

## BAGS O' BREAD MOLD

Fungi lack chlorophyll, so they can't obtain energy from the sun and can't produce their own food. To get energy, many fungi feast on dead organisms. Mold is a fuzzy, multicellular fungus that flourishes in many environments. It reproduces with **spores**. You can grow your own mold on slices of bread. What happens when you place them in different environments?

**Caution:** Some people are allergic to mold spores. Inhaling spores can be harmful. Keep ziplock bags tightly sealed at all times. Don't touch mold. Ask an adult to help you choose environments out of reach of family members and pets. When you finish the project, ask an adult to safely dispose of the sealed bags.

### Words to Know

**spore:** a structure produced by fungi that sprouts and grows into a new fungus.

1 Label the sandwich bags. Write "Bright" on one and "Dark" on the other. Jot the date on each.

2 Rub cotton swabs against a floorboard, a table leg, or another dusty surface to collect samples. Be sure to rub both swabs in the same location. Then, brush one dusty swab over the surface of one slice of bread. Brush the second swab on the other slice.

3 Fill the dropper with water. Drip 5 drops of water onto each slice of bread. Place one slice into the Bright sandwich bag and the other into the Dark bag. Seal the bags tightly.

Did you know...

Grains used to bake breads come from living things.

4 Choose a brightly lit, warm location for the Bright bag such as a sunny windowsill. Choose a cool, dark location for the Dark bag, such as a basement. Let mold spores incubate for a full week.



## ACTIVITY!

## activity

**5** Make a scientific method worksheet in your science journal. What do you think will happen to the bread after a week? Which location is better for mold to flourish? Jot down your predictions.

**6** After the first two days, gather the bags. Use the magnifying glass to examine samples. Do you observe any mold, or is it still invisible? Note observations on your scientific method worksheet. Sketch and color illustrations of the two samples. Then return the bags to their locations.

**7** After five more days, gather the bags. Use the magnifying glass to examine your mold colonies. What do the samples look like now? Jot down observations, and make colored sketches. How do the samples compare? Were your predictions accurate?

**Supplies**

- permanent marker
- 2 ziplock sandwich bags
- 2 cotton swabs
- 2 slices of bread, or 2 hamburger buns or dinner rolls
- eye dropper
- ¼ cup of water
- science journal and pencil
- magnifying glass
- crayons, markers, or colored pencils



## Did you know...

Molds grow in a variety of colors, from bright fluorescent purple to drab olive green and rusty brown. Can you research the different color types of mold and make a chart?