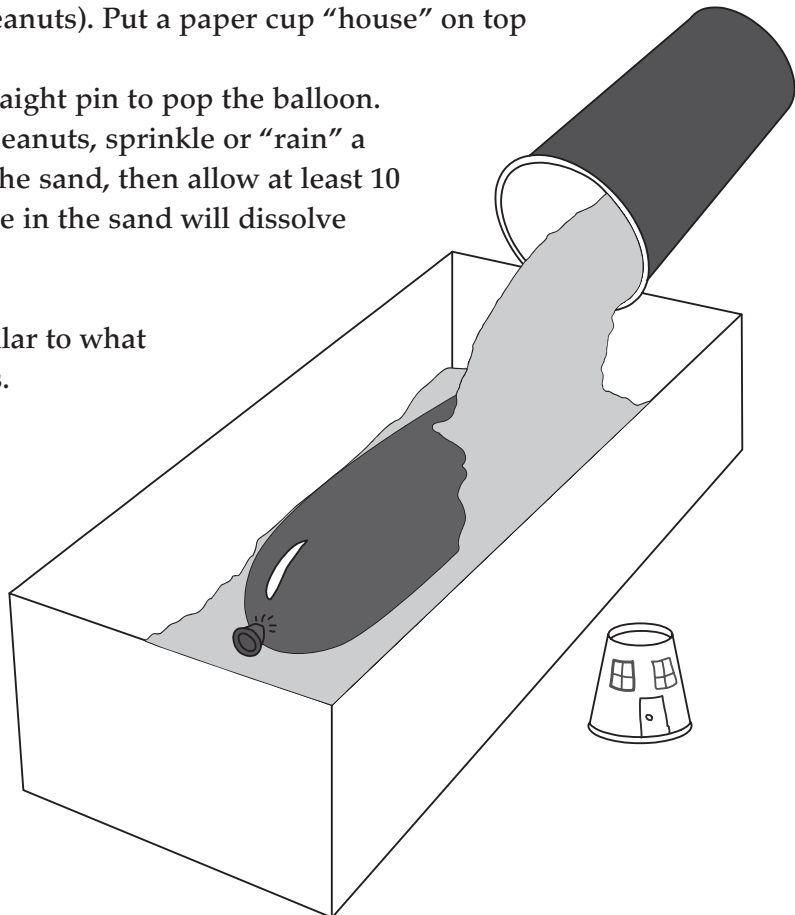
Materials

- An oblong balloon (round balloons require a bigger box) or cornstarch packing peanuts (not to be confused with Styrofoam packing peanuts)
- A shoe box
- Moist builder's or coarse sand, enough to almost fill the box
- Empty plastic cup
- Straight pin (if you use a balloon)
- Cup of water

Directions

1. Cover the bottom of the box with 1 to 2 inches of sand.
2. Blow up and tie the balloon. Place the balloon (or you can use cornstarch packing peanuts) in the center of the box on top of the sand.
3. Fill the rest of the box with enough sand to cover the balloon (or the cornstarch packing peanuts). Put a paper cup "house" on top of the sand.
4. If using a balloon, use the straight pin to pop the balloon. If using cornstarch packing peanuts, sprinkle or "rain" a small amount of water onto the sand, then allow at least 10 minutes to pass. The moisture in the sand will dissolve the packing peanuts.

The result of this activity is similar to what happens when a sinkhole forms.



The Challenges – Teacher Resources

Name _____

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Student Observation Record Sheet

- Carefully record your observations of the experiment below. Be specific about the results from your action in step 4.
- Tell how this model can be used to explain what causes sinkholes and how sinkholes form.

My observations:

My explanation of what causes sinkholes and how sinkholes form:
