

Practical activities for primary aged children attending school during extended periods of school closure

If you are faced with a period of school closure where certain children are still attending school eg key worker/vulnerable children, science activities can be ideal, particularly if the groups of children being supervised are of mixed age groups and/or from different schools.

However, if you are the teacher in charge, you:

- may have limited knowledge of the capabilities of the children themselves (they are not your normal class); and
- Will have children present with widely differing capabilities reflecting their different age/experience.

In these circumstances only practical activities that are low risk and suitable for mixed age groups can be carried out in order to keep all children safe.

The good news is we have plenty of options and with this in mind we have reviewed our activities and selected those that are most appropriate to use in these circumstances. As always they use resources that should already be available in your school or if not, are readily available from high street stores.

These activities are fun, contain excellent science and can easily be used creatively by teachers to explore scientific ideas at different levels – for example through the addition of more challenging questions or a research task.

How to use these resources

Remember even though the resources are written very clearly they are intended for use by a qualified teacher and not a parent or another member of the general public.

As a teacher you will need to decide how best to use the activity and indeed if the activity is suitable and safe for the group of children you are supervising.

Bear in mind you might also need to add in extra safety measures for example, extra cleaning of equipment, handwashing before and after any science activities etc.

Remember if you need help, contact CLEAPSS, we're here to help.

List of activities

Suitable Activities

CLEAPSS Code	Title	Link to guide	Any additional comments
P095	Making a wormery and observing worms	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P095-Making-a-wormery-and-observing-worms.aspx	-
P090	Seeing stars – making a constellation viewer	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource-File/P090-Seeing-stars-making-a-constellation-viewer.pdf	-
P087	Flappy bat	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P087-Flappy-bat.aspx	-

P085	Making and successfully throwing a boomerang	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P085-Making-and-successfully-throwing-a-boomerang.aspx	-
P084	Overflow - Using water displacement to measure volume	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P084-Overflow-using-water-displacement-to-measure-volume.aspx	-
P083	Making trace fossils	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P083-Making-trace-fossils.aspx	-
P075	Absorbent materials	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P075-Absorbent-materials.aspx	-
P077	Double bubble	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P077-Double-bubble.aspx	-
P071	Blast Off!	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P071-Blast-off.aspx	-
P070	Making ice cream without a freezer	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P70-Making-ice-cream-without-a-freezer.aspx	-
P068	Choosing and using colour	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P068-Choosing-and-using-colour.aspx	-
P067	Pop up spring chick	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P067-Pop-up-spring-chick.aspx	-
P056	How does Vitruvian Man stand up today?	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P056-How-does-Vitruvian-Man-stand-up-today.aspx	-
P053	Make your own freshwater food chain	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P053-Make-your-own-freshwater-food-chain-mobile.aspx	-
P054	Freshwater food chains and food web resource	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P054-Freshwater-food-chains-and-food-web-resource.aspx	-
P055	Hatching spring chick	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P055-Hatching-spring-chick.aspx	-
P049	Glitter Germs	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P049-Glitter-germs.aspx	-
P001	Investigating indicators	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P001-Investigating-indicators.aspx	-
P025	Vinegar and bicarbonate balloons	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P025-Vinegar-and-bicarbonate-balloons.aspx	Can be a little messy
P024	Sunshine absorbency	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P024-Sunshine-absorbency.aspx	-
P005	Investigating soaps and detergents	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P005-Investigating-soaps-and-detergents.aspx	-
P089	Dissolving jelly	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P089-Dissolving-jelly.aspx	-
P073	Lights on lights off	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P073-Lights-on-lights-off.aspx	-

This document supports teachers planning practical activities. It is not designed as a worksheet for classroom use

P072	Straw shooter rocket	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P072-Straw-shooter-rocket.aspx	-
P066	Making bath bombs	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P066-Making-bath-bombs.aspx	-
P058	Density cocktail	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P058-Density-cocktail.aspx	-
P052	Floating liquids	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P052-Floating-liquids.aspx	-
P023	Steady hand game	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P023-Steady-hand-game.aspx	-
P043	Using UV bead bracelets to study light	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P043-Using-UV-bead-bracelets-to-study-light.aspx	-
P040	Testing food samples for starch	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P040-Testing-food-samples-for-starch.aspx	-
P034	Separating inks simple method	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P034-Separating-inks-simple-method.aspx	-
P014	Separating felt pen ink colours	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P014-Separating-felt-pen-ink-colours.aspx	-
P078	Glue from milk	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P078-Glue-from-milk.aspx	Likely to be messy
P081	Quick and easy cakes	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P081-Quick-and-easy-cakes.aspx	Needs access to a microwave. MUST not be done in a lab
P079	Inseparable books	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P079-Inseparable-books.aspx	Needs good classroom management
P076	Balloon Kebabs	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P076-Balloon-kebabs.aspx	Needs good classroom management
P074	Lava lamp	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P074-Lava-lamp.aspx	Likely to be messy and needs careful management of waste. Do not carry out on large scale or with large groups.
P050	Iron for breakfast	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P050-Iron-for-breakfast.aspx	Needs good supervision of neodymium magnets
P042	Slime time	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P042-Slime-time.aspx	Do not carry out on large scale.

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			Do NOT let pupils take it home.
P002	Investigating heating and melting	http://primary.cleapss.org.uk/Resource/P002-Investigating-heating-and-melting.aspx	Do NOT let pupils eat the food used. Care is needed with the heat packs.

Unsuitable Activities

CLEAPSS Code	Title of Guide
P086	Spinning spirals
P080	Fire writing
P064	Pond dipping
P057	Vinegar and bicarbonate fire extinguisher demonstration
P021	Looking closely at the parts of a flower
P035	Making a light-up greetings card using copper tape circuits
P006	Growing fungi on food
P018	Investigating burning