Bubble Science

There's a fantastic place way up in Vancouver, Canada called Science World. And we heard a rumor that they had the thickest, bounciest bubbles around. So we asked them how they did it. Here are their recipes for bubbles that not only blow up nice and big, but do tricks and experiments! How do they do it? It's not a secret, it's science!

What You Need:

- Water
- Baby shampoo
- Package of unflavored gelatin (ex. Knox brand)
- Glycerin (you can get this at most pharmacies, all you need is a small bottle)
- Shallow baking dishes
- Bubble-blowing materials, such as drinking straws, funnels, wire hangers etc.
- Food coloring (optional)
- Printable scenes for doing colored bubble art

What You Do:

1. Mix your bubble solution! You can just try out one at a time, or make them all at once and compare the different solutions!
    - To make **All Purpose Bubble Solution**, gently mix one part water to one part baby shampoo, and let the solution stand for a few hours. This solution is great for most bubble tricks, activities and experiments
    - To make **Bouncy Bubble Solution**, Dissolve one package unflavored gelatin into one cup of hot water (just boiled). Then add 1.5 - 2 ounces (50-70 ml) glycerin, and 8.5 ounces (250 ml) baby shampoo. Stir gently. The solution will gel as it cools. Reheat it carefully in the microwave (about two minutes). Bubbles made with this solution will bounce off your clothes!
    - To make **Thick Bubble Solution**, mix 3 partsbaby shampoo to 1 part water. When you make a bubble with this solution, try puffing at it to make a bubble inside a bubble.
    - To make **Colorful Bubble Solution**, mix your choice of food coloring with the All Purpose Bubble Solution.
2. Once your solution is all mixed, put it in shallow baking dishes and get ready to experiment! Put a bunch of materials out so your child can try a variety of different tools, and make predictions about which will blow the best bubbles. Funnels, drinking straws, wire hangers bent into loops, pipe cleaners, all of these things work well. For a humongous bubble blower, thread a piece of string through two drinking straws and tie the ends together. Challenge your child to come up with his own ideas, too.
3. To make an art project out of this experiment, cut out a large shape (flower, animal, etc.) out of a piece of white poster board, blow the colored bubbles, and then "catch" them on the paper to make a neat picture. If you don't have time to cut up poster board, print out our Bubble Art Printables and use them to create your colored bubble art!

Once everyone's experimented with all the materials, have everyone grab his or her favorite blowing tool and see who can blow the weirdest bubble!

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