



The Concord  
Consortium

## InfraMation 2012

The Largest Infrared Camera-Users Conference in the World

# Teaching Science with IR Imaging

Charles Xie

Infrared YouTube, <http://energy.concord.org/ir>

Sponsored by:



National Science Foundation  
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN

# Outline

- I. Science on a piece of paper
- II. An education perspective of IR imaging
- III. A science perspective of educational imaging
- IV. More science experiments
- V. People's reactions
- VI. An education market for IR cameras?
- VII. Opportunities for actions
- VIII. Acknowledgments

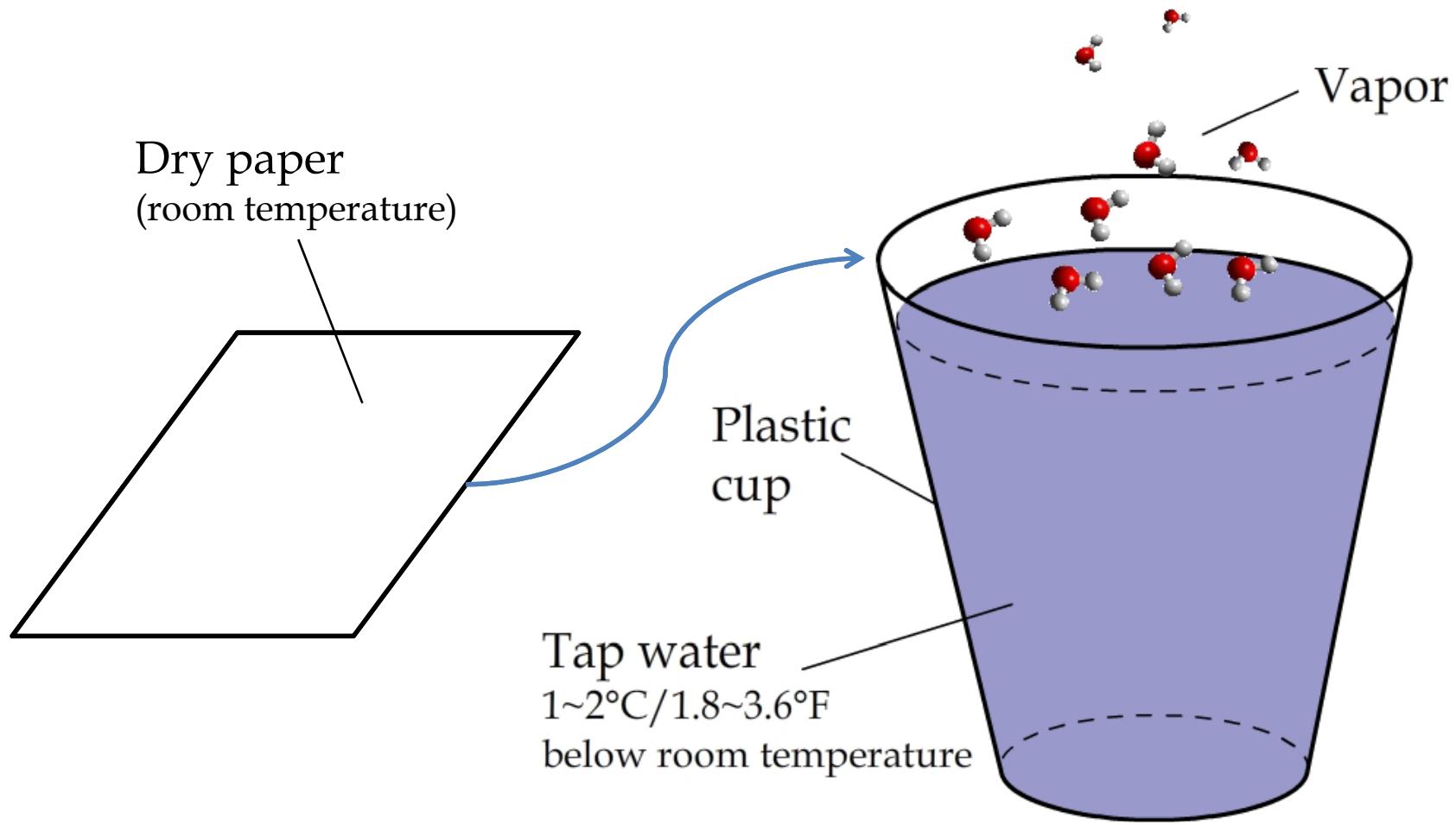


# The Concord Consortium

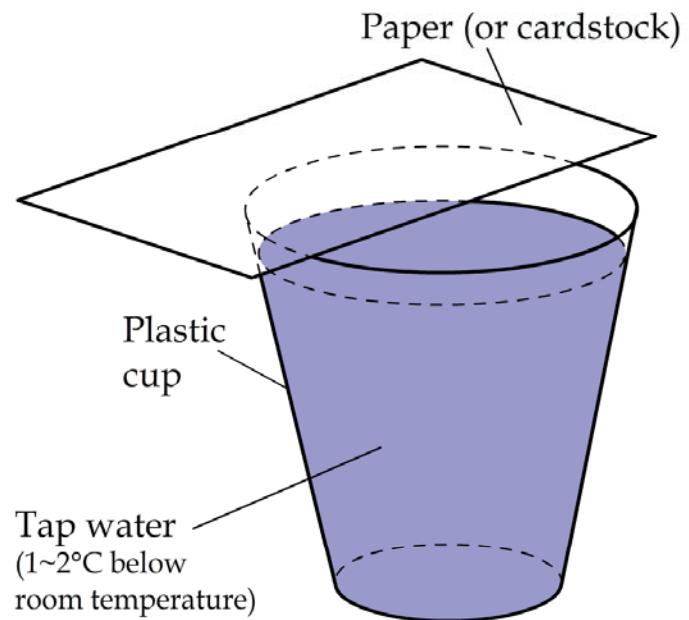
A non-profit organization  
realizing the educational promise  
of technology

<http://concord.org>

# Science on a piece of paper



# Put paper on top of water...

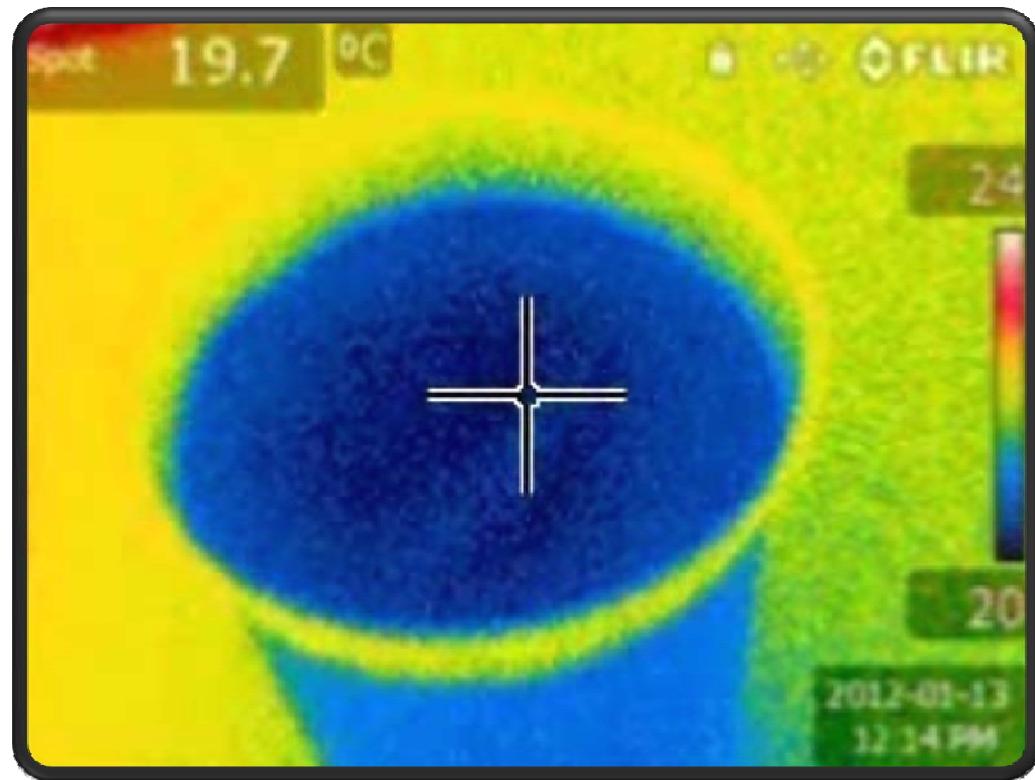


# What an IR camera sees

Camera:  
FLIR E30bx

Emissivity:  
0.95

Auto rescaling:  
On



# What an IR camera sees

Camera:  
FLIR E30bx

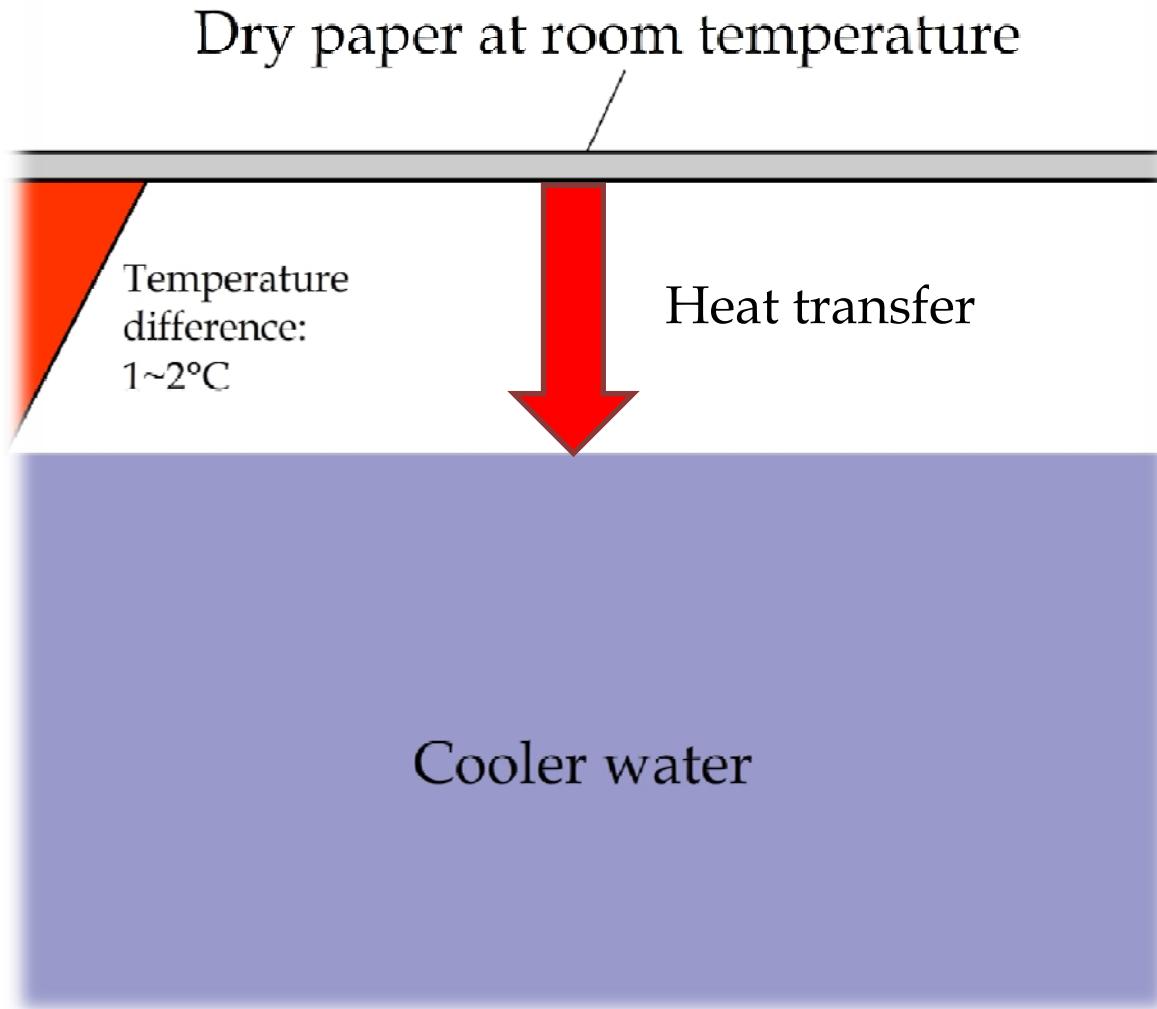
Emissivity:  
0.95

Auto rescaling:  
On

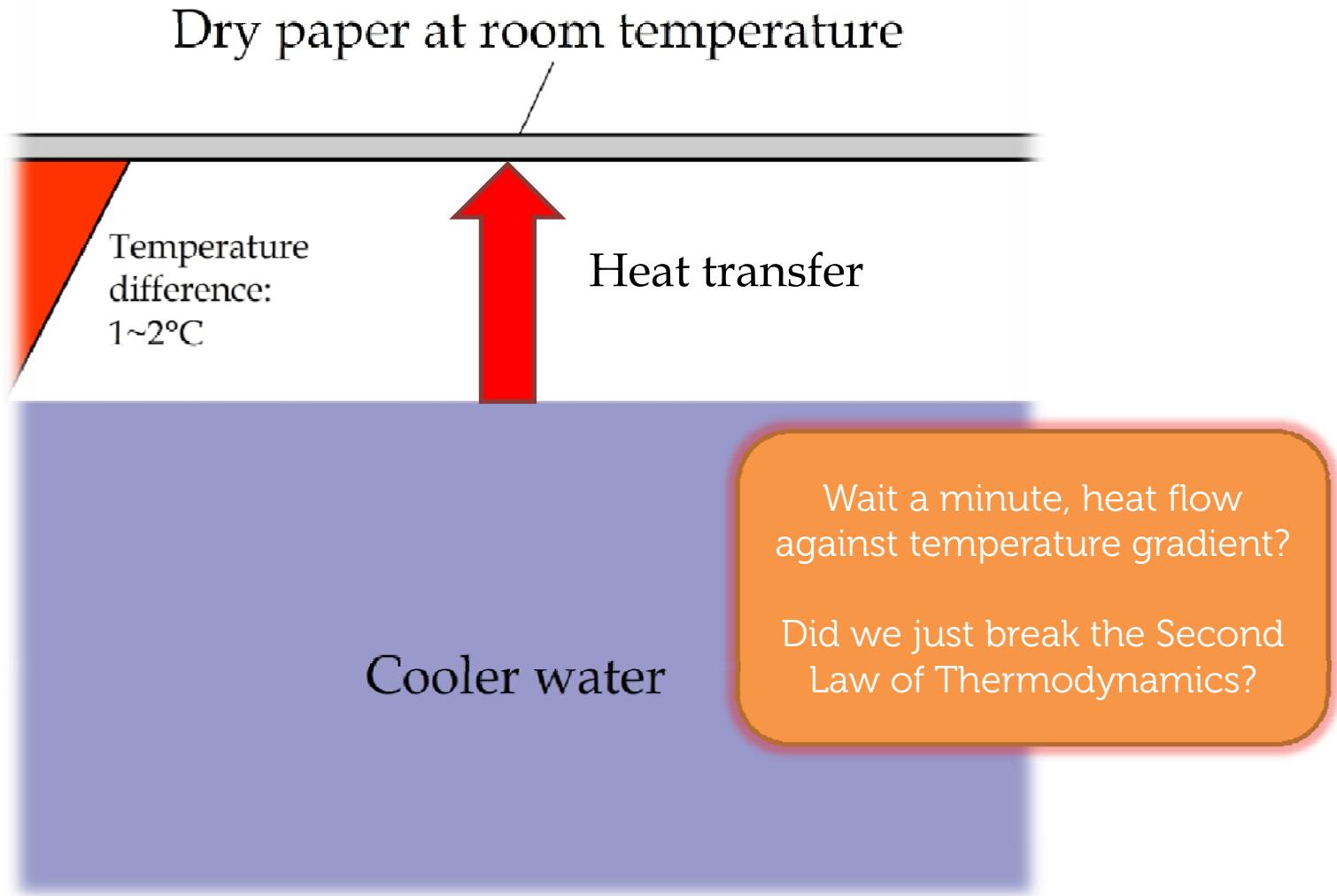
See the PEPSI logo  
from a cup of PEPSI  
drink through an IR  
camera!



# What I expected...

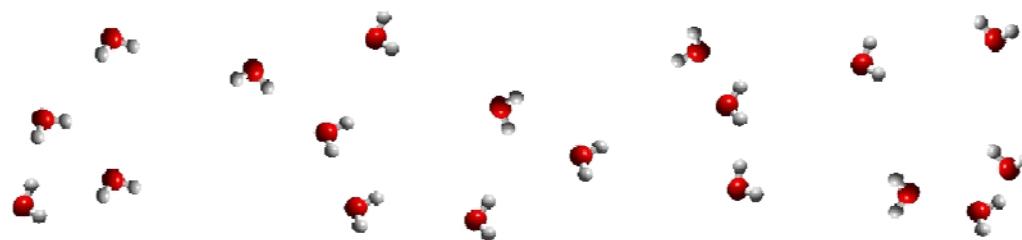


# What actually happened...



# What's going on?

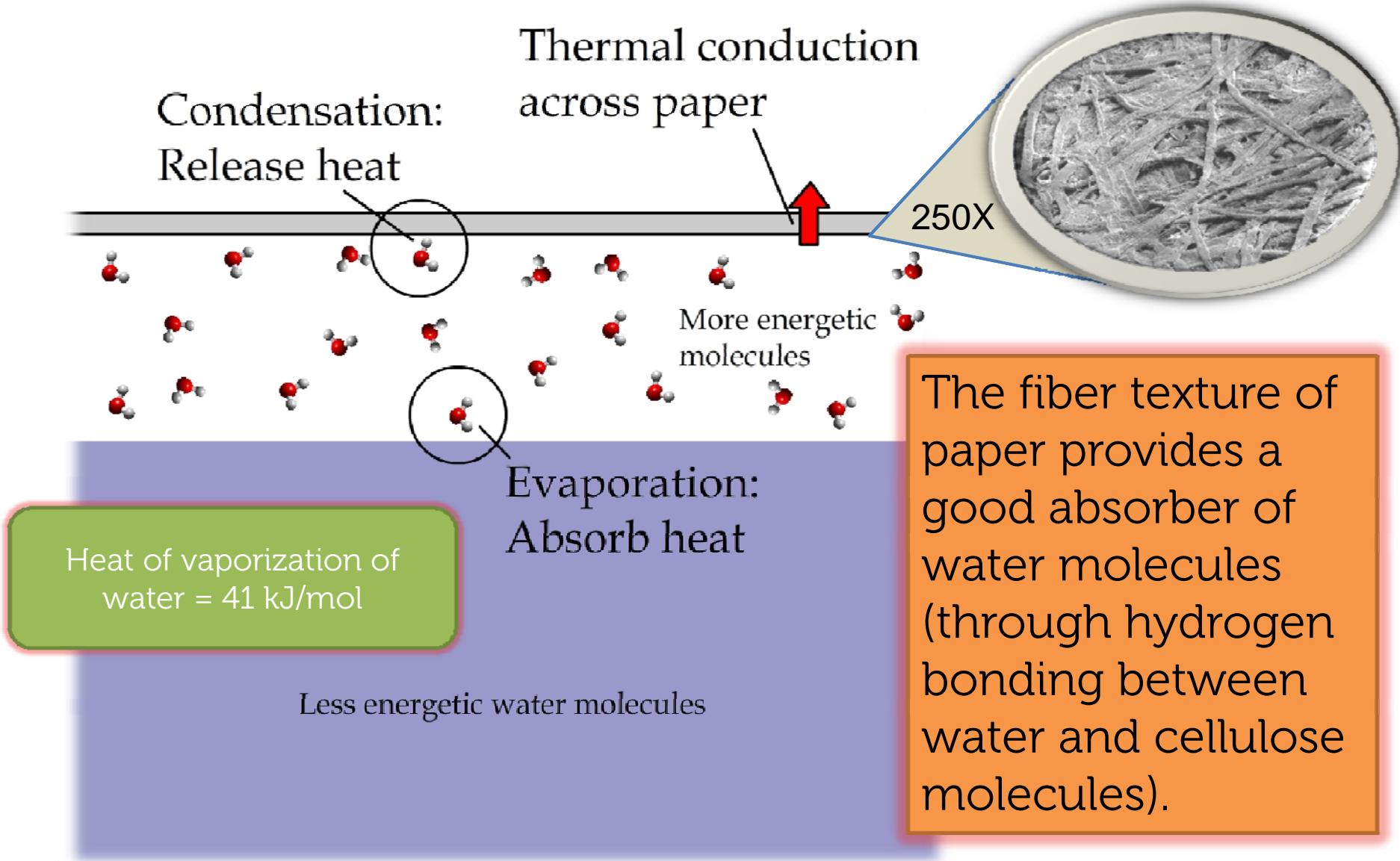
Dry paper at room temperature



Cooler water

Don't forget there is  
invisible water vapor.

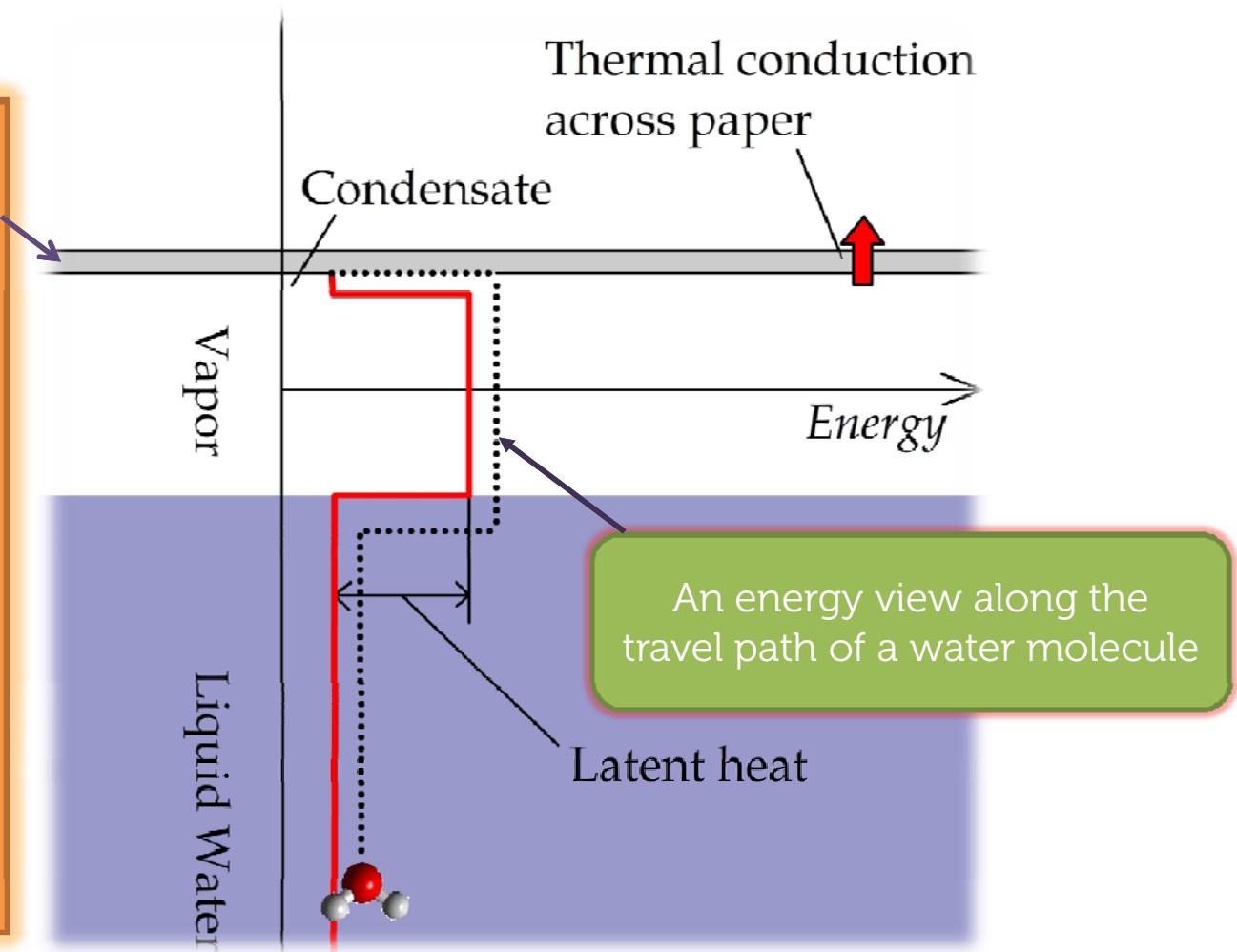
# Heat released in water absorption



# Heat transfer through two phase changes occurring at different places

The paper recovers the heat lost in evaporation.

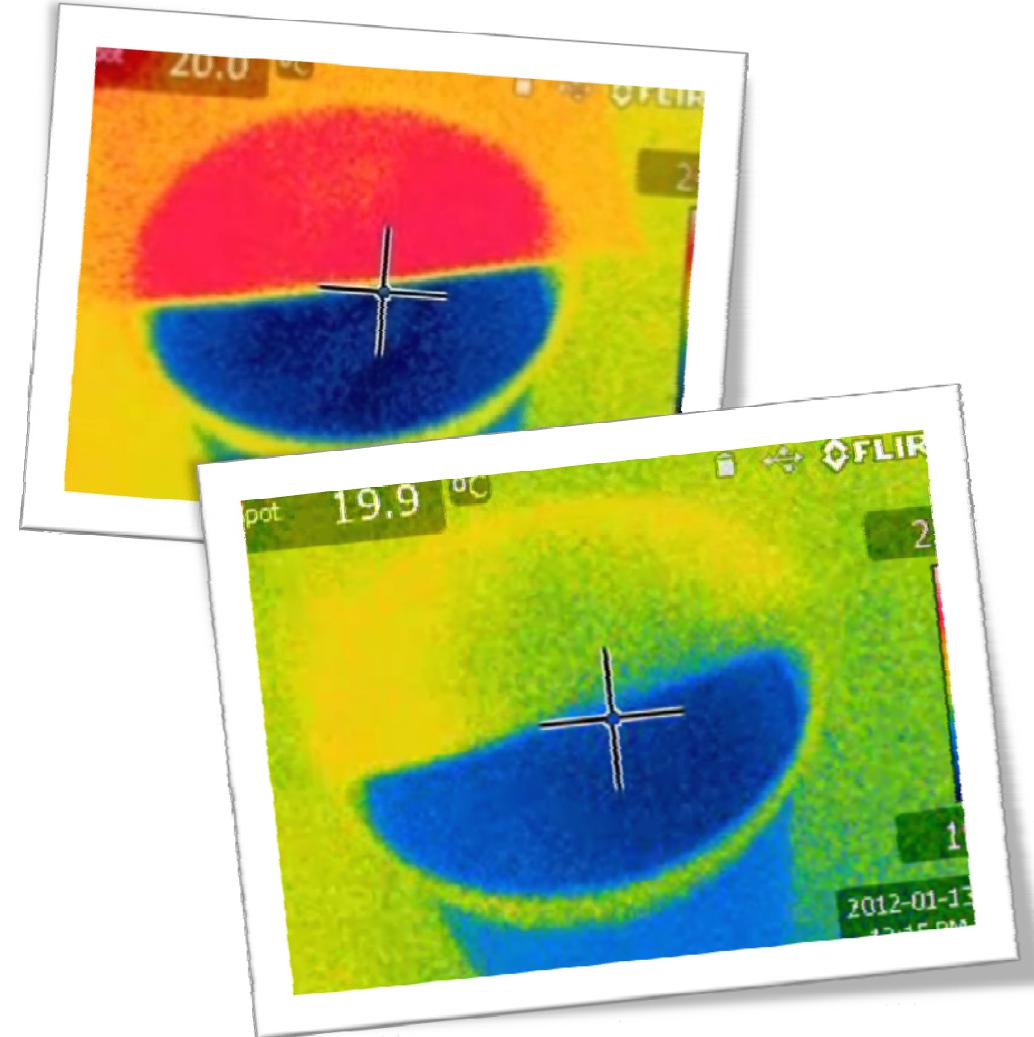
$H_2O$  acts like an energy carrier to transfer heat from water to paper.



# A cute story, isn't it? But wait!

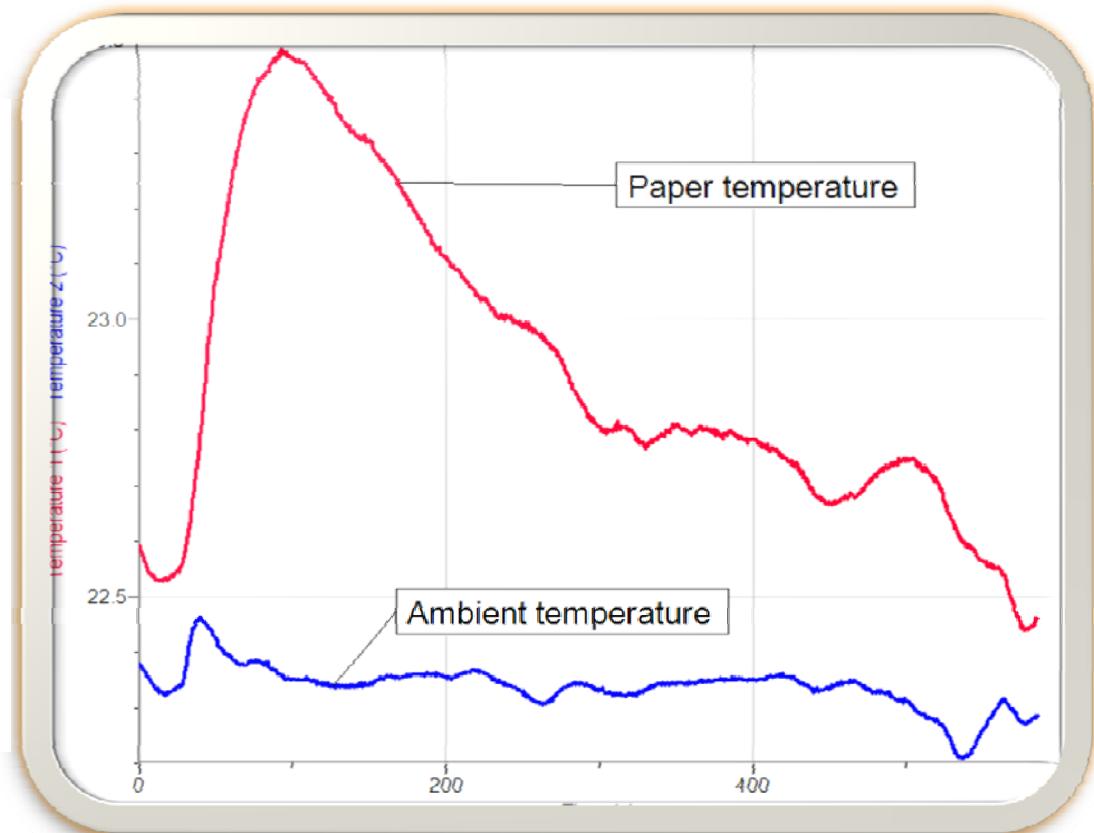
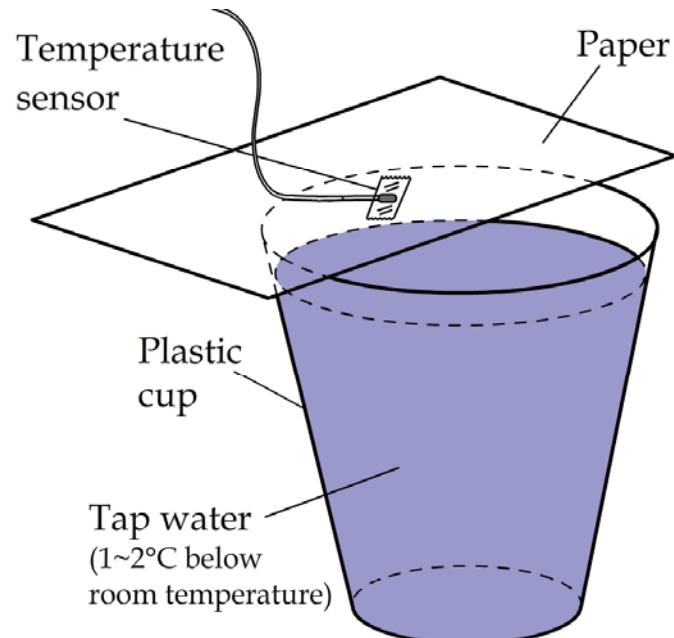
A new mystery?

Why did the condensation heating diminish in the video?



# Results from a data logger using a temperature sensor

Recorded on 10/22/2012

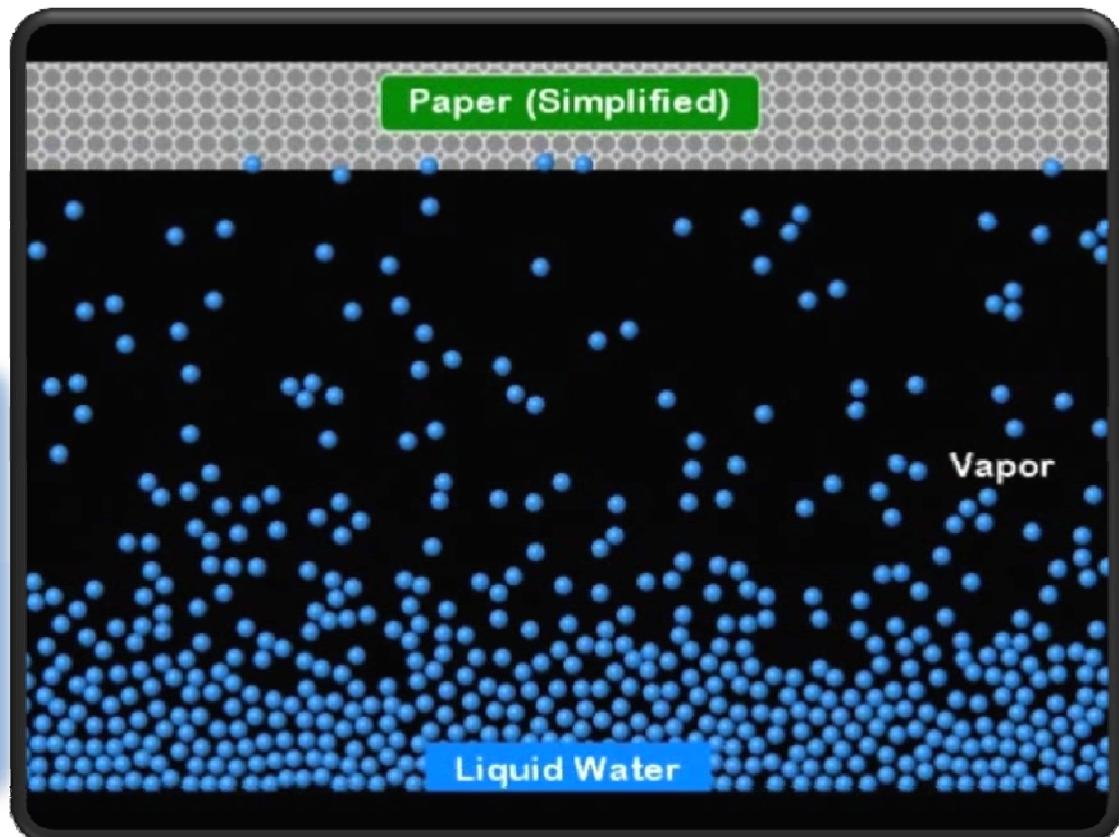
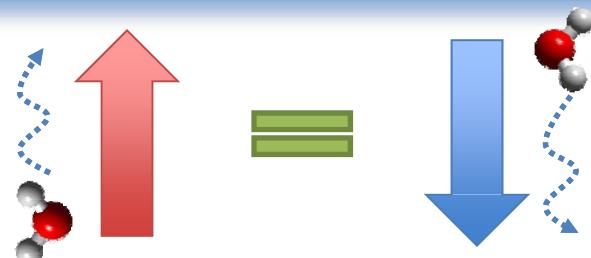


# Dynamic equilibrium

Molecular simulation

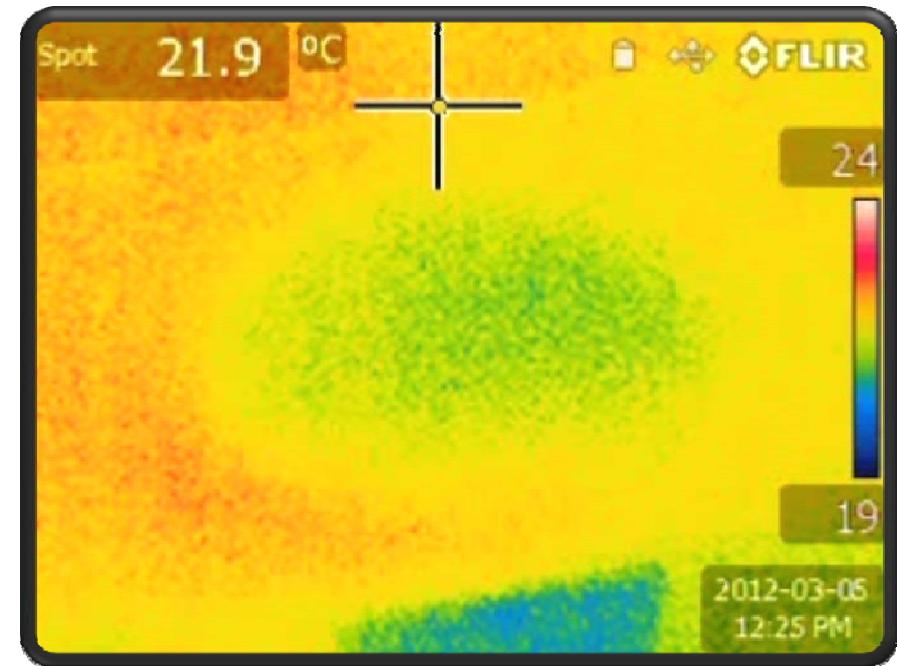
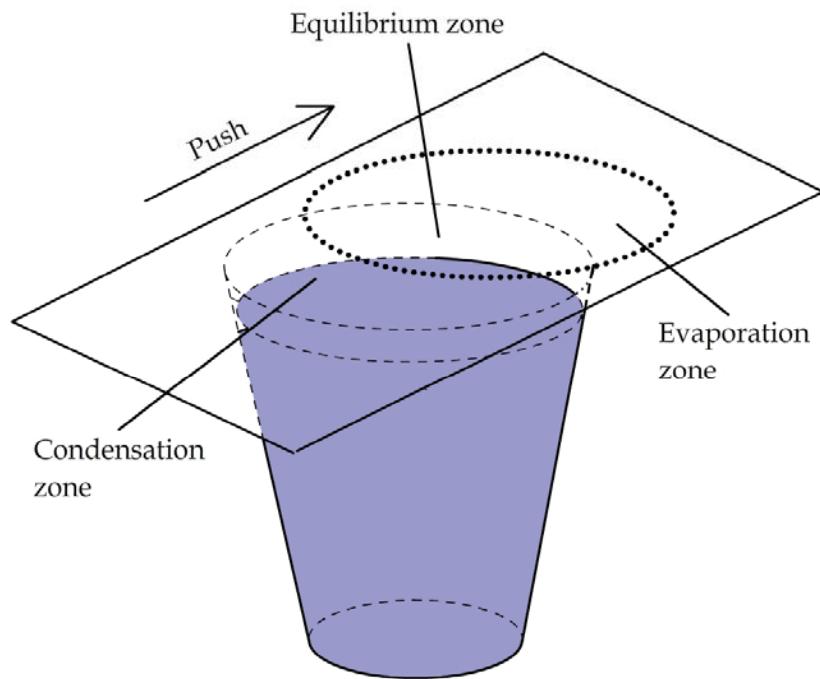


When the rate of condensation onto the paper equals the rate of evaporation from the paper...



# Breaking dynamic equilibrium

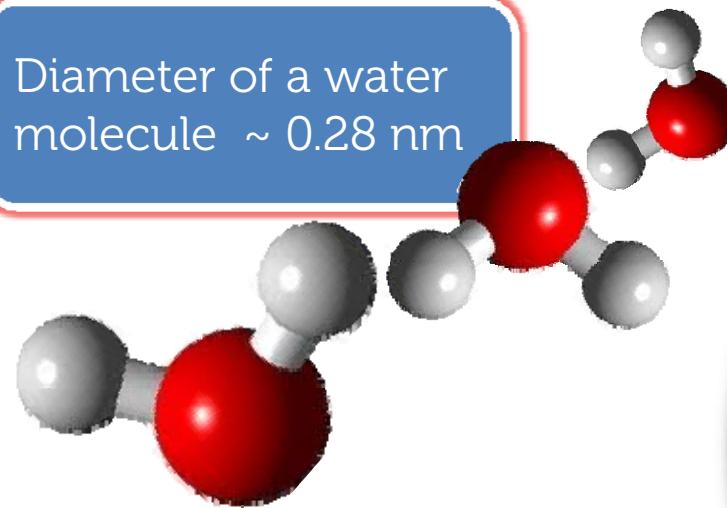
How can we be so sure that there is a dynamic equilibrium? Because we can break it – all you need to do is to push the paper a bit.



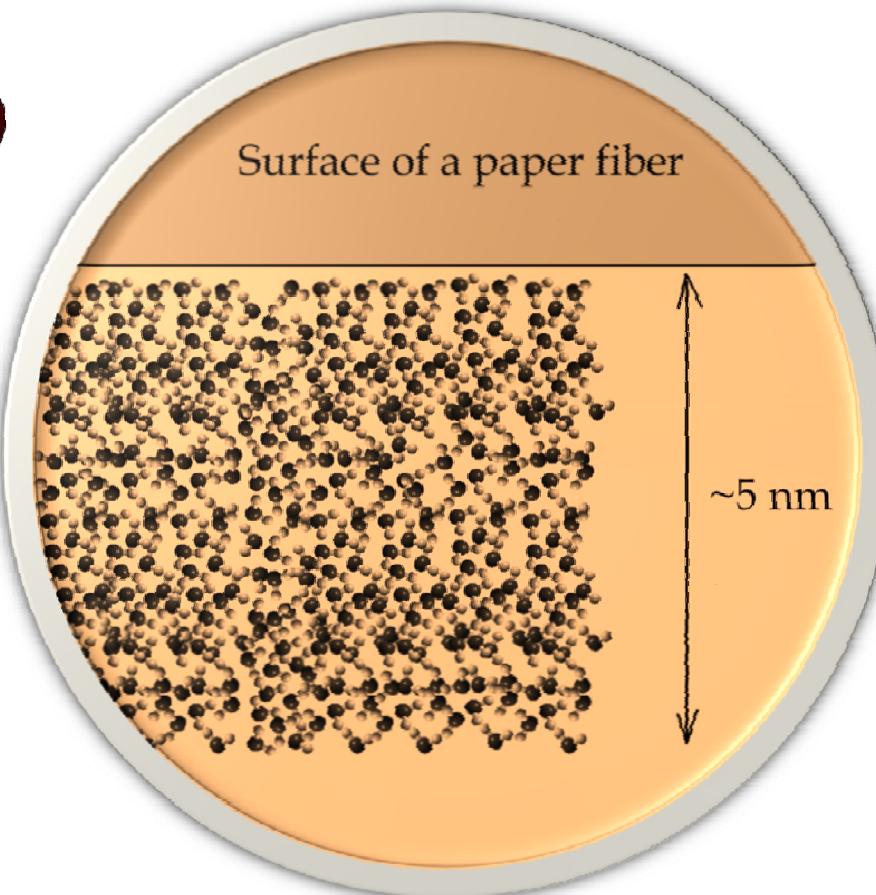
Evaporative cooling and condensation heating take place simultaneously on the same piece of paper.

# A signal from the nanoscale world

Diameter of a water molecule ~ 0.28 nm



Deposition rate <5 nm/second, i.e., about 15 layers of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  molecules per second is responsible for this heating effect!

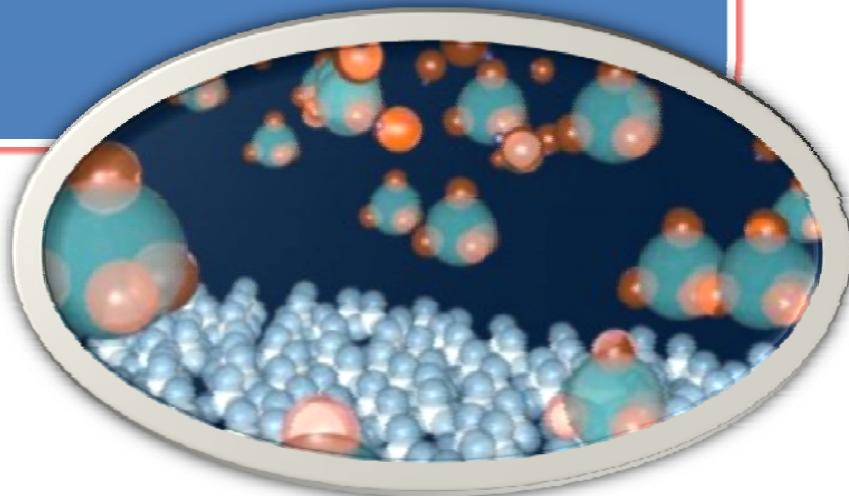


How small is a nanometer? A human hair is about 50,000 nanometers in diameter.

# An atomic layer deposition demo that anyone can do

Atomic layer deposition:

The technique to grow  
microchips, *atom by atom*, for  
your next computers or phones.



The Centura ALD system,  
Applied Materials

# Think about what all these things mean



The power in your hand may  
be greater than you think!

# Think about what all these things mean

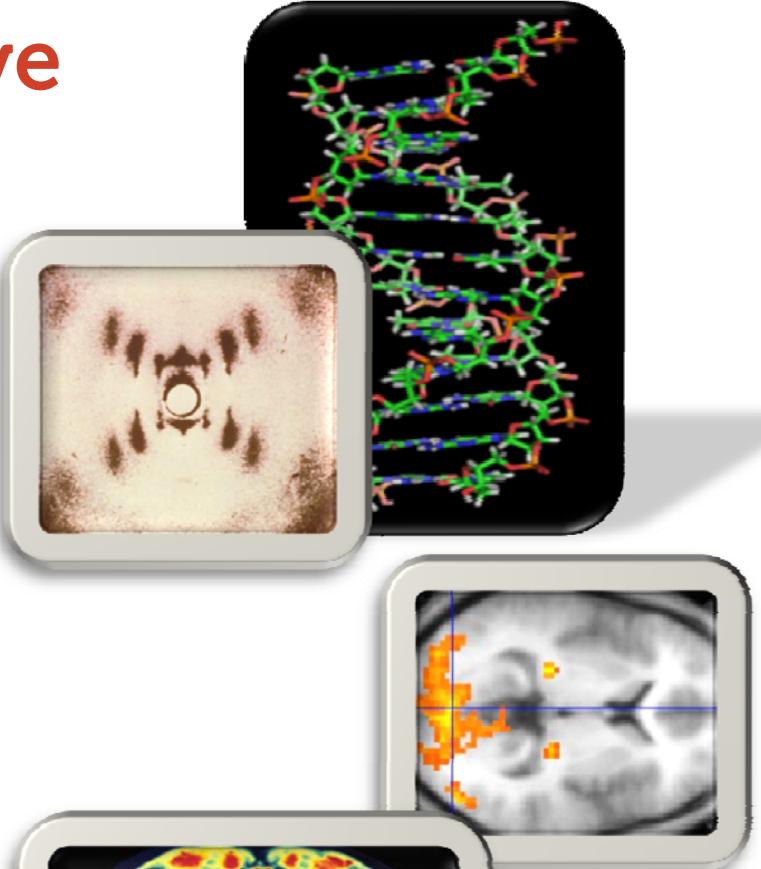
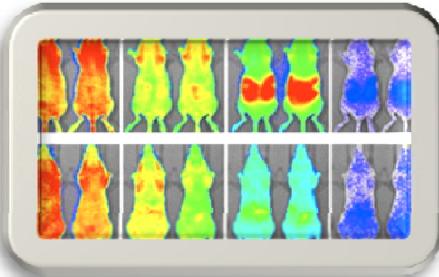


This is an incredibly powerful scientific imaging tool anyone – even children – can use!

# An education perspective

Scientific imaging is central in science.

It is important for students to see the REAL thing, not just printed or programmed graphics, because scientific discoveries come from carefully observing the real world.



# A science perspective of educational imaging

## Desktop remote sensing

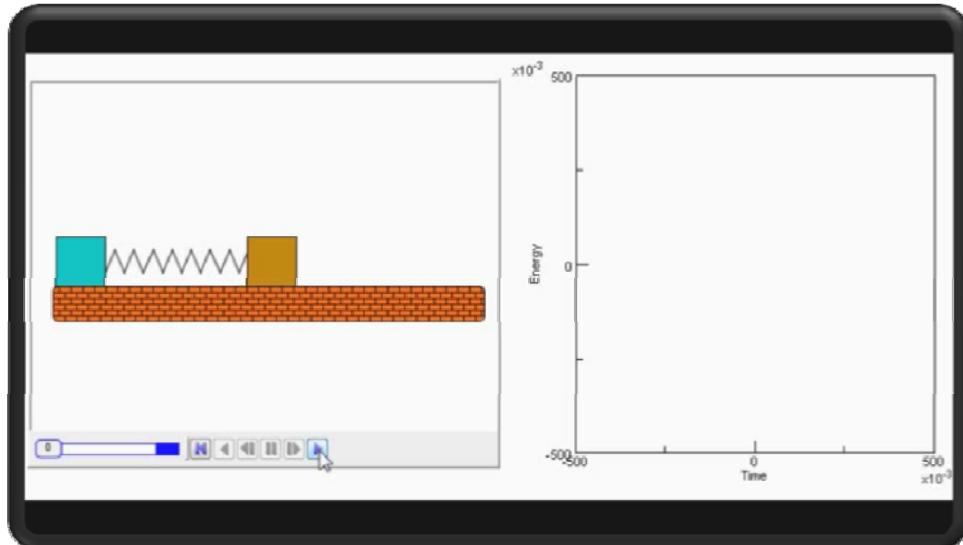
Anything that leaves  
a trace of heat  
leaves a trace of  
itself under an IR  
camera.

Many invisible physical,  
chemical, and biological  
processes that absorb or  
release heat can be visualized,  
discovered, and investigated.



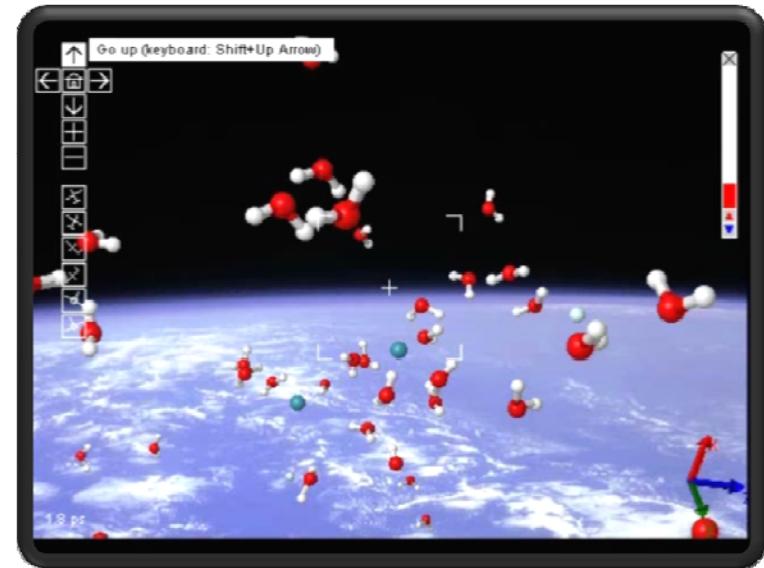
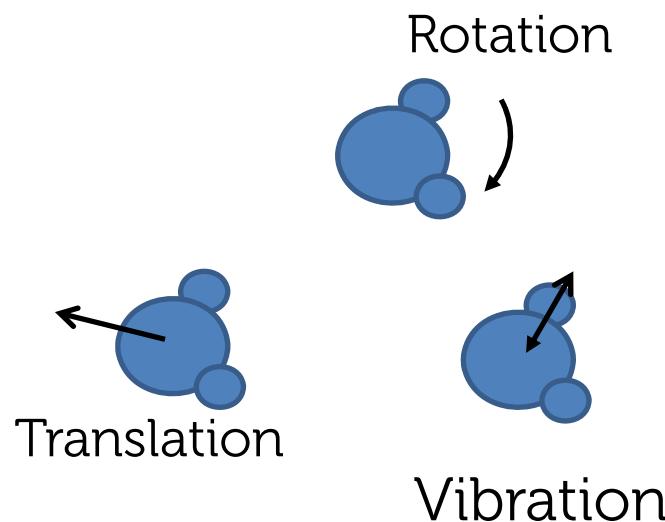
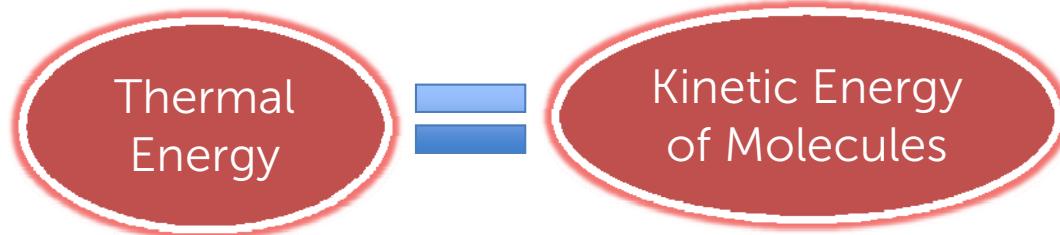
# Not just seeing thermal energy

Recall a little  
physics



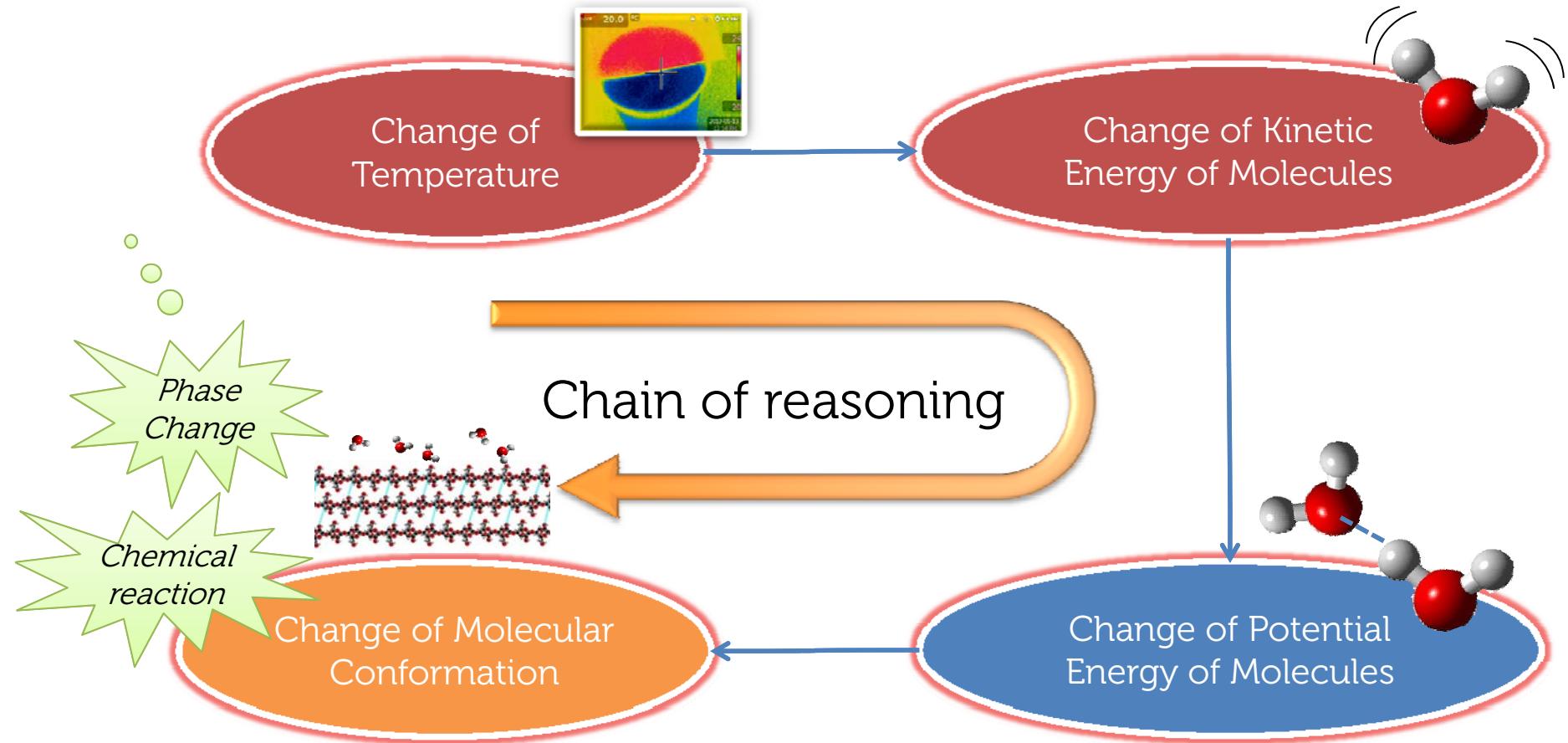
Kinetic energy is a “mirror” of potential energy (as per the Law of Conservation of Energy)

# What really is thermal energy?



Thermal energy is a “mirror” of molecular potential energy.

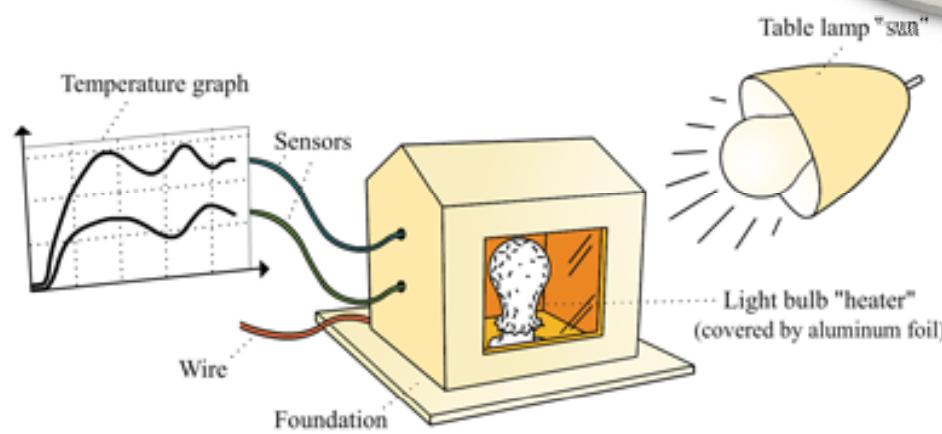
# What is in a thermal image?



Anything that leaves a trace of heat  
leaves a trace of itself under an IR camera.

# Why is IR imaging good for education?

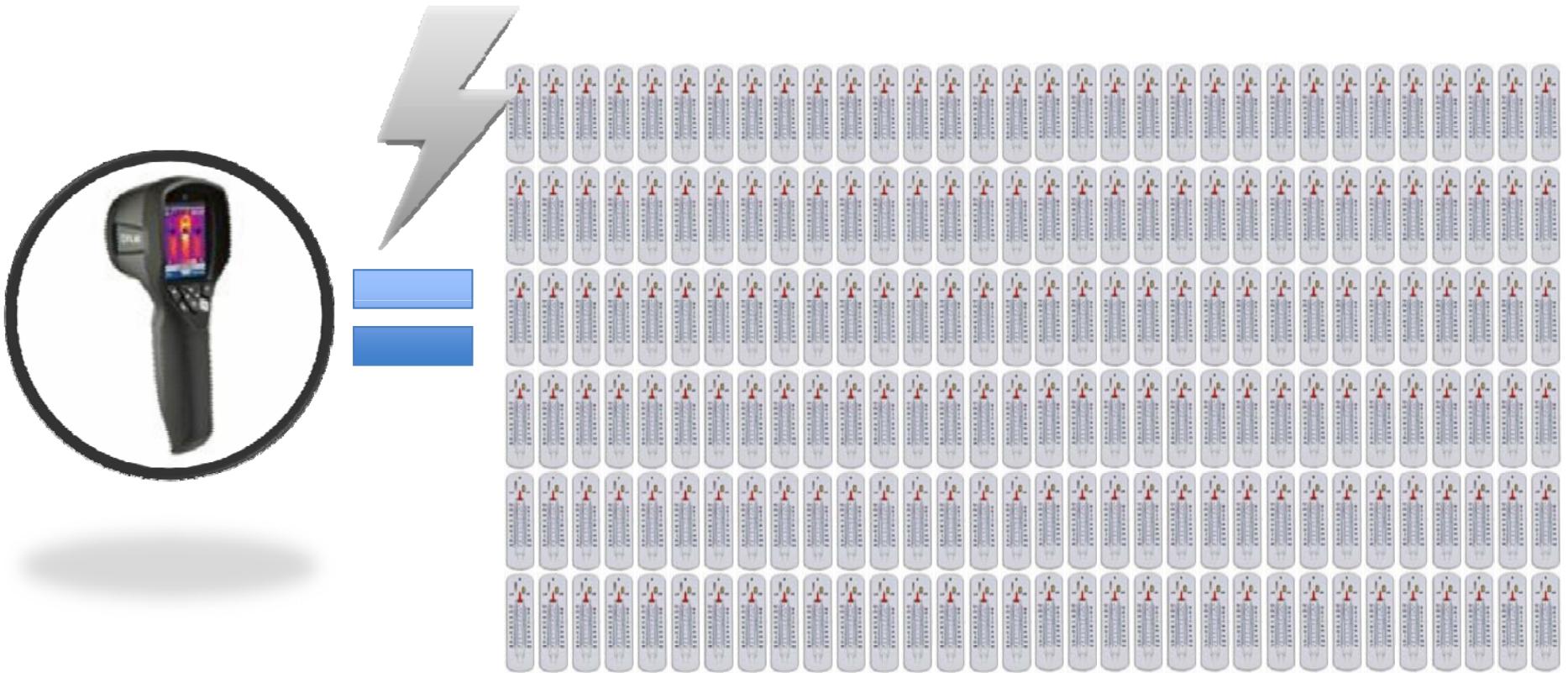
Millions of students have used sensors to learn science through hands-on experiments.



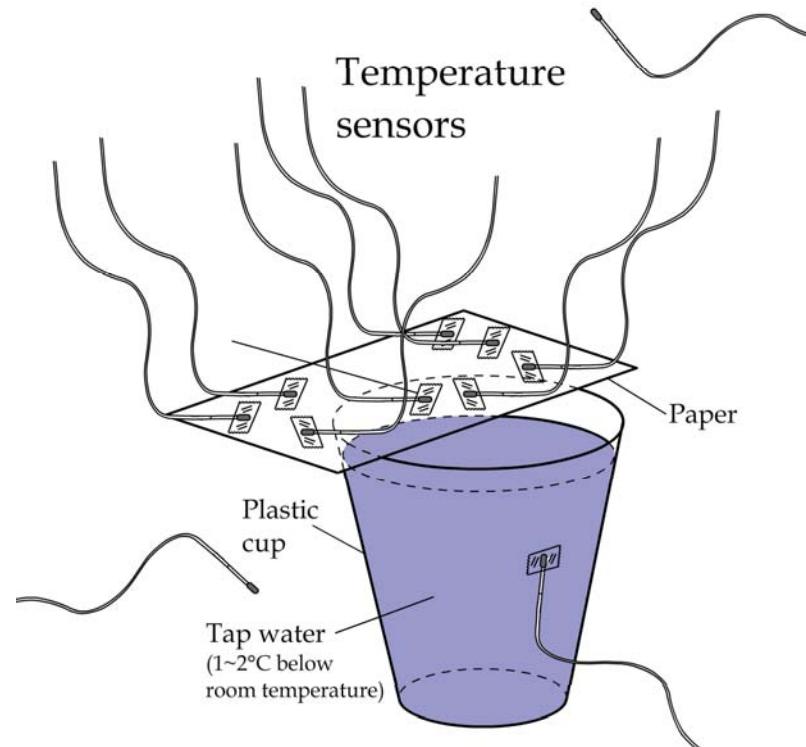
# Why is IR imaging good for education?

The power of many and parallelism – from one sensor at a time to thousands of sensors at a time

Information acquisition at the speed of light



# Instant scientific inquiry



Free students from tedious work, focus them on the fun part of science

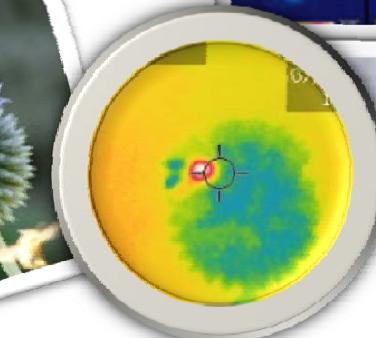
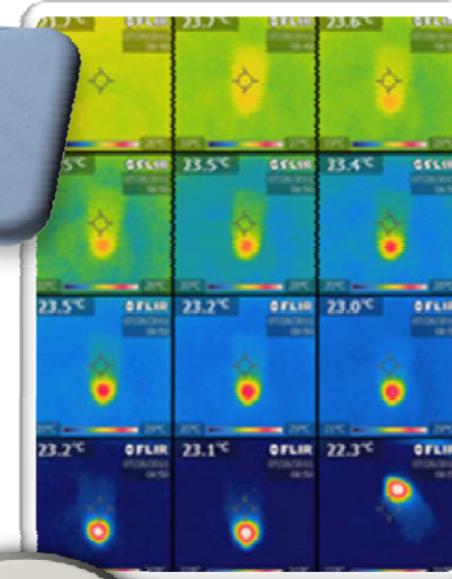
# A true discovery tool

If you tell students where they should position the sensors, you may be giving away the answer and killing the fun!

IR cameras:  
Just aim and  
discover!



Make your garden  
a biology lab!

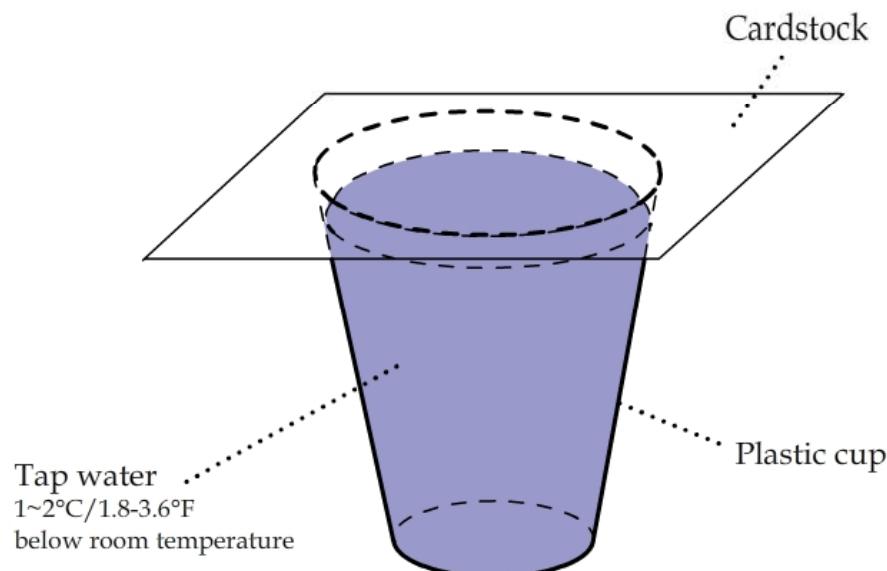


## More science experiments

1. Extensions of science on a piece of paper
2. Ask your IR camera: IR answers to common questions
3. Finale: A science puzzle for everyone

Dig into deep science in ten minutes  
with your children or grandchildren!

# Science on a piece of paper A new surprise?

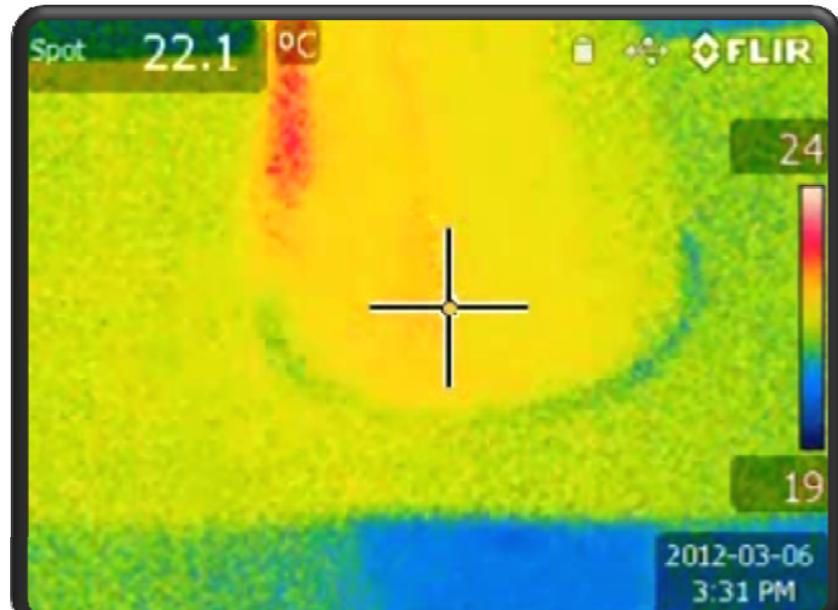


Moisture transport: Water molecules diffuse through the porous structure of paper and evaporate from the other side.

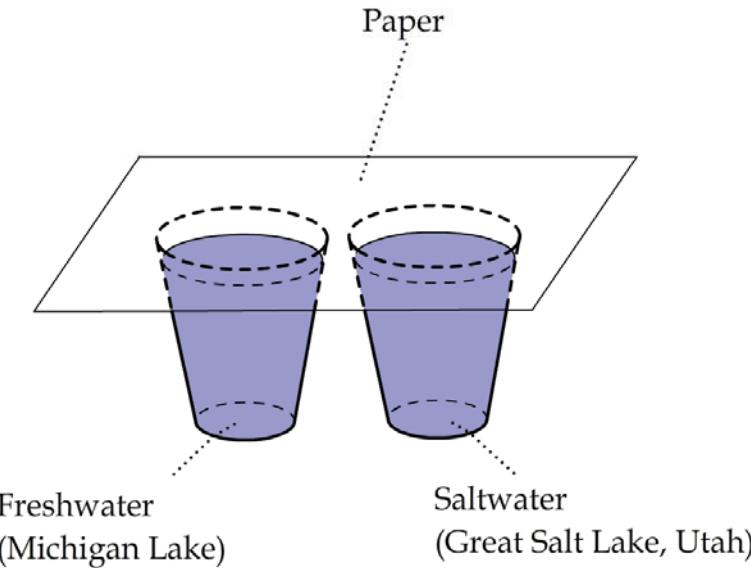
*What Causes Warm Edges  
on the Boundary of Moist Areas?*

Profs. Vollmer & Möllmann, 4:00-4:30 pm, Today

What if the paper has been atop the water for a long time?



# Science on a piece of paper Adding some salt...



A direct visualization of vapor pressure depression: The vapor pressure (proportional to the vapor concentration) above saltwater is lower than that above freshwater.

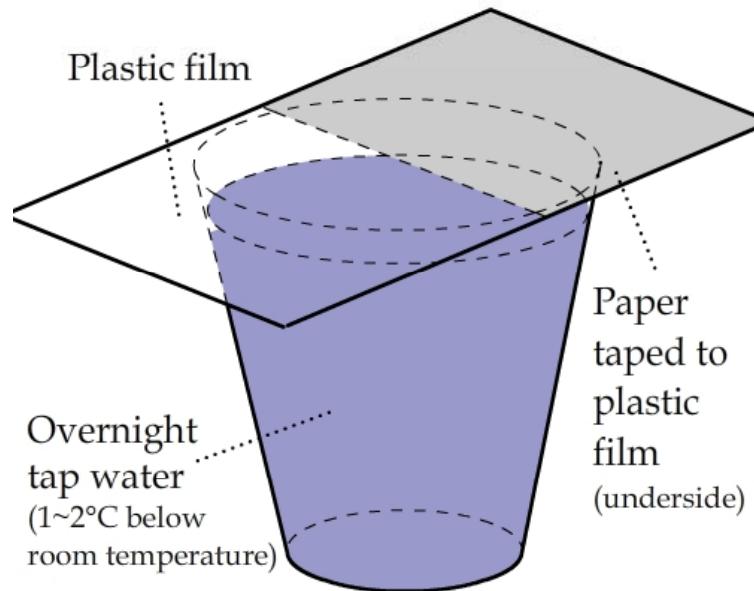
*Dissolved salt ions inhibit water evaporation.*

Climatology in a cup: Is the lake effect weaker in the Great Salt Lake?

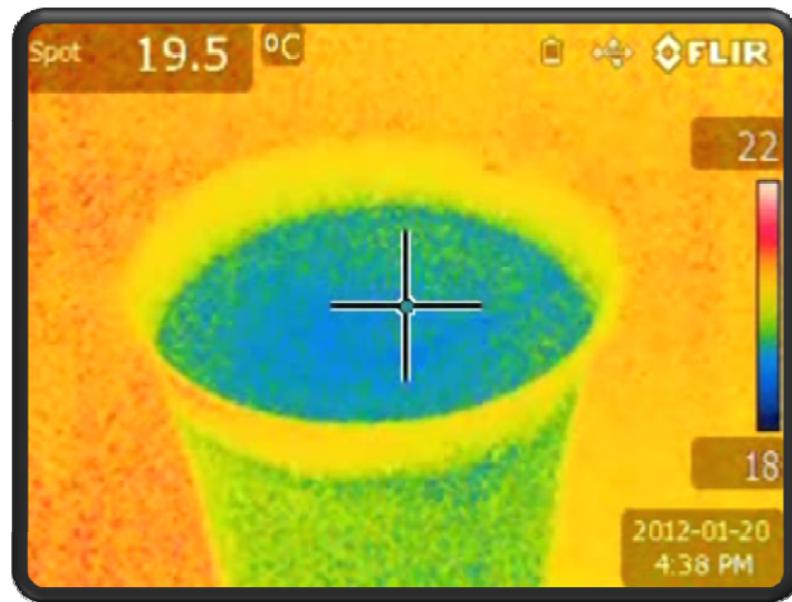


# Science on a piece of paper

## Paper vs. plastic



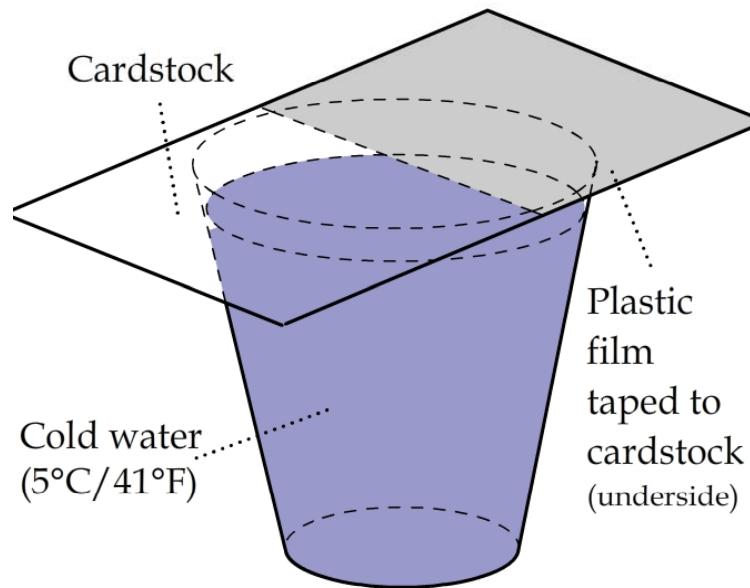
Different materials have “different dew points?”



The “attractiveness” of a material to water molecules makes a difference in the condensation of water vapor nearby.

# Science on a piece of paper

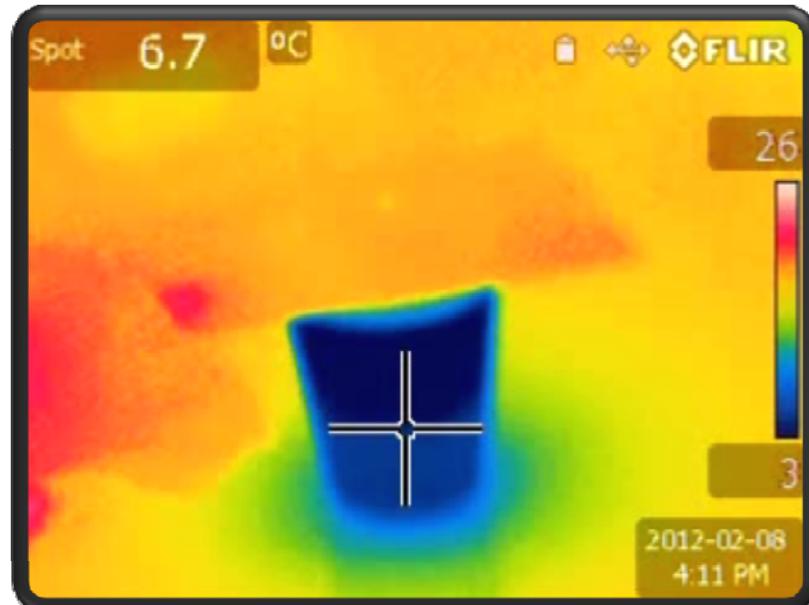
## When will the paper be cooled?



If the water is cold enough, both paper and plastic will be cooled to the same degree.

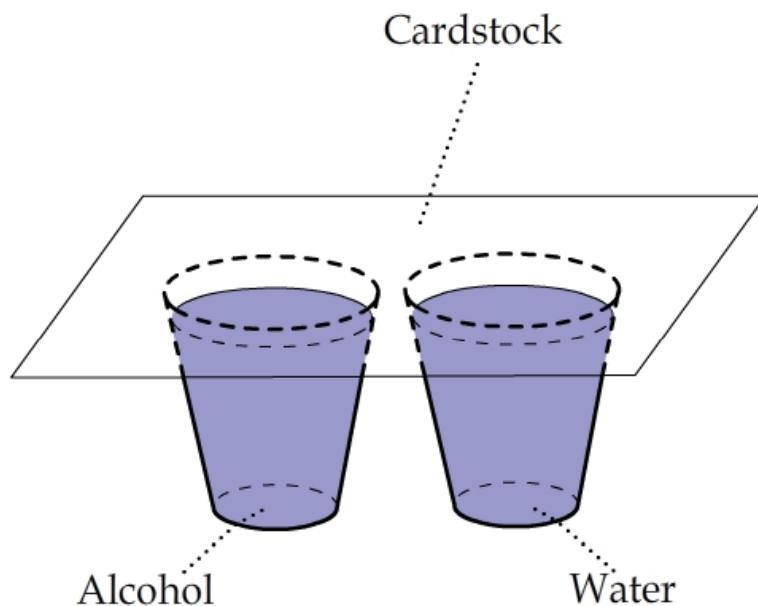
Condensation heating will be overwhelmed by heat transfer – what I originally hoped to see.

When the temperature gap is large enough ( $\sim 15^\circ\text{C}/27^\circ\text{F}$ )...

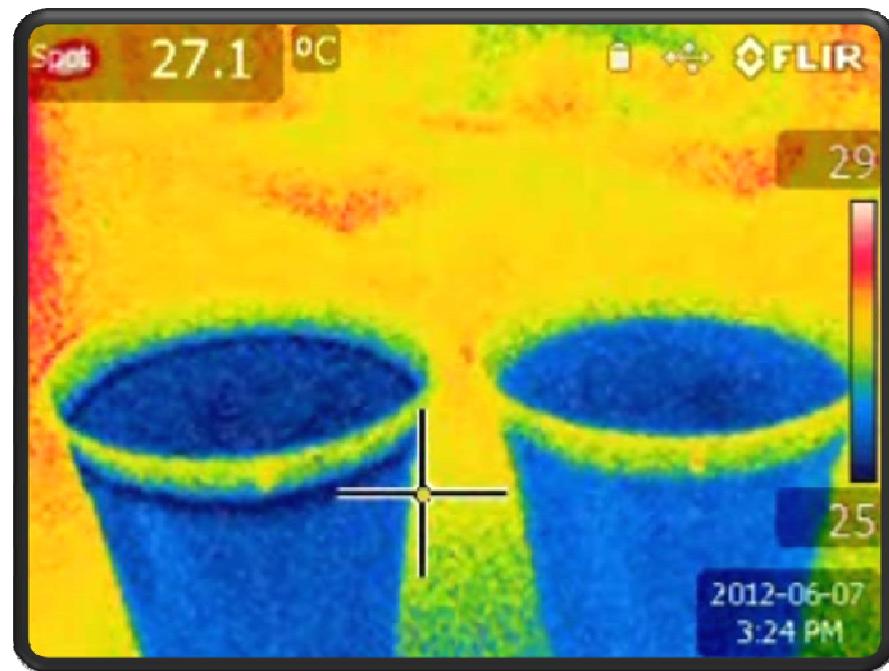


# Science on a piece of paper

## Alcohol vs. water

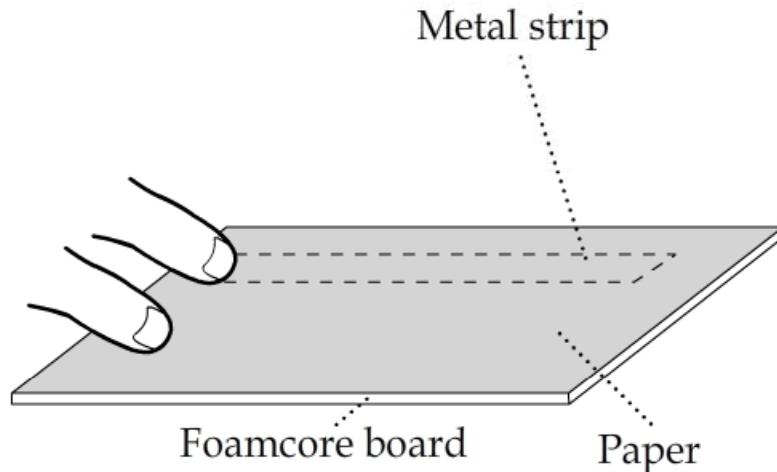


What about alcohol?



Compare the condensation heating effect of alcohol and water. Why is the warming effect of alcohol weaker?

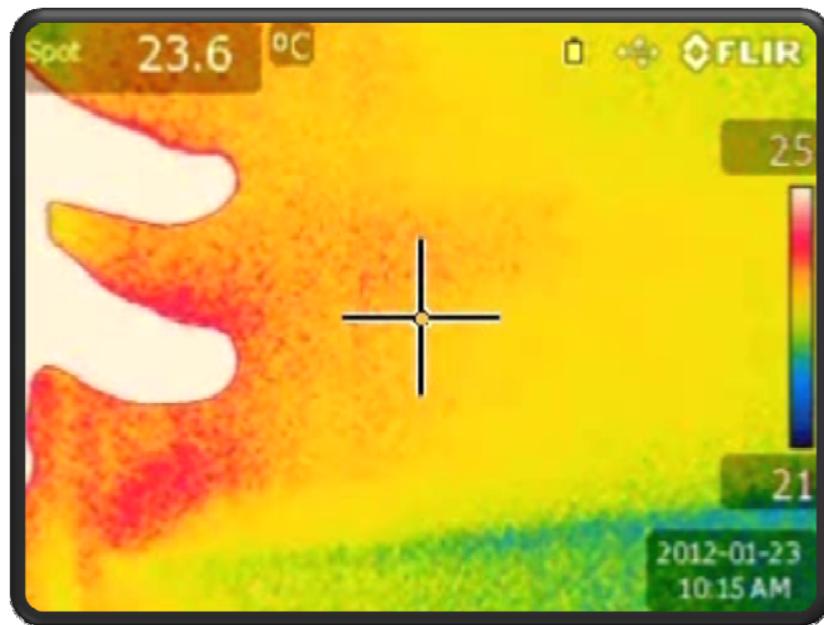
# Ask your IR camera Why do metals feel colder?



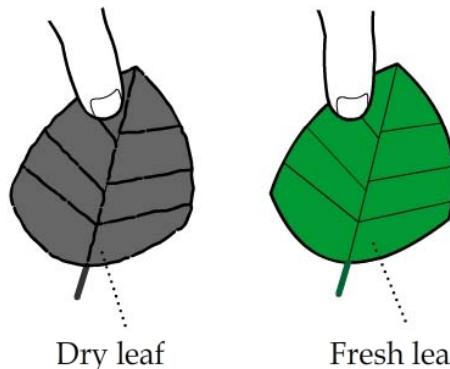
"If pupils were able to 'see' this phenomenon [that metals feel cold] in terms of a transfer of energy from their body to the object, this sort of situation would likely be less of a problem than it seems to be at present."

–Prof. Gaalen Erickson, University of British Columbia, in *Children's Ideas in Science* (p. 59), 1985

Many students believe metals *are* colder than foam. Can this IR experiment change their minds?

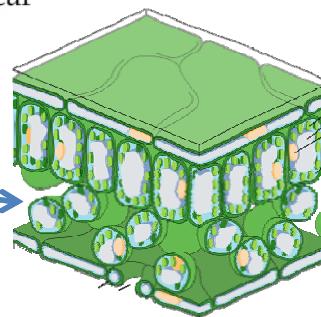


# Ask your IR camera Why do fresh leaves feel cooler?

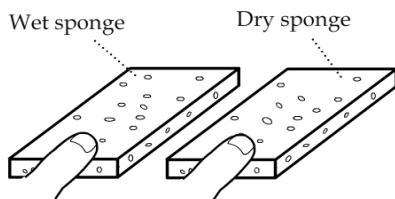


A fresh leaf has higher heat capacity due to the water content.

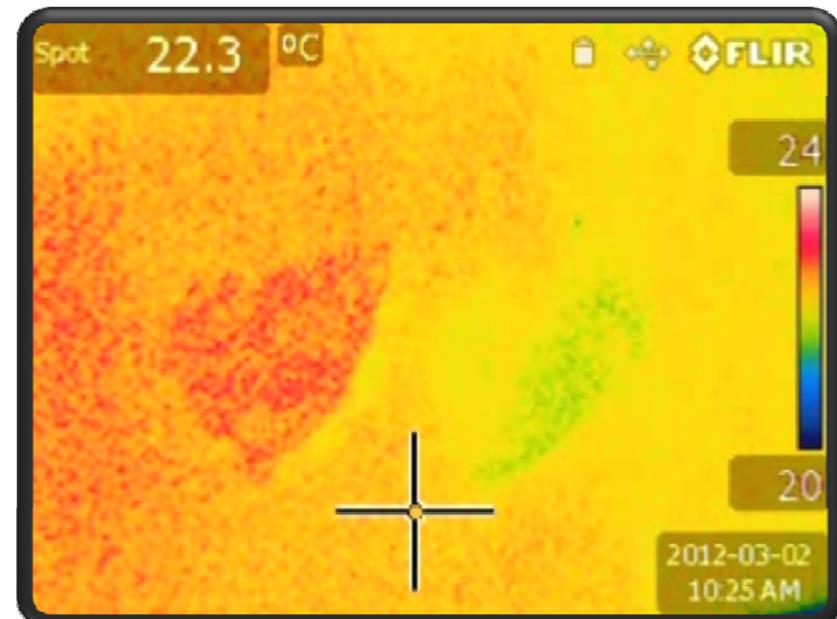
Water storage in the spongy layer



Confirm this with a dry sponge and a wet sponge (wrapped by food wrap).

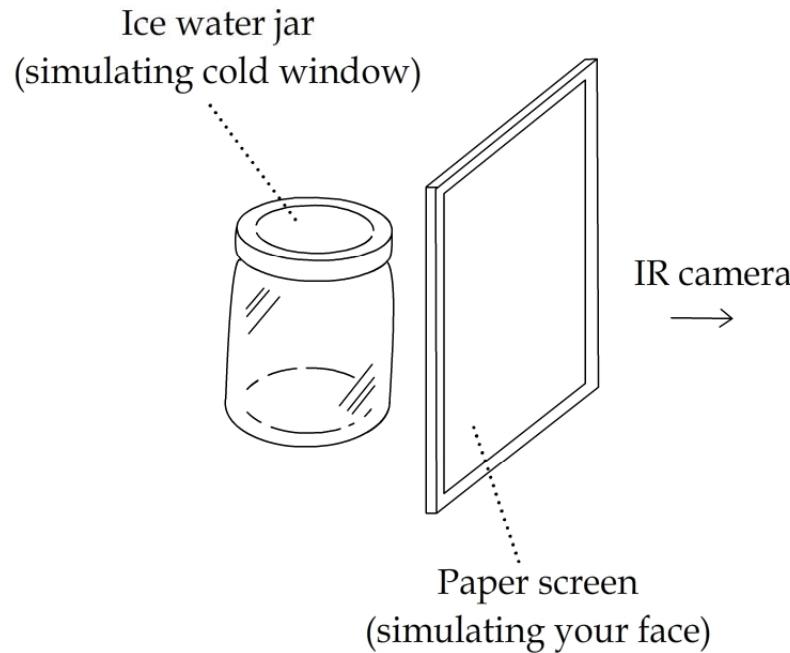


Both sponges are completely wrapped in plastic wrap (not shown).



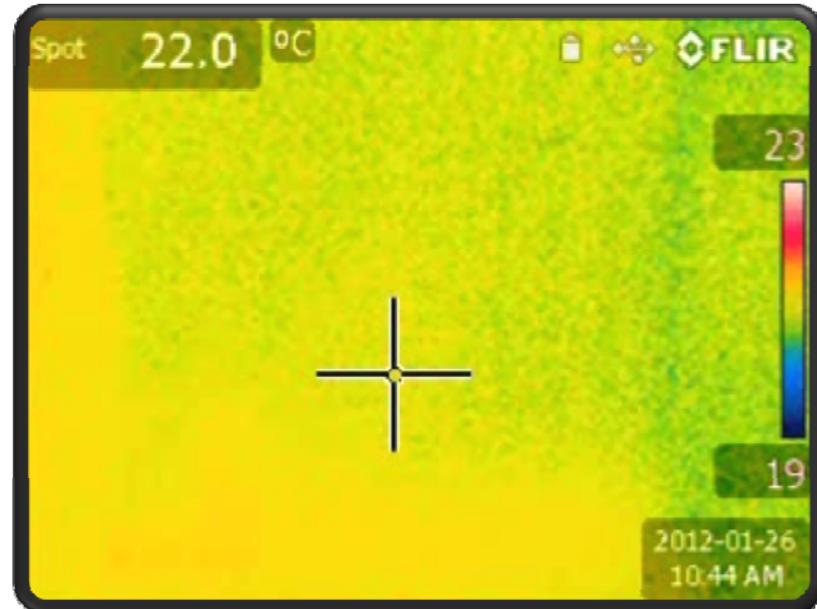
Ask your IR camera

# Why do we feel cold when facing a closed window in winter?



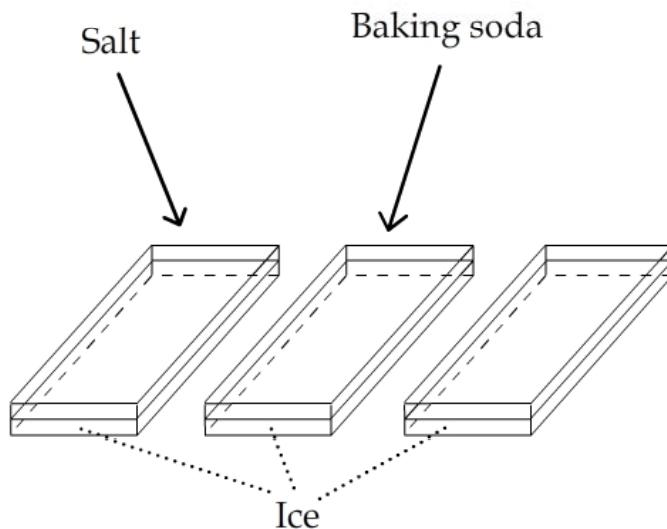
Cold doesn't radiate. Radiation heat transfer happens through the exchange of photons between two objects. The paper screen receives less after the cold jar is placed.

IR cameras are perfect tools for visualizing radiation heat transfer.



Ask your IR camera

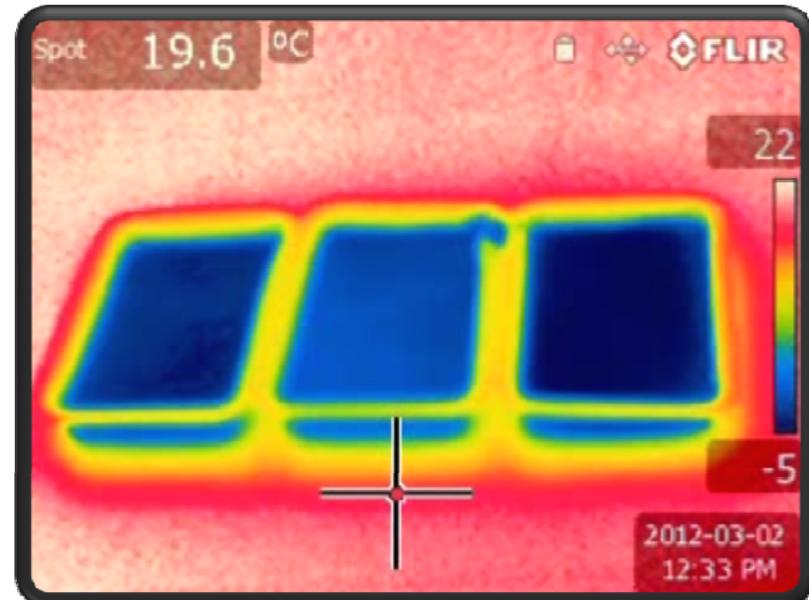
# Why don't we use baking soda to deice the road?



Similar results for sugar.

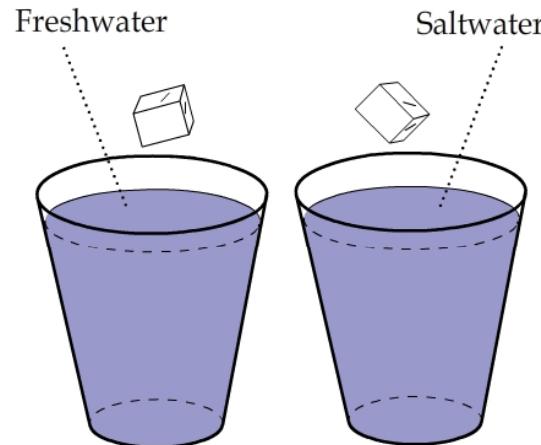
Melting causes dramatic cooling:  
Adding salt to ice is the old way to quickly freeze ice cream mixtures.

The deicing process is more visible under an IR camera due to the rapid release of latent heat.

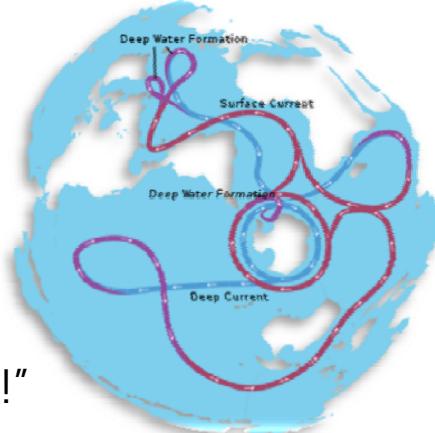


Ask your IR camera

# Why does ice melt more slowly in saltwater?



Small cup,  
big science.

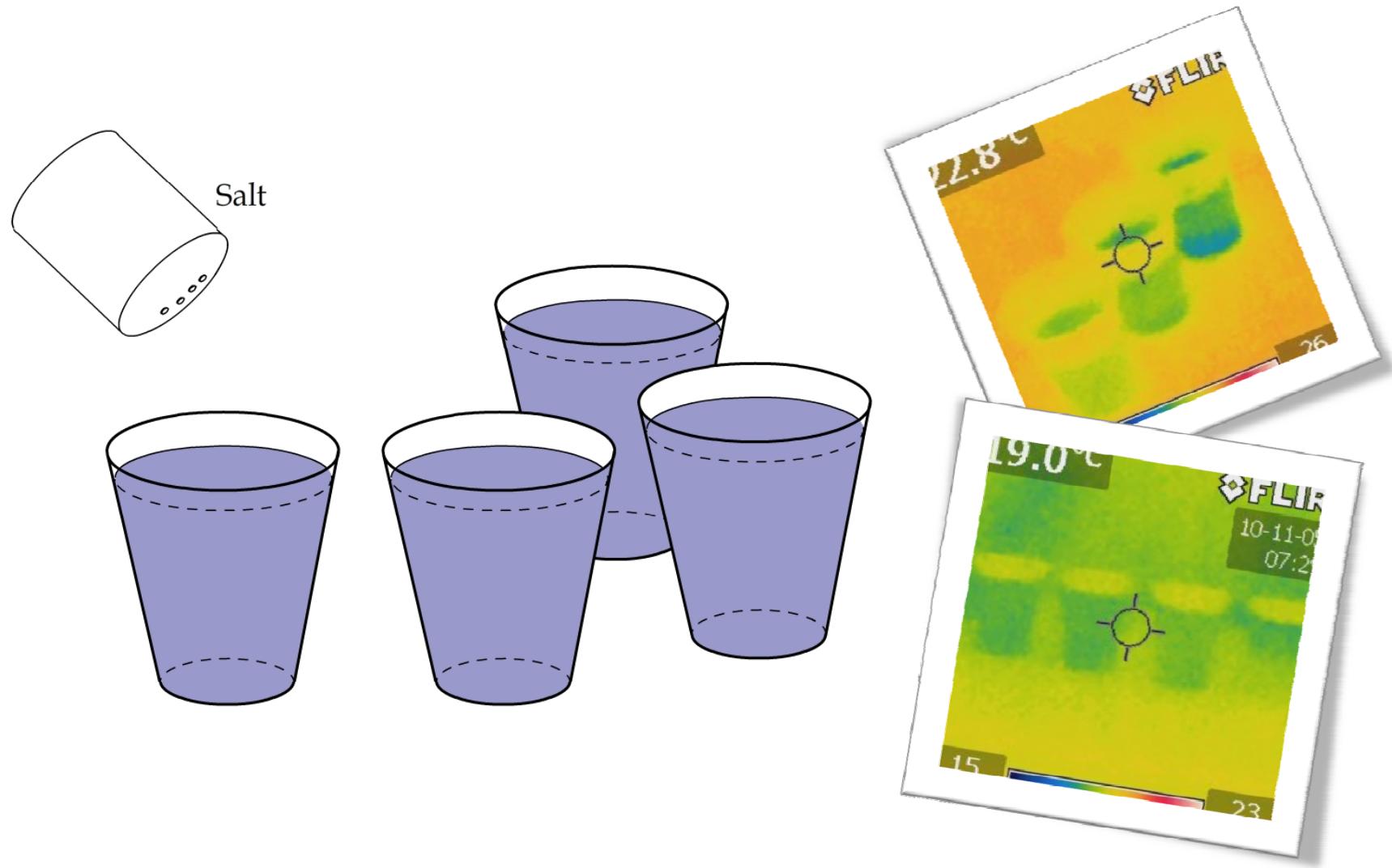


No need to use  
ink. Thermal  
energy is the "ink!"

Ocean science in a cup:  
Thermohaline stratification,  
global ocean conveyor belt

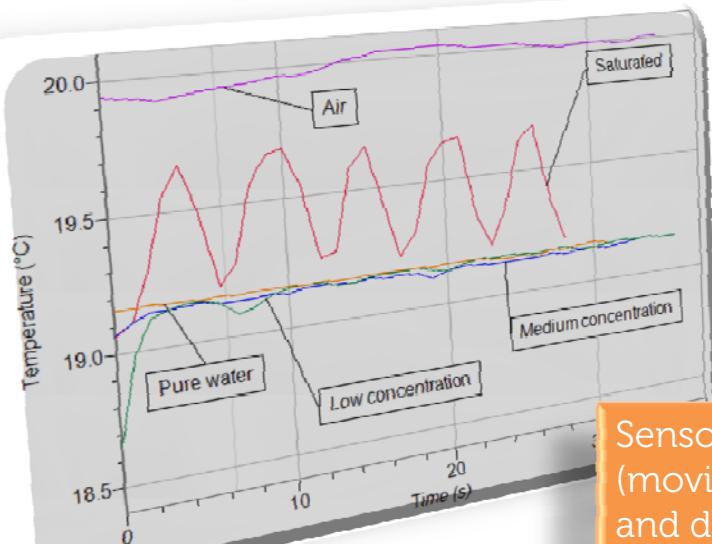


# Finale: A science puzzle for everyone

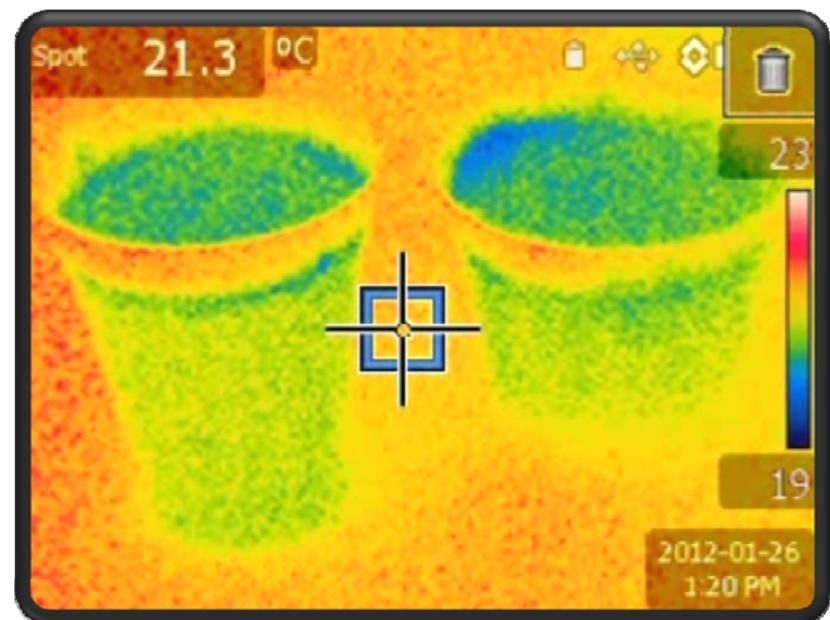
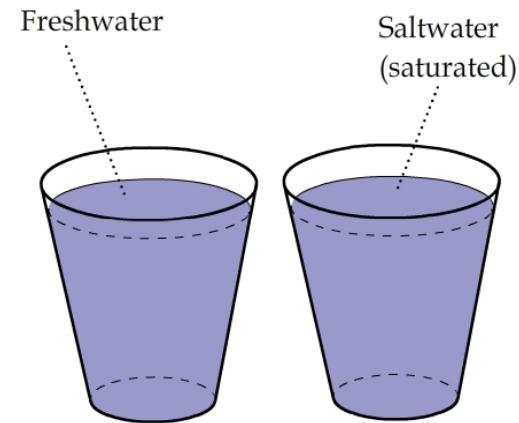


# A mysterious temperature gradient

A temperature gradient up to 0.5 °C / 0.9 °F lasts for weeks!

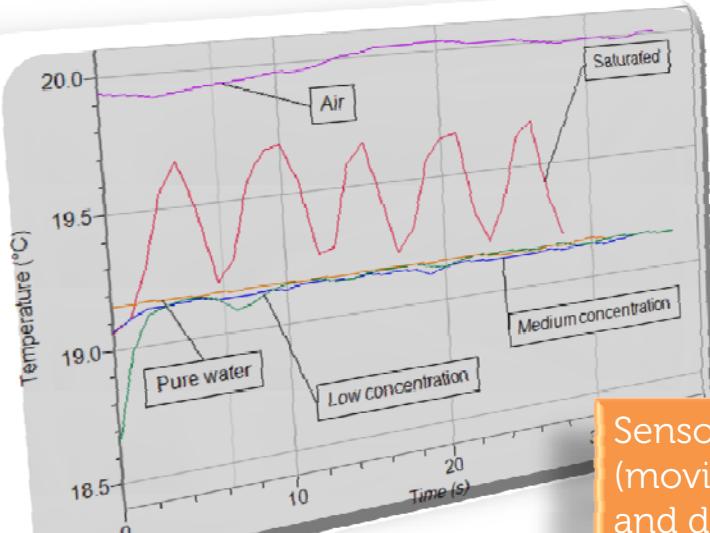


Sensor data  
(moving up  
and down)

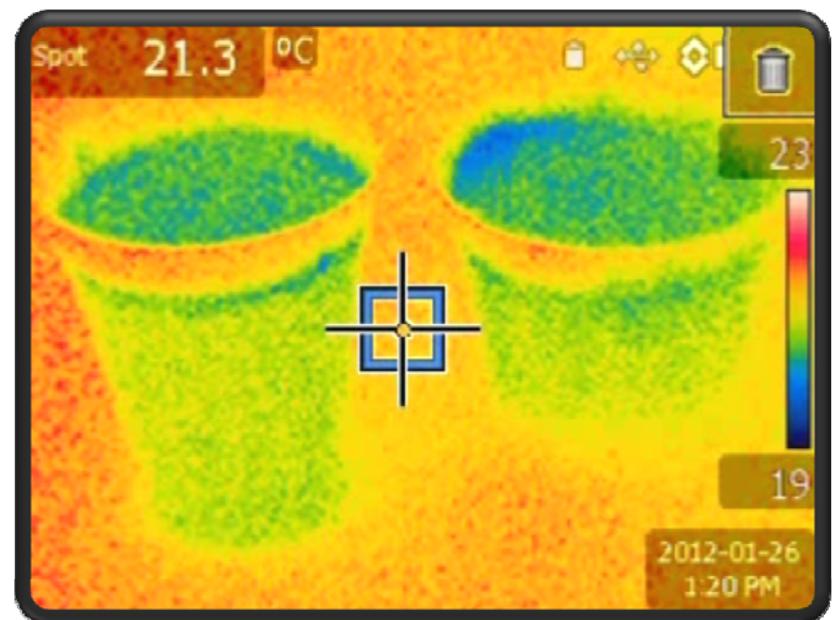
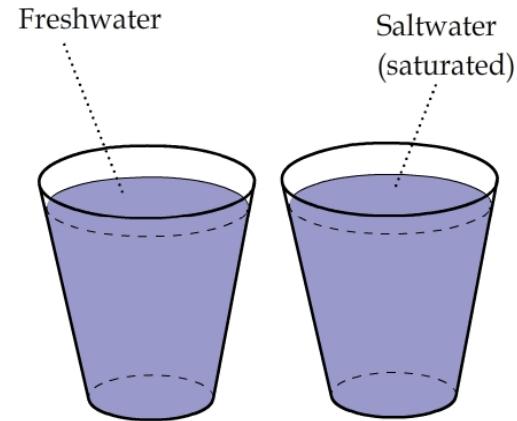


# A mysterious temperature gradient

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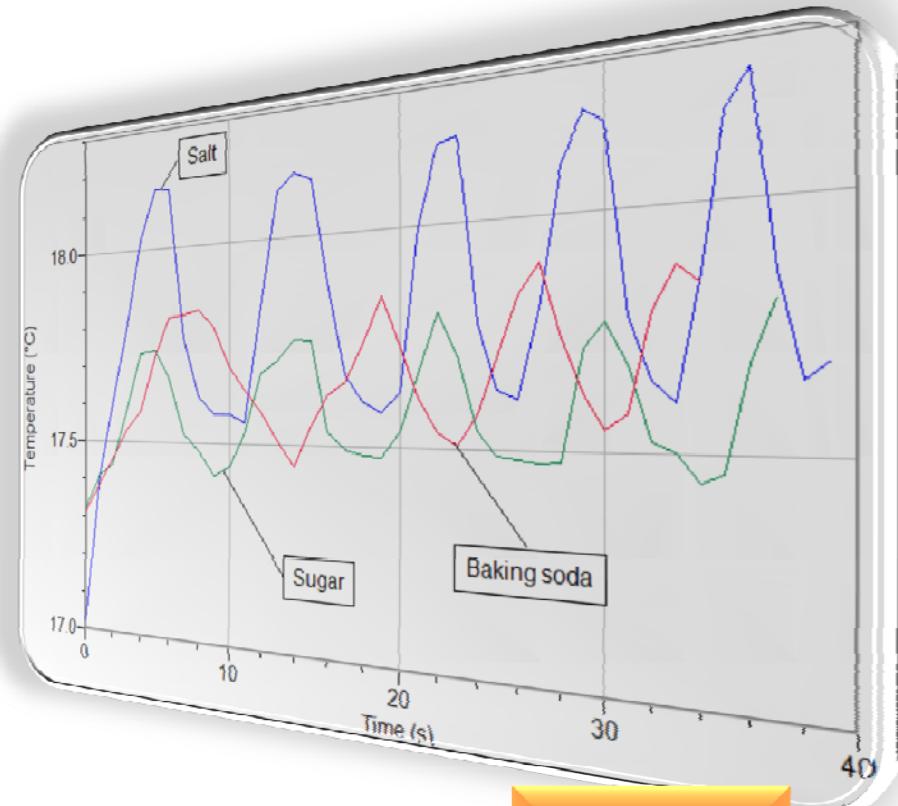
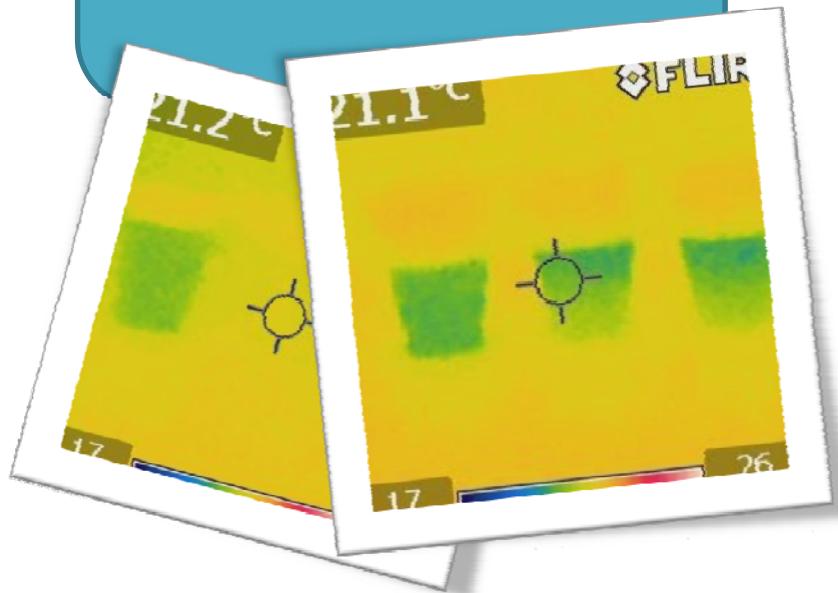
Sensor data  
(moving up  
and down)



Google has no answer for this mystery...

# A mysterious temperature gradient

This persistent temperature gradient exists in baking soda and sugar solutions as well.



Sensor data  
(moving up  
and down)

IR cameras will make it easier for students to make this kind of original scientific discoveries.

# People's reactions



Cover article (2011)



"Captivating, intriguing, and thought-provoking"  
-- Journal of Chemical Education

"Thermal cameras can become important in school physics." -- Norrköpings Tidningar



Front page  
Headline (2011)



Featured article (2011), YouTube Physics (2012)

# **Colleges and universities are sold**

Professors motivated to buy after knowing our work:

*School of Engineering and Applied Science , Harvard University*

*Department of Chemistry, The King's University College*

*Visual Learning and Communication, Linköpings Universitet*

*Department of Chemistry, Lipscomb University*

*Department of Chemistry, Parkland College*

*Department of Chemistry, Boston College*

*Department of Physics, Sewanee: The University of the South*

*School of Education, University of Georgia*

*Department of Physics, Colgate University*

*Department of Mechanical Engineering, Tufts University*

*Science Department, Tidewater Community College*

*Department of Physics, Tsinghua University*

.....



# A sizable education market?

School labs are already using these



Microscopic  
vision

Astronomic  
vision

# A sizable education market?

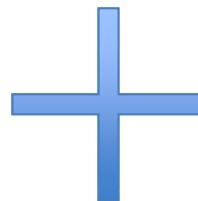
Why not adding some IR cameras?



Microscopic  
vision



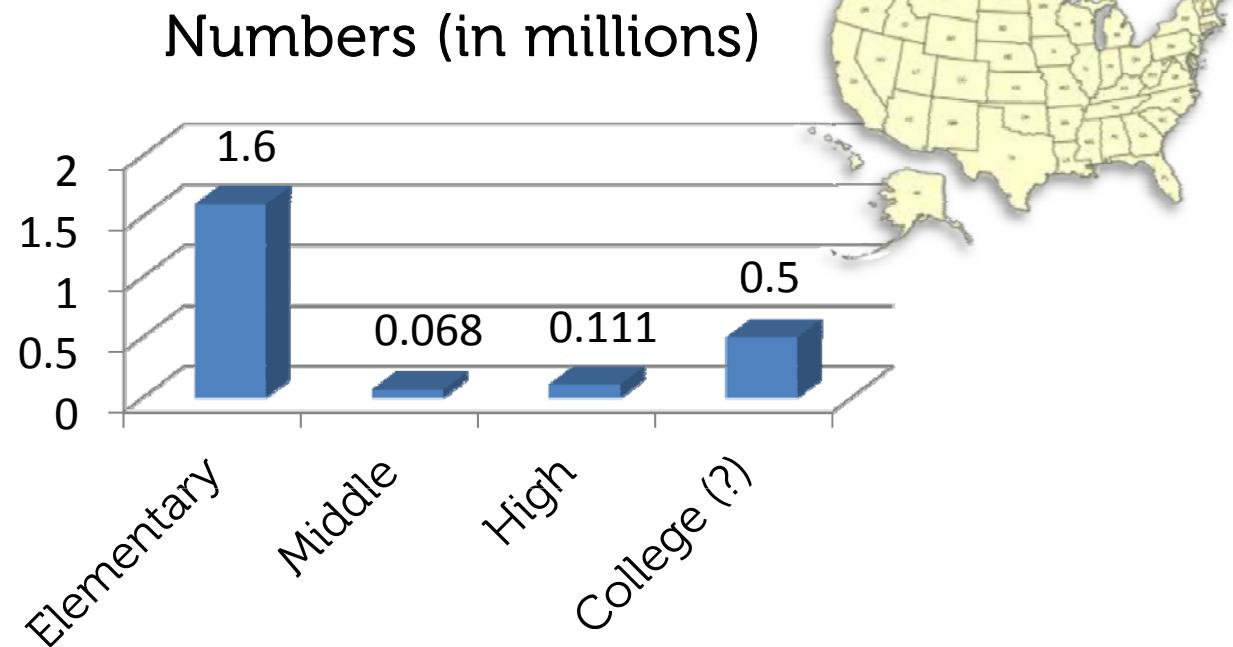
Astronomic  
vision



Thermodynamic  
vision

# How big is the education market?

*How many science teachers are there in the US?*



Source: National Science Teachers Association (2008)

If 1% of science teachers buy IR cameras, there will be more than 20,000 new customers – in the US alone.

# How big is the impact?

If one teacher teaches 25 students a year,



# How big is the impact?

In ten years, there would be

5,000,000 more people (>1% of the US population)  
who have hands-on experience with IR imaging and  
an eye open to a wide range of applications.



# Opportunities for actions



1. **Work with educators.** We will use IR cameras (10+ per site) in museums and schools: Up to \$1,000,000 match fund currently offered by a private funder to support transatlantic collaboration.
2. **Work with scientists.** We will apply for National Science Foundation grants to advance applied IR imaging (e.g., through collaboration with SEAS of Harvard University).
3. **Work with industry.** a) IR manufacturers should present at education conferences and science fairs.  
b) Consider supporting this educational initiative?

# Acknowledgements



National Science Foundation  
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN



The Concord  
Consortium



Special thanks to Concord Consortium colleagues Chad Dorsey, Edmund Hazzard, Ethan McElroy, & Robert Tinker and FLIR's Jen Loveland, Robert Madding, & Gary Orlove. And to Prof. Dr. Michael Vollmer for the idea of the Fermi calculation for estimating the thickness of the condensed water layer on paper.

Thank you  
for your time!

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