Make a Water Magnifier!

In third grade, children are starting to use magnifying glasses and microscopes to see how small things can be magnified to appear larger than they really are. Here's an interesting activity that will enable your child to make his own magnifier out of a drop of water!

What You Need:

- One 2 by 3 inch piece of cardboard
- One-inch square piece of thin clear plastic
- Pair of scissors
- Tape
- Water
- Spoon or medicine dropper
- Newspaper

What You Do:

1. Cut a dime-size hole in the middle of the cardboard.
2. Set the clear piece of plastic over the hole, and tape it down. Tape it around the edge without covering the hole. Fold each end of the cardboard down 1/4 inch.
3. Dip the tip of the spoon in the water. Hold the spoon directly over the center of the hole, and let one drop of water fall onto the plastic.
4. Set a piece of newspaper with printing, on the table.
5. Tell your child to carefully lift the magnifier and set it down on top of the paper.
6. Your child should then look straight down through the top of the water drop; the printing on the paper will appear magnified!

If the writing on the paper appears blurry you must focus your magnifier. Put the tip of your finger on the cardboard just to one side of the hole. Gently press the cardboard down this will cause the cardboard to bend so that drop will be moved down closer to the newspaper. You should be able to see a sharp image of the print. As an extension activity encourage your child to examine salt, sugar, leaves, etc.

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