

meet an in2science mentor

Read about
Mentor Alana
who is studying
Ecology,
interviewed by
students from
partner school
Wheelers Hill SC



What do you study at University?

For my undergraduate degree I studied zoology, ecology and other biology subjects, as well as some chemistry and geosciences. Now I'm a PhD student studying giant prehistoric marsupials that were extinct 40,000 years ago! I'm trying to find out how they lived when they were alive by applying reverse-engineering.

Do you enjoy University?

Yes, I love learning. There are always fascinating new things to learn in science. Plus, I loved all the field trips and opportunities to travel.

What career paths does University offer?

If you choose to study science at university the possibilities are almost endless: from park rangers, zoo keepers, chemists, geologists, computer software developers, researchers, teachers and many more!

When putting in preferences for university, how do you choose the order without knowing your VCE score?

You should always choose what you enjoy, whether you think you'll get the score or not. If you're not sure what to study, choose a general degree like science, and you can make up your mind later.

What was your favourite thing about doing a science degree?

University was an amazing experience. I got to go on field trips to Queensland and Borneo, as well as doing volunteer work in Costa Rica and Melbourne Zoo!

www.in2science.org.au



Mummified

Heads

a biology
activity
for y8-10



Hello,

This activity is for you to try at home with your child and we hope it is both a fun and rewarding experience. Also included is an interview with one of our Peer Mentors undertaken by students at one of our partner schools.

Have fun!

- The In2science Team

Who are we?

The In2science Peer Mentoring in Schools program places volunteer university students as scientists and mathematicians in the classroom. Their role is to help inspire the next generation by being a role model to them of the importance of science, maths and learning.

In2science proudly funded by



Making Mummified Heads

aim

To make a mummified apple head for Halloween

what you

need

An apple

A potato peeler

Salt – enough to cover the apple (about a cup)

Bicarbonate of soda – (approximately a quarter cup)

A container (just bigger than the apple)

A teaspoon



instructions

- Peel the apple and carve out a face using a teaspoon



Take care peeling the apple

- Bury the apple in a mixture of 1 part bicarbonate of soda, 5 parts salt
- Make sure the apple is completely covered
- Leave it for several weeks until the apple goes all dry and wrinkly
- To preserve it for longer you can varnish it (e.g. with nail varnish) or coat it with PVA glue
- Decorate it!

What's happening?

time involved?

15 minutes to set up, but a few weeks to mummify

what's happening?

The salt around the apple acts as something called a desiccant; it absorbs the moisture around it. If you left an apple out exposed to the air it would begin to rot as bacteria and mould would start to break it down. Bacteria and mould both need water to thrive so if you use a desiccant to take away the moisture, they die and the apple is preserved.

This is how the ancient Egyptians used to preserve dead bodies like that of Tutankhamen. First they removed the internal organs like the brain and liver then packed the body with a mixture of natural salts called Natron, which were a bit like bicarbonate of soda. After drying out for a few days the body was wrapped in cloth soaked with resin that acted like nail varnish and stopped more water getting in.

further investigation

Try mummifying an apple using other desiccants like uncooked rice.

Find out how microorganisms such as bacteria and mould actually help organic material decay.