



Cheshire Cat
Presents

Alice's Wonderland

a most curious adventure

Incognito Ink

In today's activity, you'll experiment with disappearances and appearances by creating your own special ink!

Do you remember the Cheshire Cat? During her adventure, Alice meets a curious cat as she is walking through the woods. As they talk, he seems to appear and disappear many times. One time, "it vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone. 'Well, I've often seen a cat without a grin', thought Alice; 'but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in all my life!'"

■ Try it!

♣ There are many different ways to make invisible ink. We'll suggest one here and then you can experiment with others on your own.

♦ To start, mix together equal amounts of salt and hot water. (Two spoonfuls of each should work well.)

♣ Dip the cotton swab in the salt mixture and write a message or a picture on a piece of white paper.

♣ Let the ink dry. When it dries, your message should be invisible. Show it to a family member to see if they can read your message.

♦ Now you can show your parent the trick to reading your secret message. Rub your pencil gently over the area where you know you wrote your message. Can you see it now? What's the trick? Do you think this would work with sugar water instead?

Invite your parent to write a secret message for you using invisible ink. Write a message for your friends at school and then teach them how to decode your message!

Try it Again ■

♣ You can also send secret messages using mirrors. Have you ever tried writing upside down and backwards? Try it and then hold your message up to a mirror.

♦ You could even write an upside down and backwards message using invisible ink so that your friend would have to decode the message twice.

What You'll Need:

Salt



Hot Water



Q-tips



White paper



Mirror

Did you know?

During the Revolutionary War, invisible ink was used to send secret messages? Spies had to use heat or a special chemical to read the words written between the lines.

Invisible ink is used today to help stop illegal logging of trees in Brazilian rainforests.

Computer programmers have to decipher many different kinds of codes in the work that they do.



Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose
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Adventure into a book or newspaper

- 1 You can use the newspaper to write secret messages too. Cut out different words from the newspaper and use the words to create a secret message. Give your message to a parent and see how they respond!
- 2 When you hold a mirror up to a picture, it can make the picture look very different. Find a picture in a book or the newspaper and change it by holding the mirror up to it. Write a new story for the funny mirror image that you created.

Down the Rabbit Hole to Children's Discovery Museum

In the "Alice's Wonderland" exhibit at Children's Discovery Museum, watch as your grin is transformed into the grin of the Cheshire Cat. Try on butterfly wings, play with shadows in the Pool of Tears, and be transported to the curious world of Wonderland. Exhibition opens February 2, 2002. Come on down!

Curiouser and curiouser...

Check out these Internet sites and book to learn more invisible ink recipes and secret codes.

www.monroe2boces.org/shared/esp/invisibleink.htm

www.cyberparent.com/kidsdo/code1.htm

Two Bad Ants by Chris Van Allsburg



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