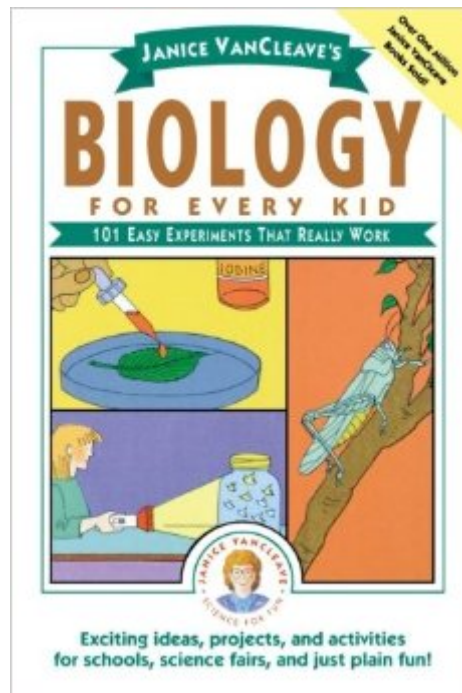


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# Janice VanCleave's Biology For Every Kid: 101 Easy Experiments That Really Work



## Synopsis

What's the effect of osmosis on a raisin? How is water transported through plant stems? What's the best way to grow penicillin? How are butterflies different from moths? Now you can discover answers to these and other fascinating questions about biology—the study of living organisms. In *Biology for Every Kid*, you'll learn how to talk with fireflies, watch bacteria wage war in a glass of milk, discover how to tell the temperature by counting cricket chirps, and find out how an apple and an onion can taste the same. Each of the 101 experiments is broken down into its purpose, a list of materials, step-by-step instructions, expected results, and an easy to understand explanation. Every activity has been pretested and can be performed safely and inexpensively in the classroom or at home.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (21 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

I reviewed this book in *The Home School Manual* =====Projects and activities to teach concepts, terminology, and (according to the author, Janice VanCleave) laboratory methods. This book and the others in the series each describe 101 experiments. For biology they are classified under plants, animals, and humans. Each is presented in a two-page spread with an illustration on the right. The order is logical. By working through the book doing some experiments and reading about the others, one would form significant concepts. An explanation is given for each activity. Growing carrots from carrot tops demonstrates that a plant can grow if it has portions of

base, stem, and root, and if it receives food and water. The explanations are oversimplified in some cases (for "finger monocle" for example). Younger students need simpler explanations, but I believe the scientific principles could be stated more accurately. Also, some of the illustrations could be improved, but basically the book is good. For a total science program I would recommend a textbook or a number of broad topic books. Individual experiments miss some of the overall themes and some concepts are hard to demonstrate. I have not seen evolutionary concepts in the book. It and others in the series seem best for about grades 3 through 5. Younger kids could profit from most of the activities. The explanations don't bring out the scientific principles clearly enough for older ones. Part of a series from John Wiley & Sons.

You will not be disappointed with this book! Janice VanCleave's *Biology For Every Kid* is divided into these categories: plants, zoology, and the human body with tons of simple hands-on experiments that you can do for each. I use these experiments all the time in my 7th grade classroom and the kids love them. Learning is so much better when it's hands-on! I would highly recommend this book for upper elementary and middle school science teachers.

As an experienced public-school science teacher, I find this book invaluable. Its contents range from simple, few-second demonstrations all the way to many-week experiments. Some of the experiments, such as the study of osmosis through use of salty water-soaked potato or cucumber slices, are commonly found in science books. Others, such as the spray painting and study of spider webs, and the counting of rings on fish scales to determine the age of the fish, are quite unique to this book. Students can learn the parts of the bean seed, and how to grow yeast and bacteria. The book is profusely indexed. All experiments are each concisely listed on two facing pages. This makes it very convenient to photocopy and hand out to students--as when making suggestions for science projects.

I wondered if this might be a good book for my nine-year-old granddaughter. So I used the "Look Inside the Book" feature and clicked on the very first experiment, "Spicy Escape". It contains the following explanation for the vanilla odor in a shoebox some time after a balloon filled with vanilla has been placed inside it: "The liquid vanilla molecules are too large to pass through the holes [in the balloon surface] but the molecules of vanilla vapor are smaller and pass through." This is incorrect in two fundamental ways: a) vanilla molecules are vanilla molecules, the same in liquid as in vapor. Unless the liquid is under extreme pressure, the vanilla molecules in the liquid are the

same size as the vanilla molecules in the vapor. b) What keeps the liquid from seeping through the holes is a combination of the internal binding that distinguishes liquid from vapor and adhesion of the liquid to the inner surface of the balloon. Is this nitpicking? I don't think so. The glib explanation involves misinformation about the molecules and a misdirected focus on the molecular level when bulk properties are really what count. It may be that other explanations are much better, but this one already disqualifies the book as an honest learning tool, in my opinion.

This book is filled with so many cool experiments. I love how most of them require ingredients that are easily accessible or those that you already have in your house. This book is also customizable. You can go as deep as you want with the experiments and the science behind it, or you can also choose to stay superficial. This makes it perfect for a variety of age groups, which makes it appealing to homeschooling families. I am pleasantly surprised by this book and recommend it. We are using it as part of our science curriculum. My son is 13. I paid full price for this product. My thoughts and opinions are my own.

This biology is nice with very easy experiment for very young kids to get them into science and to employ the scientific method in the most common scenarios. Some people may think it is too simplistic but as a biologist (I have my PhD to prove it), I use this for my 4, 8 and 10 year old kids. My 4 year old can follow these experiments quite easily with her older brothers leading. For my older kids, this introduces basic concepts in biology and they learn how to ask the right questions design simple experiments and then build on the knowledge they acquired. Most importantly you can find all the materials for these experiments around your house, your neighbor's house or your grocery store

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