Students learn slimy science

Written by Stephanie Groves Thursday, March 13, 2014 8:00 PM -

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FORT JENNINGS — Students got a lesson in slimy science when COSI (Center of Science and Industry) brought its traveling science program "It's Simply Chemistry" to Fort Jennings Elementary School on Thursday.

The highly-interactive program stimulated the imaginations of the next generation of scientists and chemists by allowing students to explore chemistry through simple experiments designed to introduce new science principles and enhance students' knowledge of the chemistry in their daily lives.

During the morning assembly, COSI's Chemistry Detective Becca Kelley showed students in grades K-6 how to solve the mystery of the missing slime ingredients by identifying acids and bases. After lunch, the students participated in a 45-minute hands-on activity session where they were engaged in diverse activities encouraging their development of scientific processing skills including: observing, inferring, questioning and hypothesizing; predicting and planning; investigating; and interpreting, communicating, relating and applying.

"It's Simple Chemistry" hands-on activities for students included:

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- A Closer Look: Using microscopes to identify powders based on their external structures;
- Chemical or Physical?: Comparing and identifying a variety of chemical changes with physical changes;
- It's a Secret: Writing secret messages in two different ways: one using phenolphthalein and washing soda, the other using ultraviolet ink and a black light;
- Solid-Liquid-Gas: Mixing solids with a liquid to produce a gas. The reaction gives results students could see, feel and hear;
- pH: With a variety of diluted household chemicals and Universal Indicator solution, students explored the full range of pH: acid to neutral to base;
- Light the Night: Experiencing a chemical reaction that produces light without heat;
- Sink or Float: Investigating density and see how it determines if something will float or sink;
- Super Slime: Using Polyvinyl Alcohol, Sodium Tetraborate and food coloring to create great non-Newtonian substances for students to explore and take with them;
- Way Cool: Mixing chemicals with water to cause exothermic (heat-producing) and endothermic (heat-absorbing) reactions students can feel.

Principal Kathleen Verhoff said it is a great opportunity for kids to experience hands-on science.

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"I want to thank the booster's for their support in bringing COSI to the elementary school," Verhoff said appreciatively.

This COSI On Wheels program aligns with Ohio Academic Content Standards, compliments the National Science Education Standards and allows students to learn about the fundamentals of chemistry through scientific experimentation.