

Studying science in the summertime

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HOUGHTON - The idea of summer school takes on a new meaning this week and next week during Summer Science Camps at Michigan Technological University. Hosted by the Center for Science and Environment at the Great Lakes Research Center, the two sessions introduce children to subjects such as science, engineering and nature.

"We're really big on learning but we want them to have fun and realize science is fun, not a subject to dread," said instructor Beth Squires.

The camps are broken up into two groups of students, the first in grades one through three and the second in grades four through six. The first session began Tuesday and runs through today with session two starting June 24 and ending June 26. Students in grades one through three participated in the "Science Explorers" session this week, learning about physics, chemistry and engineering concepts.



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Students attempt to mix glue during summer science camp at Michigan Technological University's Center for Science and the Environment at the Great Lakes Research Center. The first session started Tuesday and runs through today with the second session running Tuesday through June 26.

"We have a kind of theme for each day," Squires said.

On Wednesday, Squires helped the group learn chemistry concepts with activities such as making secret formulas. In the experiment, that secret was glue.

"I like it because you can make glue," said Birk Seagren, who is going into second grade.

"It's cool to be able to make stuff," his sister, Ingrid Seagren, agreed.

To make the glue, students mixed water with a powder and then tested their solutions by gluing two pieces of paper together and rating the success of their solution on a worksheet. Papers that stuck together for 30 seconds or more, as did the Seagrens', were considered successful.

"I've done this one before and it's really fun," said Joan Chadde, education program coordinator. "Glue is really important to kids, they need those things to stick together!"

During this session the older group is at Nara Nature Park learning nature skills. Session two will have the younger group at "Critter Camp" at Nara Nature Park while the older group heads to the Great Lake Research Center for "Rockets and Roller Coasters." Spots are still available for the next session and people can register online at wupcenter.mtu.edu.

"I think for a lot of these kids to get totally immersed in science is wonderful," Squires said. "A lot of the kids here have a really strong interest so it's something that just reminds them of science and builds on what they already know and helps them to have a better foundation when they go back to school or just to be more excited about it."