



What's the Matter with My Orange? *Background Information*



Yeast

What is it?

Yeast is a form of fungi. Fungi are organisms that are neither plants nor animals. They feed on dead and decaying matter to get their energy. Yeasts can ferment sugars to produce alcohol and carbon dioxide.

How does it relate to this activity?

The oranges in sealed containers provide the right conditions for certain yeasts to grow. These yeast help to decompose the orange by feeding on the energy stored in the orange. When the yeast and bacteria in the container use up the available oxygen, they will get energy through the process of fermentation. The sweet alcohol smell emanating from the sealed jars is the result of fermentation.

Did you know?

Yeast fermentation is used to raise bread. Yeast mixed into bread dough gets energy from the dough and gives off a gas waste product. This gas causes dough to rise prior to baking and gives us fluffy bread instead of flat, heavy bread.