NOT A BURNING QUESTION

BET YOU CAN'T KEEP A MATCH BURNING OVER A GLASS OF SODA!

THE SETUP: Check with an adult in your house before doing this trick, which involves fire. You will need a fresh bottle of carbonated soft drink and a match. Pour the soda into a glass. Light a wooden match and hold it over the glass. Be careful not to burn your fingers!

THE FIX: The warning about burning your fingers is our little joke. There is no chance your fingers will get burned. The match is quickly extinguished when you hold it close to the soda. This is because the soda contains carbon dioxide gas under pressure. When the bottle is opened, the bubbles of gas burst at the surface and the area just above the glass becomes rich in carbon dioxide and poor in oxygen. Fire is heat and light energy that is released when a fuel is combined with oxygen. Remove the oxygen and the reaction stops. In this case, the match quickly burns up whatever oxygen there is in the vicinity and only carbon dioxide, which won't support combustion, remains. So the match goes out.

NOTE: This trick requires a bottle of freshly opened soda. The wager will fall flat if the beverage is flat!