Cell-Fie Science



Redi's Experiment on Spontaneous Generation

People's ideas about where some living things come from have changed over the centuries. Remember that what might seem obvious today was not so obvious thousands of years ago. Thousands of years ago, people thought that some living things somehow "arose" from nonliving matter. Scholars of the day even gave a name to the idea that life could arise from nonliving matter called spontaneous generation. People would leave meat out and flies would "spontaneously" appear. An Italian physician named Francesco Redi believed that spontaneous generation was not true so he did a set of experiments to test the hypothesis of spontaneous generation. Below is a set-up of Redi's experiment.

