

How does ocean pollution hurt sea shells?

Brief summary:

In this experiment you will investigate the effects of ocean pollution and climate change by covering sea shells with water and vinegar.

You will need:

- Pen
- 6 plastic cups
- 2 clean mussel shells (or other sea shells)
- 2 clean oyster shells (or other sea shells)
- 2 clean scallop shells (or other sea shells)
- Enough water to fill 3 of the cups
- Enough vinegar to fill 3 of the cups

What to do:

Step 1. Using the pen, label the cups as follows: "mussel + water", "oyster + water", "scallop + water", "mussel + vinegar", "oyster + vinegar" and "scallop + vinegar".

Step 2. Look closely at each shell and record how each shell feels, in particular the shiny surface inside the shell. You can take photos if you like.

Step 3. Place the shells into the cups and add water to the water cups and vinegar to the vinegar cups, making sure that the shells are completely covered.

Step 4. Watch the shells for 15 minutes to see if there are any changes to the shell, in particular any bubbling.

Step 5. Examine the shells once a day for three days, taking the shells out to record any changes in appearance, texture or flexibility.

Take it further:

Repeat this experiment using different acids, such as lemon or orange juice.

Big questions:

- In what other ways does pollution affect marine life?
- What is ocean acidification?
- What is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?

