

# Landstuhl students show their Mad Science skills

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European edition, Wednesday, April 29, 2009

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Chemical concoctions that bubbled, pH levels that turned indicator paper different colors and hands-on experiments that created unusual substances and reactions showed children at Landstuhl Elementary-Middle School on Tuesday that learning science can be more than just book work.

More than 40 classes at the school were treated to a Mr. Wizard-like science demonstration that gave them opportunities to learn by doing. There were seven topics ranging from space travel to chemical reactions, with each lesson tailored to a specific grade level.

The lessons came courtesy of the education company Mad Science, a stateside-based organization that sent a handful of lab coat-clad "mad scientists" from Sittard, Netherlands. The school's Parent Teacher Student Association raised the \$5,500 needed to bring them to Landstuhl.

Madison Moran, an 11-year-old fifth-grader, said her favorite part of the Mad Science presentation was mixing a few liquids together and watching the results. "It started to bubble up and it got lighter and it got colder," she said.

One of the projects involved mixing glue and a chemical together to make a Silly Putty-like substance, something Madison said she planned on using to freak out her younger sisters.

"It's pretty cool that we are making 'Silly Putty,' and everything is so fun," said fifth-grader Matthew Duman, 12.

"It's pretty fun to be able to view someone from Holland [giving a science lesson]," added Caitlin Materla, 11, one of Matthew's classmates.

Fourth-grader Natasha Crouch and other students in Deborah Edmonds' class were psyched as they learned about hydrogen, acids, bases and pH levels from Mad Scientist Iyes Schols.

"It's really fun. He's good," Natasha said about Schols.

Natasha and her classmates got into the lesson by dipping indicator paper into various liquids to test the liquids' pH levels. They also got to go outside on a rainy day to make a baking-soda mixture and watch as it caused the lids of their test tubes to shoot off.

Fifth-grade teacher Sharon Emerling said Mad Scientist Rachel Jacobs held her students' attention for the entire hourlong lesson.

"I'm loving it, [Jacobs] is very interactive," Emerling said. "This is the first program I've seen like this."

Dawn Light, first vice president of the Parent Teacher Student Association, said Mad Science is an example of the enrichment programs they try to bring to the school every year.

"It has been a blast," Light said. "The kids love it."



Ben Bloker / S&S  
Mariah Bonaudi gazes at her Silly Putty-like creation Tuesday at Landstuhl Elementary. Students at Landstuhl experienced interactive science presented by a group from the Netherlands called Mad Science.



Ben Bloker / S&S  
Natasha Crouch, left, reacts to exploding test tubes as Dayna Berry waits for hers to pop. This particular lesson was an experiment in bases and acids.