

GOLDBLOCKS IS NOT TO BE TRUSTED

Students will explore the concept of heat within a popular children's story.

MATERIALS:

Hot water

Thermometer

Paper and pencil

One styrofoam cup

PROCEDURE:

1. Read aloud the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.
2. Indicate that you have always been concerned about why baby's porridge was always "just right". Could we put this idea to a test? Is it true that Papa's would be too hot, Mama's too cold, and Baby's be just right?
3. Heat a pot full of porridge (water) and place the thermometer in the cup.
4. Fill one cup with "porridge" and record the highest temperature reached.
5. Temperatures should be recorded every minute for Papa's portion (full cup), Mama's portion (half cup) and Baby Bear's portion (one quarter cup).
6. It may be best to take an average of the ten sets of data for each portion.
(Sorry for the math!)
7. Have students compare their experimental results with the story.

(An extension activity would be to have the students rewrite the story based on the results of their experiment)

EXPLANATION:

The larger bowl of Papa's porridge will take longer to cool off due to the conduction of heat. The larger the object, the longer it takes to cool down. That is why Papa's and Mama's porridge takes longer to cool than Baby Bear's. It appears that Goldilocks has a lot more to explain about her actions.