Ocean Pollution Experiment

World Oceans Day is June 8! We’re celebrating by reminding everyone to keep our oceans clean by not polluting. Pollution is caused when something unnatural, like plastic or oil, enters a natural environment, like air or water. Pollution can be very harmful to the plants and animals who live in these environments. Trash in the ocean can harm marine plants and make fish sick. In this experiment, learn how challenging it is to remove pollution from the ocean once it is there, and the importance of being responsible with our garbage.

Gather Supplies:

- Large Clear Container
- Oil
- Dirt
- Trash
- Tongs
- Sieve
- Water
- Sponge
- Coffee Filter
- Funnel
- Jug
- 3-5 Pieces of Trash (ex. food wrappers, plastic containers)

1. Pour clean water into a large container.
2. 

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3. Add some oil to the water.

4. Put a little dirt in the water.

5. Add various pieces of trash to the water.

6. Now look at your “polluted” water. Let’s think of ways we can clean it up!
7

Use tongs to remove large pieces of trash from the water.

8

Try to use the tongs to remove the dirt and oil. Does that work?

9

Try to use the slotted spoon to remove dirt and oil.

10

Try to use the sieve to filter out the dirt and oil from the water.
11. Use the sponge to try to wipe away the dirt and oil.

12. Check to see how your water is after your different cleaning attempts. Is it still dirty?

13. Place a coffee filter in a funnel and try to filter some water into a jug.

14. Take a look at your filtered water. Is there still oil and dirt in it?
CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Was it easy to dirty the water?
Was it easy to clean it up?

It was very easy to make the water dirty. It was much harder to get the water clean again after dirtying it. And really, the water was never as clean as when we started the experiment. Similarly, it is very difficult to clean our oceans after we’ve polluted them. The best thing that we can do for our oceans is to keep garbage and oil out of them!