



HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Catch That Dirt

Tiny dirt and dust particles are floating in the air around us. Some places have more of these tiny particles than others. Perhaps the air inside your classroom is cleaner than the air outside. Maybe the air outside is cleaner.

Objective

Collaborate to investigate pollution in the air. What question will you investigate to meet this objective?

Materials

- 4 small plastic containers with lids
- petroleum jelly
- plastic spoon
- hand lens

Procedure

STEP 1 Gather your materials. Use the plastic spoon to spread petroleum jelly inside each container. Cover the sides and bottom with a thin layer. Label the containers 1–4 and place a lid on each

Why do you think you have prepared more than one container?



STEP 2 Look closely at all four containers. Describe what the inside surface of the containers looks like.



Name _____

STEP 3 Place two containers indoors. Remove the lids.

Place the other two containers outdoors. Remove the lids. Leave the containers in place for two hours. Write the location of each container.



STEP 4 After two hours, use a hand lens to study the inside of each container.

Describe what you see on the insides of the containers.

Container 1: _____



Container 2: _____

Container 3: _____

Container 4: _____

Name _____

Analyze Your Results

STEP 5 Did you notice differences between the containers? If you did, describe them.

STEP 6 Share and compare your results with other students. Discuss how you could explain the differences you observed.

Draw Conclusions

STEP 7 Based on your observations, which containers were left to sit in the cleaner air?

STEP 8 Make a claim about the air inside your classroom and the air outside. Cite evidence to support your claim.

STEP 9 What does this investigation tell you about the environment?

STEP 10 Think of other questions you want to ask about air quality.
