

A Sixth Grade Experiment.

Before I start today's podcast, I would like to mention a little something about the title of yesterday's podcast. One of my listeners, called Bahareh, asked me to explain the expression Super Duper Slither Scooter. First of all, the scooter is just the thing that you ride. Slither is the brand name of it; you could call it 'The Slither'. Super Duper is a silly phrase that we use to say that something is wonderful. We also use it sarcastically. Most often, super duper indicates that something is brand new, or of good quality, or just quite special. And, of course, the two words rhyme, which makes it a little more playful in speech. "My father bought a super duper car" is less serious or formal than "my father bought an elegant, expensive car". I hope that is clear. Anyway, the sixth grade science experiment found its way into my kitchen. I discovered it sitting on the counter top. There was a strange smell in the air, something unpleasant and sharp smelling. So I looked around, and there it was. It was a glass with an egg floating in white vinegar. Okay, that makes sense. My son, Hudson, has started to learn about the Periodic table, the different elements, the molecules, and how they interact. I remember many years ago doing the same thing in science class. If my dim memory serves me well, the experiment showed how the calcium carbonate of the egg shell dissolves in the vinegar. I think that's right. So, my son is bringing home all sorts of instructions for kitchen experiments. He has to carry them out, and then write down his observations. He loves it. It reminds me of a story my husband told me about when his cousins were young. They made a concoction in the kitchen that ended up blowing up. They were very lucky that they didn't get seriously hurt. They charred the kitchen ceiling, and singed off their eyebrows. Unsupervised kids are a recipe for disaster. Thankfully, Hudsons' eyebrows are safely on his face, and I am keeping a close eye on his experiments.

Grammar notes.

Expressions: to singe, concoction, someone's memory serves them well, to char.

1. The coal fell out of the fireplace and singed the carpet.
2. What kind of concoction is this drink; it's disgusting!
3. I remember that day; my memory serves me well.
4. The walls had been charred black by the fire.