



Sweat - Why do people sweat?

Fact

- It's your body's way of cooling itself down.
- The sweat glands under your skin make sweat when you're doing lots of exercise or it's a really hot day.
- That sweat leaks out of your body onto your skin and evaporates into the air.
- To evaporate the sweat uses heat from your body and that makes your body cool down.

Do you know

- You have thousands of sweat glands under your skin.
- The soles of your feet and the palms of your hands have the most sweat glands!
- Your brain sends a message to your glands telling them when it's time to sweat.
- Sweat doesn't smell until bacteria start to snack on it.

Experiments you can do

Evaporation

What you need:

2 tablespoons of water

2 saucers or jar lids (same size)

Some plastic wrap

A sunny spot like a windowsill

What you do:

At breakfast time put a tablespoon of water into both lids or saucers and cover one tightly with plastic wrap. Put both lids or saucers in a sunny spot like on a windowsill where they won't be in the way. Write down the time and what the weather is like (is it sunny, cloudy, raining) and leave them until you get home from school. How much water is left, has any of it evaporated? Keep a diary, check it again in the morning then when you get home from school until the water has completely evaporated. If the days were sunny try the experiment again on a rainy day. Keep a diary again so you can compare the results? Did the weather make a difference?

Other Investigations

What makes you sweat?

The next time your class is doing exercise or you're racing around after school investigate with some different exercises. Does running make you hot and sweaty? How about skipping. Maybe it will be hopping or doing handstands. What part of your body sweats the most? Some people sweat a lot from their head, others their armpits.

Maybe it's not just exercise – some people sweat when they get nervous.

Jokes

Why was the person hot and sticky? They were wearing a "sweater" in summer.