

Sewer Lice Demo

"Sewer lice" is an engage activity to get students thinking about what is life.

Materials Needed	Quantity Needed
Small clear plastic cups or 250ml beakers	One per student pair
Raisins	~10 per beaker
Carbonated beverage (Mt Dew is best) Or carbonated water with food coloring	one can per every 3 beakers

Setup:

Place ~10 raisins in each beaker and add 2 inches of cold, canned soda to each beaker. The color of Mountain Dew works best but some students recognize the smell. Raisins in clear soda are easy to distinguish as raisins and dark brown sodas are too hard to see the raisins in. After 2-3 minutes, raisins will start to "dance" around.

Note: After a few hours, raisins will bloat and the soda will lose carbonation making the "sewer lice" look dead. For best results, set up another set of demos midday.

Class Presentation:

Story of lice discovery

These were discovered recently in the Colorado River by a University of Texas researcher. They are being called sewer lice and it's still unknown exactly what they are. They may be a newly discovered organism. It was supposedly in the newspaper recently but I didn't see the article. UT researchers have been kind enough to let me borrow these so you can work with them today. You and your partner will be observing the river lice and writing your observations down in your INB.

This activity can also be used to remind students what makes a good observation and how you want them to record observations.

Class Discussion Questions

What evidence is there to support sewer lice are alive?

What evidence supports that sewer lice are **not** alive?

How can you tell if an object is alive?