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## Editor's Corner - "Gretch"

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## EDITOR'S CORNER

### "Gretch"

"Gretch" may be considered a material or an experience. The relationship between the material and the experience may have something in common with the relationship of matter and energy, although the creator of "Gretch" need not operate in the same intellectual sphere as Einstein. Currently, the original creator of "Gretch" is not known, and the name "Gretch" (which will be used temporarily until the original name is found) was formed by the author's blending of his source of information about the stuff and the nature of it. Correspondence identifying the original creator of "Gretch" will be gratefully acknowledged! Rumors abound, but the written word is elusive.

The "Gretch" matter and experience can be obtained by following these directions:

- 1) Pour a small amount of white glue in a container such as a clear 5 oz. plastic glass.
- 2) Pour in about the same amount of liquid starch.
- 3) Gently mix with the fingers.
- 4) Observe the matter and enjoy the experience.

Students should be given these three rules:

- 1) Your "Gretch" can not touch anything that belongs to anyone else.
- 2) Every question you think of about "Gretch" should be written down as a sentence.
- 3) All questions you can answer should have the answer written as a complete sentence.

The following questions were proposed by seventh grade students at Price Laboratory School at the University of Northern Iowa. Only questions to which the students found reasonable answers are listed. The student with the highest score (1 point for a good question and 2 points for a good answer) was Karine Walther with a score of 96 developed during about two class periods.

- 1) How much glue should I use?
- 2) How much starch should I use?
- 3) What determines the "best" combination of glue and starch?
- 4) What sound does it make if you squeeze it?
- 5) Can you stretch it?
- 6) To what length can it be stretched?
- 7) Will changing the amount of glue and starch allow it to stretch farther?
- 8) Does it pick up print from the newspaper?
- 9) Can you print with "Gretch"?
- 10) Does it bounce?
- 11) How high will it bounce?
- 12) Does it take the shape of its container?
- 13) Does it harden overnight?
- 14) Does it lose its flavor on the bedpost overnight? (Editor's question)

- 15) Does it erase pencil marks?
- 16) Does it change temperature when it is rolled?

A number of these questions lend themselves to the development of quantitative studies which can be carried on by middle or high school students.

Where did "Gretch" come from?

What have your students discovered about "Gretch"?

Would you write and share your information with us?

Please send your answers (worth 2 points each) to the editor.

— C.W.B.