

The Atmosphere

Learning Activity 1

Objective:

Students will discover that the faster air moves, the lower the pressure becomes within that flow of air.

Overview:

Create low pressure by blowing between two soda cans.

Total Time:

10 minutes

Supplies:

Two empty soda cans, level surface

Procedure:

Lay the two cans parallel to each other, about one inch apart, near the edge of a level surface. Put your face down near the surface and blow between the two cans.

Discussion:

The two cans will roll together. In fact, the harder they blow, the faster the cans move toward each other. This is the Bernoulli's Principle in action. Bernoulli discovered that the faster a fluid flowed, the lower the pressure that was within that fluid.

By blowing between the two cans, you are making the air between them move faster than the surrounding air (which is basically calm). The cans roll together as the higher pressure surrounding the two cans (away from the air flow) pushes the cans together.