

Blossoming Flower (Petal Pushing)

TOPIC: Capillarity

PROBLEM: Why do the petals open up?

INQUIRY SKILLS: observing, measuring, recording data,
inferring, forming hypotheses

TEACHER BACKGROUND: Capillarity is a name given to various surface tension phenomena in which the surface of a liquid confined in a narrow bore tube rises above or is depressed below the level it would have if it were unconfined. When the attraction between the molecules of liquid and those of the tube exceeds the combined effects of gravity, and the attractive forces within the liquid (cohesion), the liquid rises in the tube until equilibrium is restored. Capillarity is of importance in nature, particularly in the transport of fluids in plants and through the soil.

MATERIALS: Water, scissors, paper cut-outs, crayons, pie plates.

Procedure: Color in the design with crayons

cut out along the lines and

fold petals towards center - stop at the center

place gently in a pie plate (filled with water)

Watch the petals unfold

Why did this happen?

What could be some variables?

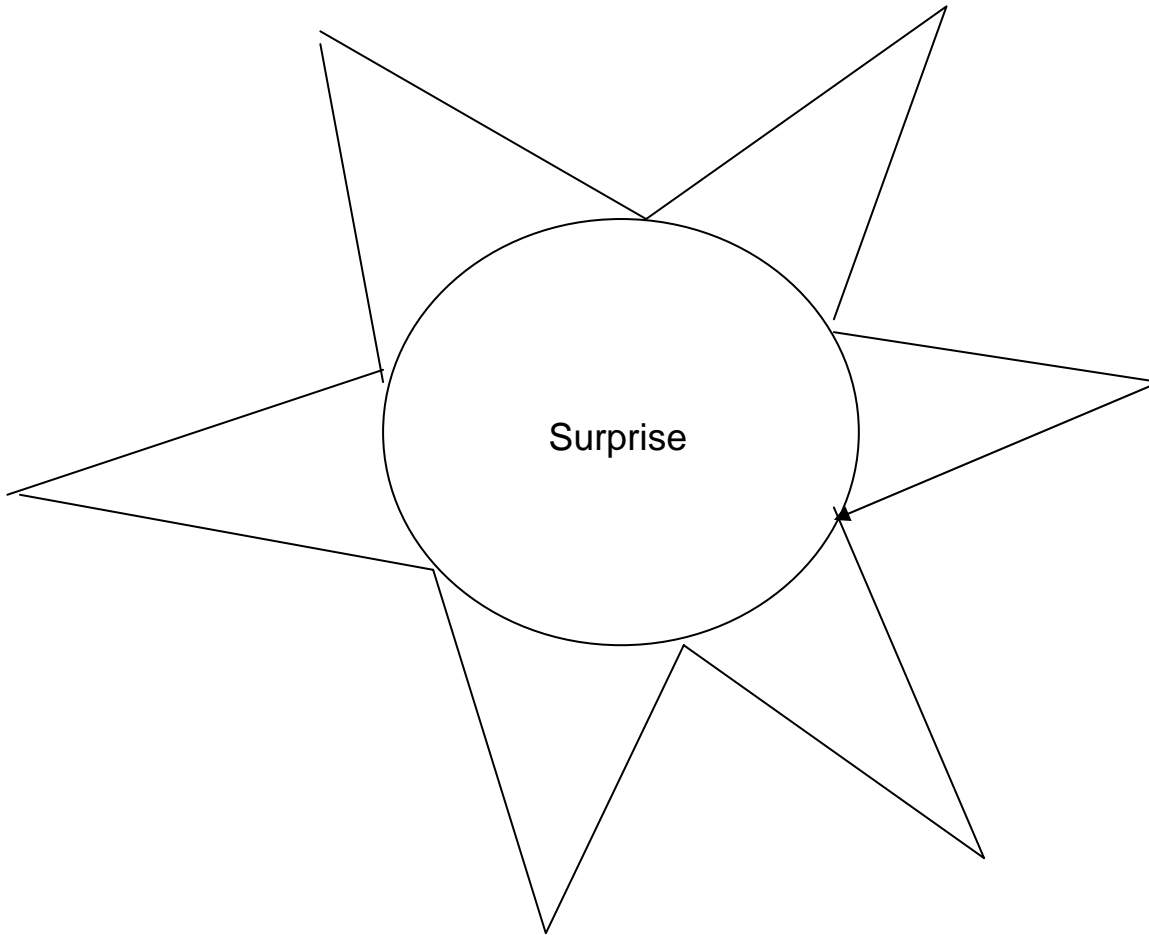


Diagram : Courtesy, P. Picasso