



# MIND STRETCHING FUN!

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## December 2008 Newsletter

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### Grow your own snowflake!

Did you know that snowflakes are made up of two to 200 separate snow crystals? Snow crystals are crystals that have formed around tiny bits of dirt that have been carried up into the atmosphere by the wind. Make a beautiful snowflake from real crystal while learning some basic principles of chemistry.

#### What you'll need:

- Wide mouthed jar
- 3 white pipe cleaners
- String
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Boiling water
- Spoon
- Borax
- Optional: blue food coloring

#### Directions:

- Twist the pipe cleaners together to make a six-sided, figure. Make sure it can fit inside the wide-mouthed jar.
- Tie the string around the pipe cleaners to form a snowflake shape.
- Tie a few inches of string to one of the pipe cleaners and tie the other end to a pencil.
- Fill the jar with boiling water and add about 3 tablespoonfuls of Borax into the jar for every cup of water. Add a few drops of blue food coloring if you wish.

- Hang the pipe cleaner snowflake into the jar so that the pencil rests on top of the jar and the snowflake is completely covered with liquid and hangs freely (not touching the bottom of the jar).

Let your snowflake sit overnight. In the morning it will be covered with beautiful crystals.

**Why it works:**

As the supersaturated solution cools, the borax comes out of solution (less of the Borax can dissolve in cool water) and forms crystals on the pipe cleaners and string.