Ever touch something gooey? Stick your fingers in a jar of cold cream. Make some mud pies. Feel some spit. Ick!

**Gooey Stuff**

Gooey stuff feels soft and thick and sort of wet. You can push it around easily, but it is not very runny. It has no real shape. Gooey stuff sticks together. A blob of goo will plop off a spoon or hang in a heavy drop that slowly gets longer and longer.

Go on a goo hunt around your house. How many gooey things can you find? Here’s a list to get you started: toothpaste, shampoo, syrup, ice cream, glue, chewed food.

There are many kinds of goo. Some is pleasant and creamy. Some is icky and smelly. Some goo keeps out water; other goo keeps it in. Some goo makes things slip and slide; other goo sticks things together. All living things make goo, and an important part of all living things is gooey stuff.

All the different kinds of gooey stuff, and all the different ways it can be used make it very interesting. Some scientists study goo. They ask questions about it. What is it made of? What does it do? How can you use it? How can you make it?

You can be a scientist and make your own study of goo. This book shows you how. Make goo you can eat. Learn how goo protects you. Discover goos that stop being gooey.

Want to play with gobs of goo? Read on.
Slimy Goo

Want to feel some slimy goo? Let a raw egg run through your fingers. Pick up a wet fish or hold a raw oyster. Touch a trail left on glass by a land snail.

Slimy goo feels wet and thick and a little like greasy goo and a little like sticky goo. Snails make a kind of slime to travel on. Their slime helps them stick to a smooth surface like glass. It also helps them glide slowly along their path.

Egg white, another slimy goo, protects the yolk inside its shell. See for yourself. The next time someone is going to cook eggs, hold a raw egg and shake it hard. Then crack it open into a bowl, carefully. If you don’t break the yolk when you crack the egg, the yolk will still be whole. The egg white kept the yolk in the middle of the egg and protected it from banging against the shell. The mother hen often moves her eggs. The white makes sure the yolk stays whole so that it can develop properly.

Slimy goo protects things that live in water. Many water plants in fish tanks, frogs’ eggs, and fish are coated with slime. When you hold your hands in water for a long time, your fingers get to look like prunes. Water flows into your skin and makes it swell and get wrinkled. A coat of slimy goo keeps this from happening to many things that live in water. Water can’t get through the slime.

Here’s something you can do with slimy goo. You can blow bubbles in it. Try blowing bubbles in egg white. To do this, you have to separate the yolk from the white. This is tricky and may take some practice. The idea is to keep the yolk whole. You can scramble your mistakes. You will need these things:

- two small bowls
- a table knife
- an egg
- a jar or juice glass
- a straw

Give a sharp rap with the blade of the knife to the middle of the side of the egg. It should crack cleanly. If it doesn’t, give another light tap in the same place.

Hold the cracked egg in an upright position in your left hand over one of the bowls. Put the thumbnail of your right hand into the crack and pry off the top half of the eggshell. (Use the opposite hands if you are left-handed.) When you remove the top of the eggshell, egg white will run over your hand into the bowl. If the yolk did not break, you’re halfway there. If the yolk is broken, dump the egg into the bowl and start over with a fresh egg and another bowl.

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