



Lab Investigation: Terrarium

A terrarium is a miniature garden in a glass bowl or jar. In this lab, you will replicate the water cycle by creating a terrarium. You will observe changes in your terrarium over the course of one week.

Materials

- clear glass jar with a lid
- one or two small plants (small enough to fit in the jar)
- bottlecap
- soil
- sand
- small rocks

Note: the amount of soil, sand, and rocks depends on the size of your jar. See instructions below.

Procedure

1. Place a layer of small rocks in the bottom of your jar.
2. Cover the rocks with a layer of sand, and then a layer of soil. Each of these these layers—rocks, sand, and soil—should be about the same thickness, and should fill your jar about halfway.
3. Carefully transplant the small plants into the jar, digging a small hole in the soil and making sure the roots are covered completely. You may have to add a little more soil, depending on the size of your plants. If your plants reach above the lip of the jar, you will have to trim them so they can fit completely inside.
4. Fill a bottle cap with water and place it on the soil.
5. Place the lid on the jar. Your terrarium is complete.

6. Put the terrarium in a sunny place.
7. Observe your terrarium for a week. Try to notice the different parts of the water cycle.
8. Record your observations on the data table below.

Data Table: Terrarium Water Cycle

OBSERVATIONS	
Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	
Day 6	
Day 7	

Conclusions

1. Summarize the results of this lab investigation.

2. Explain how this lab demonstrates the water cycle.
