

Water Surface Experiment

Worksheet

Resources

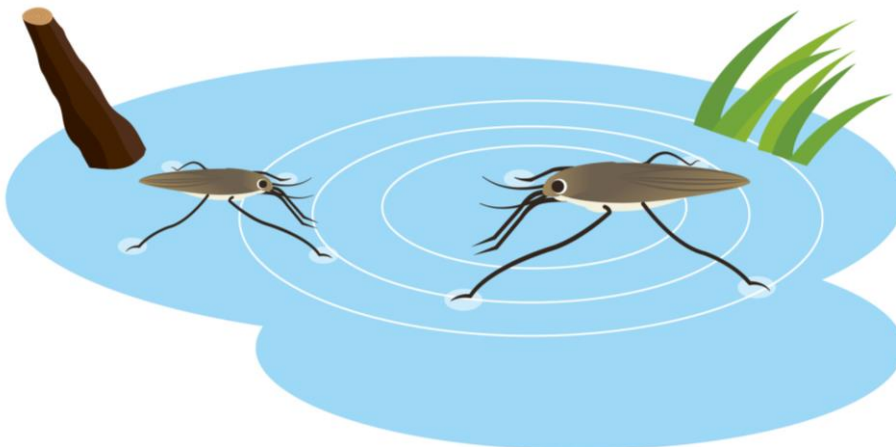
- 1 x bowl of water
- 1 x sewing needle
- Washing up liquid
- Spoon to stir

Experiment

Step 1: Carefully balance the sewing needle on the surface of the water. If you are very gentle then it should be able to balance, despite being made of metal.

Step 2: Add a couple of squirts of washing-up liquid to the water and gently stir. You're not trying to create bubbles, just mix the water and washing up liquid together.

Step 3: Now try to balance the needle on the water again. Does it float?



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Prediction

Do you think the needle will float or sink after you add the washing-up liquid? Why?

Think:

Were you right with your prediction?

Why has this happened? The answer is that the water surface has now been made thinner by the washing up liquid.

Why might this be a problem for insects like Pond Skaters that live on the water?

Does the same thing happen when you add other things to water like laundry powder? Why not find out?

