

Sun-Earth Day Celebrate the Connection!

Public Outreach

- Make and Take Activities

Ice Cube Meltdown

About this Activity

Some colors absorb light and heat better than others. Some colors are better at reflecting light and heat. Guess which color gets the hottest, and test your guess by melting ice cubes on different colored surfaces. Experiment with ways of making the ice cubes melt faster and slower.

(Age range: middle school)

Modified from an activity from: www.solarschoolhouse.org

Preparation

Gather materials.

To Do and Notice

- Guess which color will melt an ice cube fastest.
- 2. Put different colored pieces of paper (and a piece of aluminum foil) in the sun.
- 3. Place an ice cube on each surface.
- 4. See which ice cube melts first, and which melts last.

Which surface caused the ice cube to melt the fastest? Why?

OPTIONAL:

Put a piece of cardboard under the colored surfaces. Would this make any difference in how long it takes the ice cubes to melt? Why?

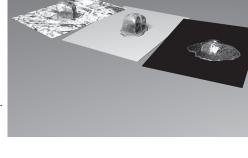
Now try putting the ice cubes in plastic bags, or covering them with plastic wrap. Would this make any difference in how long it takes the ice cubes to melt? Why?

Activity Notes

Light is one form of energy. When light hits an object, that energy is absorbed into the object and transformed from light energy into heat energy.

What You'll Need

- Construction paper of different colors
- Aluminum foil
- Same-sized ice cubes
- Cardboard (optional)
- Plastic wrap or plastic bags (optional)



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