

This activity suits individuals, pairs or groups Age 10+

## OIL SPILL

### TASK

To see what happens when you try to remove oil from water

### EQUIPMENT

A range of absorbent materials e.g. kitchen towel, tissue, kitchen cloth, old rag, newspaper, washing up liquid, **oil absorbent products**,\* cooking oil, water, suitable bowl or tray.

\*See The Green Marine Directory at [www.thegreenblue.org.uk/greendirectory](http://www.thegreenblue.org.uk/greendirectory) for oil absorbent products.

### ACTIVITY

- Pour enough clean water to cover the base of a bowl or tray.
- Pour a drop of cooking oil onto the water

What happens when...

1. ...oil is spilt onto water?
2. ...you try to soak it up with paper materials?
3. ... you try to soak it up with old rags or cloths?
4. ...you add washing up liquid?
5. ... an oil absorbent sock is placed in the water?
6. What was most effective at **removing** oil from the water?
7. Why shouldn't you use washing up liquid to spread an oil spill?



Answers: 1 It spreads out on the surface of the water. 2 The paper becomes soggy. 3 The rags soak up mostly water. 4 The oil spreads out and mixes into the water. 5 The oil and not the water is absorbed into the material. 6 Oil absorbent products. 7 It just spreads and mixes the oil in the water.