Rotting food

Brief summary:

In this activity you conduct an experiment to see how different substances found in the kitchen can help to preserve food. WARNING: This experiment requires choppoing apple with a knife and dealing with rotting food - please ask for help from an adult.

You will need:

- Help from an adult
- 1 apple sliced into 6 equally sized pieces (ask for help from an adult)
- 6 small jars, each large enough to hold a slice of apple
- Enough of the following substances to fill one jar each:
  - Salt
  - Sugar
  - Antibacterial hand soap
  - Vinegar
  - Water
- Permanent marker
- Several paper plates
- Tongs or fork
- Rubber gloves

What to do:

Step 1. Using the permanent marker label each jar with the following: 'salt', sugar', 'hand soap', 'vinegar', 'water', and 'control'.

Step 2. Place a piece of apple inside each jar. Completely cover each piece of apple with the substance you wrote on the label (for example, in the sugar jar cover the apple with sugar). Don't add anything to the 'control' jar.

Step 3. Set all the jars in a cool, dry place and leave for a week.

Step 4. After one week, put on some rubber gloves and take all the pieces of apple out of the jars, placing them carefully on the paper plates and compare the 'rot'. Which ones had the most rot?

NOTE: Once you have completed this experiment ensure that all rotten food is placed in the bin.

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Take it further:

Repeat the experiment with different foods and different substances.

Consider photographing the foods before and after.

Big questions:

- What role does packaging play in keeping food fresh?
- How is packaging bad for the environment?
- How are preservatives bad for the environment?

For more information on how you can help our environment, or to make some suggestions of your own, please go to www.coolaustralia.org