Detergent Derby
How do laundry detergents work?

**What to do:** Add the detergent to one of the jars. Screw the lid on, shake the jar, and remove the lid. The other jar will contain only plain water. Now drop three or four pieces of string into each jar and watch what happens to the strings.

**What happens:** The strings in the jar of plain water float on the surface, while the strings in the detergent water soon sink to the bottom.

**Why:** The strings that dropped to the bottom of the glass of detergent water had become water-soaked. The water and detergent mixture is an emulsion, or liquids floating in one another. This emulsion caused the strings to get wetter faster. The simple idea of using detergent as a "wetting agent" helps to remove dirt from clothes.