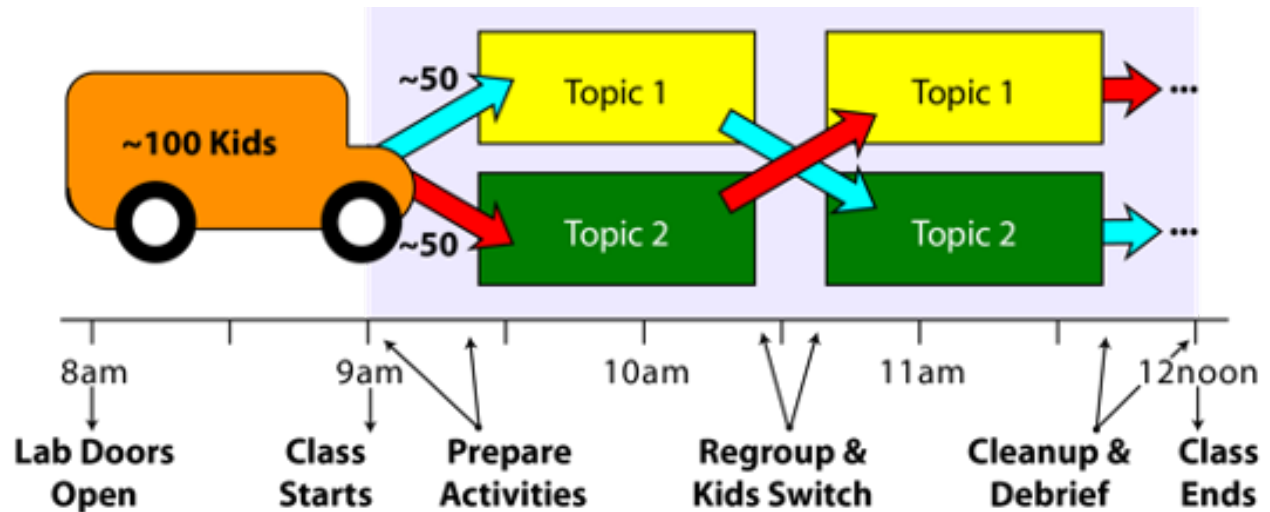


Supplemental Material

CBE—Life Sciences Education

Bush *et al.*



Supplemental Figure 1. A day in the LBDL. An LBDL teaching event takes place during a 3-hour lab period on Thursday or Friday mornings. Students are asked to arrive early if their schedules allow them to assist with set up. Around 9am, school busses arrive with that day's group of school children, their teachers, and chaperones and this group is split in half (schools are notified in advance that large groups must be divided). Meanwhile, in the labs, the SIs and FIs are engaged in final preparation, and short anticipatory discussions about the incoming group. From 9:20-10:20 am two teaching events take place in parallel. From 10:20-10:30 the school groups switch labs. During this short interval the SIs reset their teaching space, briefly reflect on the first hour, and make any 'quick fixes' necessary to help hour two go more smoothly. From 10:30-11:30 the SIs teach the same content to a new group of kids. At 11:30 am the school group leaves (to return to school or for other activities on campus). Between 11:30 am and noon, the SIs and FIs reflect on the day and discuss possible changes to be implemented the next week.

LBDL Pre-Survey

Modified STEBI-B survey administered to students enrolled in the LBDL prior to the first teaching event (i.e. during the first two weeks of the quarter.)

Note: Students are asked to provide their student ID for the purposes of matching pre and post survey data.

Welcome:

To improve the LBDL experience, we are interested in understanding how participating in the LBDL impacts Cal Poly Students. The following survey should take no more than 20 min. In part one it probes your thoughts on teaching science and in part two it will ask questions about you.

Part One: Science Teaching Beliefs

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. There is no right or wrong answer! We just want to know what you think. (For questions 1-23 the answer choices are: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)

1. When a student does better than usual in science, it is often because the teacher exerted a little extra effort.
2. I will continually find better ways to teach science.
3. Even if I try very hard, I will not teach science as well as I will most subjects.
4. When the science grades of students improve, it is often due to their teacher having found a more effective teaching approach.
5. I know the steps necessary to teach science concepts effectively.
6. I will not be very effective in monitoring science experiments.
7. If students are underachieving in science, it is most likely due to ineffective science teaching.
8. I will generally teach science ineffectively.
9. The inadequacy of a student's science background can be overcome by good teaching.
10. The low science achievement of students cannot generally be blamed on their teachers.
11. When a low-achieving child progresses in science, it is usually due to extra attention given by the teacher.
12. I understand science concepts well enough to be effective in teaching elementary science.
13. Increased effort in science teaching produces little change in students' science achievement.
14. The teacher is generally responsible for the achievement of students in science.
15. Students' achievement in science is directly related to their teacher's effectiveness in science teaching.
16. If parents comment that their child is showing more interest in science, it is probably due to the child's teacher.
17. I will find it difficult to explain to students why science experiments work.
18. I will typically be able to answer students' science questions.
19. I wonder if I will have the necessary skills to teach science.
20. Given a choice, I will not invite the principal to evaluate my science teaching.

21. When a student has difficulty understanding a science concept, I will usually be at a loss as to how to help the student understand.
22. When teaching science, I will usually welcome student questions.
23. I do not know what to do to turn students on to science.

Part Two: Who Are You?

This section will ask you to share some demographic information and career goals.

24. How would you characterize your gender identity? (woman, man, decline to state, other)
25. With which group(s) do you most closely identify? (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, Decline to state, other)
26. With which ethnicity do you most closely identify? (Hispanic or Latino, Not Hispanic or Latino, Decline to state)
27. What other teaching experiences have you had?
28. Overall, my science teaching experiences have been... (positive, negative)
29. I could imagine becoming a teacher. (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
30. I plan to become a teacher. (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
31. Describe your dream career...

LBDL Post-Survey

Modified STEBI-B survey administered to students enrolled in the LBDL after the final teaching event (i.e. during the last week of the quarter.)

Note: Students are asked to provide their student ID for the purposes of matching pre and post survey data.

Welcome:

To improve the LBDL experience, we are interested in understanding how participating in the LBDL impacts Cal Poly Students. The following survey should take no more than 20 min. In part one it probes your thoughts on teaching science and in part two it will ask questions about you.

Part One: Science Teaching Beliefs

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. There is no right or wrong answer! We just want to know what you think. (For questions 1-23 the answer choices are: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)

1. When a student does better than usual in science, it is often because the teacher exerted a little extra effort.
2. I will continually find better ways to teach science.
3. Even if I try very hard, I will not teach science as well as I will most subjects.
4. When the science grades of students improve, it is often due to their teacher having found a more effective teaching approach.
5. I know the steps necessary to teach science concepts effectively.
6. I will not be very effective in monitoring science experiments.
7. If students are underachieving in science, it is most likely due to ineffective science teaching.
8. I will generally teach science ineffectively.
9. The inadequacy of a student's science background can be overcome by good teaching.
10. The low science achievement of students cannot generally be blamed on their teachers.
11. When a low-achieving child progresses in science, it is usually due to extra attention given by the teacher.
12. I understand science concepts well enough to be effective in teaching elementary science.
13. Increased effort in science teaching produces little change in students' science achievement.
14. The teacher is generally responsible for the achievement of students in science.
15. Students' achievement in science is directly related to their teacher's effectiveness in science teaching.
16. If parents comment that their child is showing more interest in science, it is probably due to the child's teacher.
17. I will find it difficult to explain to students why science experiments work.
18. I will typically be able to answer students' science questions.
19. I wonder if I will have the necessary skills to teach science.
20. Given a choice, I will not invite the principal to evaluate my science teaching.

21. When a student has difficulty understanding a science concept, I will usually be at a loss as to how to help the student understand.
22. When teaching science, I will usually welcome student questions.
23. I do not know what to do to turn students on to science.

Part Two: Who Are You?

This section will ask you to share some about your experience in the Learn By Doing Lab and your career goals.

24. I would recommend taking the Learn By Doing Lab to a friend. (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
25. Explain your reasoning regarding your recommendation answer above.
26. I could imagine becoming a teacher. (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
27. I plan to become a teacher. (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
28. How did your experience in the Learn By Doing Lab impact your thoughts about a career in teaching?
29. What skills do you feel you developed or used in the Learn By Doing Lab that might help you in ANY career?
30. What is the most important thing you will take away from your time working in the Learn By Doing Lab?
31. Describe your dream career...

Learn By Doing Lab: Modules and Materials

Numerous hour-long curriculum modules have been developed for the LBDL. On this page are the titles and short description of some of the life science and physical science modules. On the following 6 pages are 'foldables' handed out to the visiting students. **Drafts of these foldables were developed by the faculty instructors. As part of the run-up to teaching, the students instructors requested edits and supplemental content based on their teaching goals.**

Instructions for folding these pages into an 8-page mini-book can be found at:

<https://www.instructables.com/An-8-Page-Book-From-a-Piece-of-Paper/>

Genetics Exploration

Students isolate DNA while learning about cell structure. Students will explore the relationship between an organism's DNA (genotype) and its physical traits (phenotype). Comparing live normal and mutant organisms will demonstrate how changing the DNA can alter the organism. Students determine their taster status using PTC test strips then associate taster status with DNA sequence of the *TAS2R38* gene.

Physiology Exploration

Students will build a working circulatory system using tubing, bulbs, and Luer-Lok connections to learn about the role of one-way valves in the heart. Students build a small model of the lungs using balloons, tubing and pill vials to learn how diaphragm contraction changes pressure in lungs during breathing.

Phase Exploration

Students learn about the different states of matter and how transitions between these stages occur. Students develop scientific definitions of solids, liquids, and gases through guided experimentation with a variety of materials.

Magnet Exploration

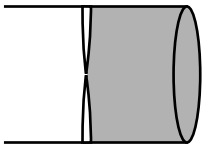
Students uncover and discover properties of magnets through a series of hands-on explorations. Students build, test, and refine a model for how magnets and magnetism work. We may just turn the whole class into a giant magnet for fun.

Atoms and Molecules

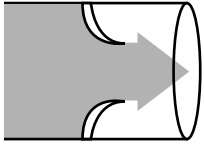
Students use an interactive domino-like learning platform, Atomic Tiles, to learn basic principles of atoms and bonding, build and explore the periodic table, investigate how atoms come together to form molecules, and see how molecules are relevant to our daily lives.

Acids and Bases

Students learn about the acids and bases that are all around us. Students are introduced to the relationship between hydrogen ions and the pH LOG scale. Students experience their own citric acid base test. Finally, students create their own artwork using a mixture of several color changing molecules using the universal indicator.



Heart relaxes... valves close to prevent blood from flowing back.

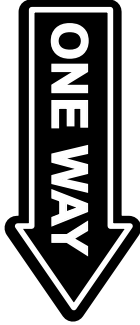


Heart contracts... valves open and blood is pushed through.



The human heart has four of these valves... one at the exit of each chamber.

Blood takes about 20 seconds to circulate throughout the entire vascular system.

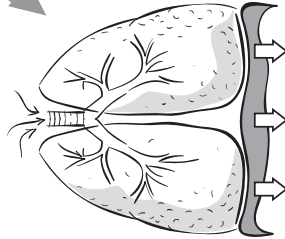
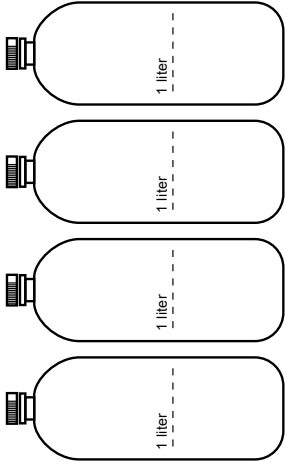


Use a **SPIKOMETER** to measure the volume of air in your lungs.

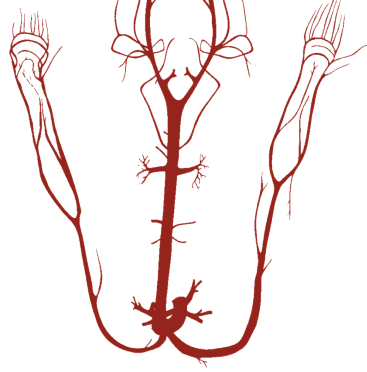
My lung volume is _____ liters.

LUNG FLIPBOOK: Lift this page up and down to see the lungs work. Watch the diaphragm at the bottom of the lungs move higher and lower.

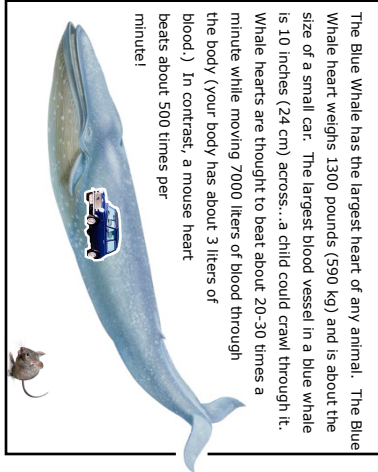
How many soda bottles could you fill with one breath?



Can you find the aorta?



The aorta, the largest artery in the body, is almost the diameter of a garden hose. Capillaries, on the other hand, are so small that it takes ten of them to equal the thickness of 20 feet (6 m) of blood vessels. An adult has over 60,000 miles of blood vessels.



The Blue Whale has the largest heart of any animal. The Blue Whale heart weighs 1300 pounds (590 kg) and is about the size of a small car. The largest blood vessel in a blue whale is 10 inches (24 cm) across... a child could crawl through it. Whale hearts are thought to beat about 20-30 times a minute while moving 7000 liters of blood through the body (your body has about 3 liters of blood.) In contrast, a mouse heart beats about 500 times per minute!

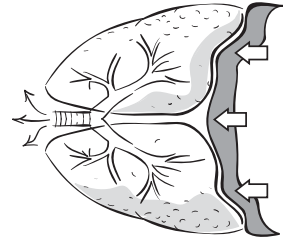


one-way flow of blood.

HEART FLIPBOOK: Lift this page up and down to see the heart beat. Look for the valves that open and close to ensure the one-way flow of blood.

The human heart creates enough pressure to squirt blood 30 feet (9m).

4 The balloon inside the capsule represents the lung. The balloon at the bottom represents the diaphragm. Pulling down on the balloon creates negative pressure in the capsule.



Diaphragm down, air goes...
Diaphragm up, air goes...

(write "in" or "out" in the boxes)

Number of heart beats = in 10 seconds

× 6 = in a minute

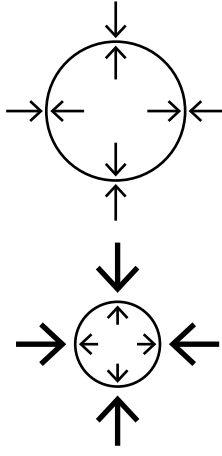
× 1440 = in a day

× 365 = in a year

× your age = number of beats in a your life

5 The average human heart will beat 3 billion times in its lifetime and pump 48 million gallons of blood

Pressure and volume have an **INVERSE** relationship (when one goes up, the other goes down.) Look at the air bubble to the



right. When the pressure (arrows) is high outside it stays small. When the outside pressure decreases the volume increases and the bubble expands.

Volume

Pressure

CAL POLY
Learn By Doing Lab

DL **LB**

Circulatory System

Name: _____

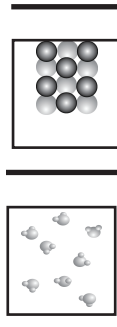
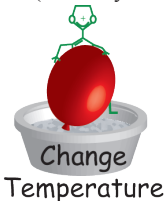
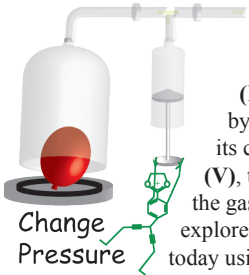
Properties of Gases

Quick Facts:

The behavior of gases can be described in terms of a few **macroscopic** quantities. In 1662 the Irish born physicist Sir Charles Boyle presented

a careful study of the relationship between **Pressure (P)**, the force exerted by a gas on the walls of its container, and **Volume (V)**, the physical size of the gas container. We will explore this relationship today using a vacuum pump and marshmallows...

The 18th century French chemist (and early balloon enthusiast) Jacques Charles studied the relationship between Volume and Temperature (T). We will explore this relationship using liquid nitrogen and balloons...



Brain Candy

Thought Question 1: Label each sketch as Solid, Liquid or Gas. Explain your answers to a friend. Given this picture, why do you think ... Gases are compressible by Solids are not?

Thought Question 2: In outer space the temperature is $-270\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (3K , $-454\text{ }^\circ\text{F}$) and pressure is 0.000000000001 (F) and pressure is 0.000000000001 (F) on taken from conditions on the surface of earth to the conditions of outer space? Assume the balloon will not pop, crack or leak. Explain your answer to a friend.

Thought Question 3: Does Gas have mass?

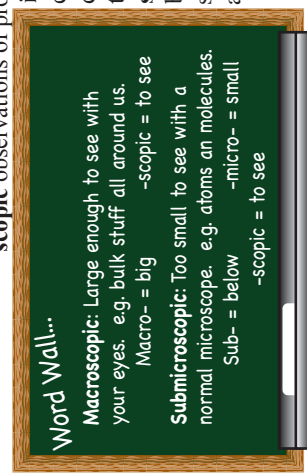
Shape, Fluidity and Compressibility

Quick Facts: Solid, Liquid and Gas are three common states of matter. These states of matter are often referred to as "phases". Scientists use **macroscopic** observations of properties like **compressibility** and **fluidity** to contrast the behavior of different phases and to try to understand the **sub-microscopic** behaviors of solids, liquids and gases.

Word Wall...

Macroscopic: Large enough to see with your eyes. e.g. bulk stuff all around us.
Macro- = big -scopic = to see

Submicroscopic: Too small to see with a normal microscope. e.g. atoms an molecules.
Sub- = below -micro- = small -scopic = to see



Data Table		Fixed Shape	Able to Flow	Compressible
Solid 	Prediction:			
	Observation:			
Liquid 	Prediction:			
	Observation:			
Gas 	Prediction:			
	Observation:			

Lower Temperature

Prediction: T \downarrow V ____

Observation: T \uparrow V ____

As the temperature decreased, the volume of the balloon _____. As the temperature increased, the volume of the balloon _____. Taken together these two observations suggest there is a _____ relationship between volume and temperature.

Lower Pressure

Prediction: P \downarrow V ____

Observation: P \uparrow V ____

As the air was removed from the bell jar, the pressure decreased and the volume of the balloon _____. As the air returned to the bell jar, the pressure increased and the volume of the balloon _____. Taken together these two observations suggest there is an _____ relationship between volume and pressure.

Phase Transition Scavenger Hunt

Check each Phase Transition you see. Substance: _____

Circle the Phase Transitions that REQUIRE energy.

Solid \rightarrow Gas
Sublimation Substance: _____

Gas \rightarrow Solid
Deposition Substance: _____

Gas \rightarrow Liquid
Condensation Substance: _____

Liquid \rightarrow Solid
Freezing or Fusion Substance: _____

Solid \rightarrow Liquid
Melting Substance: _____

Phun Phase Phacts...

By changing external conditions like temperature or pressure one can induce phase changes. Phase changes for pure compounds occur at characteristic temperatures.

- Liquid nitrogen (N_2) boils at: $-196\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (77 K , $-321\text{ }^\circ\text{F}$)
- Solid carbon dioxide (CO_2) sublimates at: $-79\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (194 K , $-110\text{ }^\circ\text{F}$)
- Solid iron (Fe) melts at: $1538\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (1811 K , $2800\text{ }^\circ\text{F}$)

Name _____

Magnet Exploration

Learn by doing lab

D L B L

Say Hi, to Nano-Guy!

Nano Guy's Brain Candy

The Planet Earth has a magnetic field of ~0.5 gauss, about 1/10 the strength of a refrigerator magnet.

Flipped out!
Earth's Geographic North Pole is its Magnetic South Pole.

The First Compasses were built using iron-rich rocks called **Loadstones**, which are naturally occurring permanent magnets. Mariners could attach a loadstone to a string and the stone's magnetic field would align with the Earth's magnetic field.

Magnetic Model...

The "Domain" model of magnetism postulates that inside a potential permanent magnet there are microscopic regions that act like mini-magnets.

- In a non-magnetic material these mini-magnets point in random directions and cancel each other out.
- In magnetic materials these mini-magnets point in the same direction, and add collectively.

NON-MAGNETIC

MAGNETIC

Make a domain model sketch of your magnet

Magnetic Personalities

How do magnets interact with ...
... Each Other?

Fill in the observation table

?

		Magnet 1	
		North	South
Magnet 2	North		
	South		

A for Attract

R for Repel

... A Compass?

Fill in the compass needles



... Other Stuff?

1. Take a stand. Write a general rule for what is, or is not, attracted to a magnet.

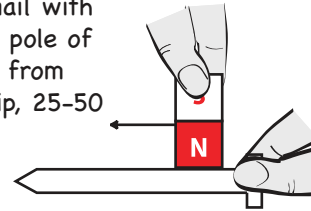
2. Make predictions and collect data.

Material	Prediction	Observation

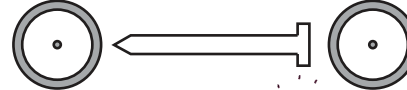
3. Refine your rule using your observations.

Lets Make a Magnet

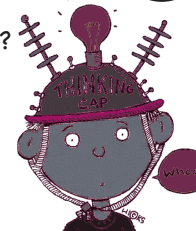
1. Rub a nail with the north pole of a magnet, from head to tip, 25-50 times.



2. Test your nail with a compass. Label the North and South poles



3. What's going on? Make an Initial Magnet Model!



4. Test the magnet model.

PREDICTIONS				
OBSERVATIONS				

My OBSERVATIONS...

Support Do Not Support

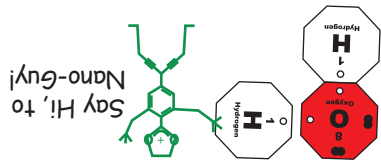
... my Initial Magnet Model

Atoms and Molecules Exploration

learn by doing lab

DTLB

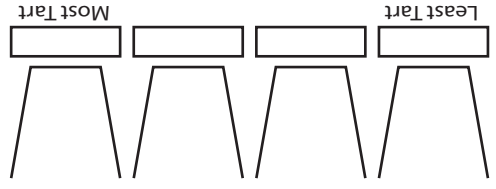
Name _____



2. What is the Formula for Citric Acid?

C	H	O

1. I think _____ juice has the most citric acid based on this evidence:



Quick Facts...

Citric acid is one of the molecules that give citrus fruits like oranges and lemons their tart taste. Citric acid is acidic, it will react with baking soda (NaHCO₃) to form carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas.

Brain Candy...

The development of the periodic table is a triumph of critical thinking and careful observation. In the late 1800's chemists struggled to find coherence among the chemical and physical properties of elements. While many scientists worked on this problem, Dmitri Mendeleev, a Russian high school chemistry teacher in the late 1800's, is credited with envisioning the modern periodic table in his 1868 textbook, "Principles of Chemistry". His approach to organizing the known elements stood the test of time as much for what it did not include as for what it did include. Confident in his organizational structure, Mendeleev left several gaps in his periodic table that accurately predicted future elemental discoveries.

3. Which family do you think this Mysterium is in?

Helium Nitrogen Fluorine Oxygen Carbon Nitrogen Helium

Lets Build a Periodic Table

1. What is one thing you notice about your periodic table?

2. Elements in a family tend to have very similar chemical properties.

Take a stand!

I think families likely go: (circle)

Up and Down
Left to Right

3. Which family do you think this Mysterium is in?

Helium Nitrogen Fluorine Oxygen Carbon Nitrogen Helium

4. Explain your answer.

Octet

Can you make a Legal Play?

Yes! No

Did you Fill an Atom? No

Your turn is Over...

Did you Fill a Molecule? No

Go Again!

Yes!

Collect Your Molecule!! Go Again

Legal Play

Filled Molecule

Filled Atoms

Unfilled Atom

How Atomic Tiles Work

Atoms are nature's building blocks. Everything around you, from the shoes on your feet to the air in this room, is made of atoms. Atomic Tiles are models of atoms. They help us understand how atoms form bonds to create molecules.

Open Circles: Bonding valence electrons

Closed Circles: Non-bonding valence electrons

Atoms form bonds by sharing bonding valence electrons. When you make a match with Atomic Tiles, you are making a bond!

1. Given your observations so far... Which element likely forms ...the most bonds? ...the fewest bonds? ...bonds in the most different ways?

Lets Build Molecules

Making Molecules:

- Rule One:** Elements must match formula
- Rule Two:** All open circles must be matched

1. Getting Started

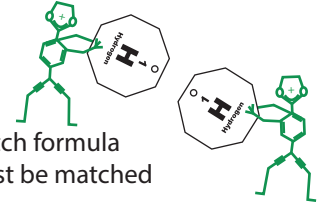
- A. H₂O (Water) (2 H atoms, 1 O atom)
- B. O₂ (Molecular Oxygen) (2 O atoms)

2. Ramp it up

- A. NH₃ (Ammonia)
- B. N₂ (Molecular Nitrogen)
- C. HCN (Hydrogen Cyanide)
- D. HNO (Nitroxyl)

3. Kick it up a notch

- A. CO₂ (Carbon Dioxide)
- B. C₂H₄ (Ethene)
- C. C₂H₆ (Ethane)
- D. C₂H₂ (Ethyne)



Summation Station:

	Valence Electrons	Bonds
Carbon		
Nitrogen		
Oxygen		
Hydrogen		

4. Test your Skills!

- H₂O₂ (Hydrogen Peroxide)
- N₂H₄ (Hydrazine)
- N₂O₂ (Dinitrogen Dioxide)
- CH₃OH (Methanol)
- CH₃COOH (Acetic Acid)
- CH₃CH₂OH (Ethanol)
- CH₂O (Formaldehyde)
- CCl₃F (Freon-11)
- CCl₂F₂ (Freon-12)
- H₄C₂Cl₂ (Freon-150)
- C₆H₁₂O₆ (Glucose)
- C₆H₈O₆ (Ascorbic Acid)

Lewis Dot Structures:

Bonds:

Single Dot Match = Single bond = Single line between atoms

Double Dot Match = Double bond = Double line between atoms

Triple Dot Match = Triple bond = Triple line between atoms

Lone Pairs:

Non-bonding electrons => lone pairs... two dots

Thoughts on Implementation

Prior to creating the LBDL, we hosted school groups on an irregular schedule. Bush and Himelblau are Science Faculty with Education Specialties (SFES) with a focus on K-12 education in the Chemistry/Biochemistry and Biological Sciences Departments respectively. Each school visit required a rotating pool of student volunteers to be identified, rooms to be reserved, etc. We realized that by institutionalizing the LBDL as an official course we could i) serve many more local schools; ii) compensate students and faculty involvement with units; and iii) reduce some less desirable management tasks that fell to SFES (or at least replace those tasks with a more sustainable and scalable system). The LBDL course was created under the general prefix for the College of Science and Mathematics rather than under a particular department course prefix to acknowledge that faculty from across the college are involved in teaching. There has been strong and consistent support for the course on our campus with the departments covering the teaching units for the faculty involved, and the College of Science and Mathematics covering the salary of an administrative assistant for several hours per week.

Course Mechanics: The LBDL was designed to provide a low-barrier teaching experience for STEM undergraduates. The course description in the catalog is: “Early teaching experience in an informal science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) teaching and learning environment. Principles of inquiry-driven STEM education, lesson design, implementation and assessment. Intended for undergraduates exploring STEM teaching as a career.” To enroll, students must have fulfilled their life science and physical science General Education course requirements (one lower-division course in biology, and one in chemistry, earth science, or physics). This requirement biases enrollment toward students in their second year and above. That said, we have had many first-year students enroll in the class with instructor permission and they have been successful. The course is two units, reflecting the one-hour-per-week seminar and the three-hour-per-week teaching event. We elected a credit/no credit grading scheme for the class because grading is based on participation only; there are no quizzes or exams, and work outside of class is intentionally kept minimal. Because the scientific focus shifts from term to term, the course is repeatable. Some departments within the College of Science and Mathematics have added the LBDL to their list of electives allowing students to apply the course to their degree. In all cases, the departments have limited the number of units students may apply to their degree. For example, students in Biological Sciences can only apply two units of LBDL toward their degree as an elective.

Recruiting: Students are actively recruited to participate in the LBDL. Today, the LBDL has been offered consistently for over 10 years and word-of-mouth among students drives much of the enrollment. Initially, active recruiting by faculty was essential. Short classroom visits targeting 2nd-year STEM majors, advertising in student newspapers, and posting informational fliers in public spaces in STEM departments have all been effective. We provide evidence that LBDL experience increases perceptions of the teaching profession and specifically increases affirmation to prompts like “I plan to become a teacher.” However, the majority of LBDL participants do not intend to become teachers. Hence, in our recruiting materials and presentations we are careful to avoid saying that the experience is intended exclusively for pre-service teachers. Evidence presented here indicating that LBDL experience develops 21st century competencies should be incorporated into recruiting for any LBDL-like program to appeal to students focused on health professions, engineering, or any other STEM field.

Timeline: The quarter-long (10 week) timeline for the LBDL (Figure 2) was driven by the needs of the SIs, many of whom were doing their first-ever teaching experience. We *could* have increased the number of visiting school children if we reduced the class time devoted to preparation and collaboration. Three of the ten weeks are dedicated to preparation and practice and we strongly encourage any SFES considering an LBDL-like program to resist the urge to maximize the number of visiting schools at the expense of some of these ‘quiet’ weeks. We believe that the first two weeks, during which no schools are visiting, are essential to helping these novice teachers prepare and build a supportive community. In the sixth week of the quarter the cohorts of SIs switch the content they are teaching (i.e. the students who were teaching life science switch to teaching physical science and vice versa.) This mid-point switch has several advantages. The midpoint switch provides a break from the high-energy weeks (3-5 and 7-10) when students visit. The switch also helps to keep the content fresh for the SIs who might tire of teaching the same hour-long module for the entire duration of the course. However, the biggest benefit of switching content is to give the SIs the opportunity to apply what they learned from their first weeks of teaching. We are always impressed by how effectively the SIs, now with three weeks of teaching experience under their belts, collaborate to plan the teaching of the new content making evidence-based decisions about pedagogy and scaffolding.

Administration and Funding: Throughout its development the LBDL has benefited from strong institutional support. Most logistics are managed by an administrative assistant at CESAME who is committed to LBDL-related activities for about 10 hours per week during quarters when the LBDL is offered. The administrative assistant covers most non-teaching-related details of the LBDL. For example, the administrative assistant sends email notifications about the program to local schools, manages the registration list (see below), arranges day-of logistics with schools especially related to bus drop off, pick up, and parking, and is the day-of contact with the lead teacher from any visiting school. LBDL does not manage other aspects of a school’s visit to campus but we have developed an information packet with suggestions for places to eat lunch (including when it’s raining), and lists of other on-campus groups with outreach programs that schools can take advantage of if they wish to extend their on-campus field trip beyond the LBDL hours.

Practically, the LBDL offers a no-cost option for a STEM focused field trip. School sites and individual teachers are invited to apply to bring groups of 3-8th grade students of any size, with up to 100 students on any given day. Larger school groups are split across multiple days. If several small school groups apply, they are grouped together to yield approximately 100 visiting students. Because demand for accommodations is far greater than our 3500 student/year capacity, a lottery system using an algorithm developed to maximize the number of students who are able to attend the laboratory is employed to ensure equitable access. Priority is given to school sites that have not visited the LBDL in the prior year.

Materials costs for the LBDL are covered in two ways. Most new lab activities require an initial investment in permanent materials (i.e. equipment). These are purchased using funds from the CSU-wide Math Science Teaching Initiative (MSTI) program. The goals of the program are to support recruiting and training of STEM teachers and the LBDL fits well with this goal. Consumable materials are generally low cost and are paid for by the participating departments.

Adaptability to Virtual Teaching: During the COVID pandemic, implementing the standard in-person LBDL model was not an option. We could either develop a Virtual LBDL experience or not offer the course. As an advisor approved elective, a handful of students needed this course to graduate, so we decided to keep the course open and experiment with Virtual LBDL offerings. Over four terms, we have engaged more than 70 Cal Poly students and welcomed more than 3000 visitors, through live, synchronous Virtual LBDL sessions hosted via Zoom.

In experimenting with a Virtual LBDL offering, the experience of our SIs remained our top priority. To this end SIs were directly engaged in developing virtual, hands-on modules. While building modules, they focused on equity and safety, believing it was essential that visiting kids have easy access to the materials needed for any given activity and that activities could be carried out safely with minimal in-person supervision. To date SIs have developed three modules one focused on Kitchen Chemistry, one focused on Environmental Literacy and Engineering, and one focused on Visualizing Unseen Forces (tied to a NASA uplink). The process SIs went through to develop and refine virtual modules mirrored our traditional face-to-face approach and seemed to give SIs similar opportunities for growth.

We have experimented with two models for recruiting and engaging visiting kids. Our first model engaged families directly through social media, local parent teacher associations, and word of mouth. Families could sign-up kids from 3-8th grade to join a 90-minute session and would receive short one-page descriptions of each activity and the materials kids would need. During the activities, visiting kids were encouraged to do the activities as modeled by the SIs. This recruitment approach resulted in large, diverse groups of visitors, mostly from California but with representation from 10 other states, Canada, Europe, South America, and Asia. This model was effective for visitors when public school offerings were virtual and heavily asynchronous. Our second model for recruiting and engaging visiting kids reverted to our traditional “classroom” based approach. Using our existing lottery system, regional teachers could apply to bring groups of up to 60, 5-8th or 3-4th grade students to the Virtual LBDL for a ~90-minute session. One-page activity descriptions were shared with teachers who distributed them to students in their classes. This recruitment approach resulted in visitor groups that most resembled our face-to-face meetings, with narrow grade bands from local schools. This model was most effective when school sites were 100% virtual and mostly asynchronous. This model was less effective in hybrid situations, where a portion of the visiting students were on-site at their schools and a portion were at home.