

# Pierre's PAMPERED PET PALACE

## ACTIVITY

Join Inspector Hector, the soft-boiled health inspector, and his cross-eyed Siamese cat Ajax, who has a tongue rougher than cheap bathroom cleanser, in aiding Ajax in fluffing up his friend Silvia, the silver poodle.

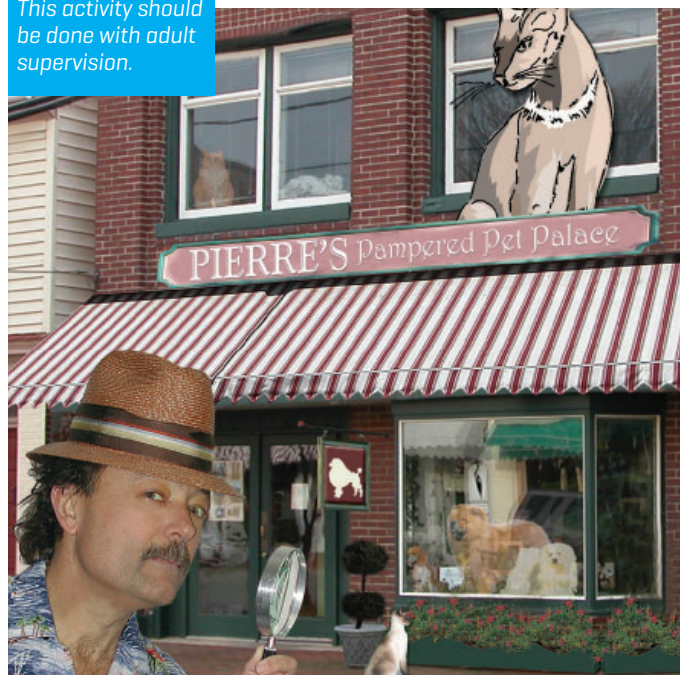
### Pierre's Pampered Pet Palace

It was a beautiful day! The sky was blue and the golden sun was making the early morning dew sparkle like diamonds as Inspector Hector and Ajax took their daily stroll down Main Street. Everyone in the neighborhood had worked hard to make the sidewalks and store fronts around Pierre's Pampered Pet Palace as neat as a pin. Today was a big day! A reporter and a photographer from Doggy Digest were on their way to do a feature article on Ajax's friend, Silvia, a beautiful silver Standard Poodle.

Pierre loved all animals. He stocked special items for them in his store, from hand-knitted Iguana sweaters to sunglasses for bunnies with light sensitive eyes. But his poodle, Silvia, was his pride and joy! A special shampoo and a weekly trim made the puffs of fur on the ends of her delicate legs and tail look like fluffy silver clouds when she posed in the sunny window. Ajax felt superior to the pooches that visited the Palace, even Silvia, because after all, cats can wash themselves. He always sat down on the sidewalk in front of Silvia's perch in the plate glass window to give his paw a swipe with his rough tongue just to prove it.

The jaunty striped awning snapped in the frisky breeze and two trim topiaries stood like soldiers on either side of the door when the Inspector and Ajax approached Pierre's Pampered Pet Palace. Ajax sat on his usual spot on the sun-warmed sidewalk and licked his paw. He squinted up at the spot in the window where he knew his poodle friend would be to see if she got the joke. What was that creature in the window! It was like two sad brown eyes looking out

This activity should be done with adult supervision.



You'll need household items and a simple way to test for hardness. Hardness tests are commonly done for swimming pools, spas, aquariums and drinking water.

#### Materials Needed:

Test strips or a test kit that tests for Hardness, about 0 – 180 ppm range

Distilled water, 1 gallon

Epsom salts, 1/4 teaspoon

Small cups or containers, 4

2-liter soft drink bottles or 2-liter plastic containers, 3

Measuring cup

Measuring spoons

Timer or clock

Follow instructions and safety precautions for all materials. Consult the manufacturer's web site for Safety Data Sheets.

Suggested test strip:  
LaMotte Hardness, 0 – 180 ppm range [Code 2981]



from under a sour, gray mop. It was Silvia and, wow, was she having a bad hair day! Her ankle puffs dragged on the ground like the hems of a famous rapper's pants and the poof that usually sat prettily above her dainty forehead drooped down to her nose like a fallen soufflé. Quelle horreur!

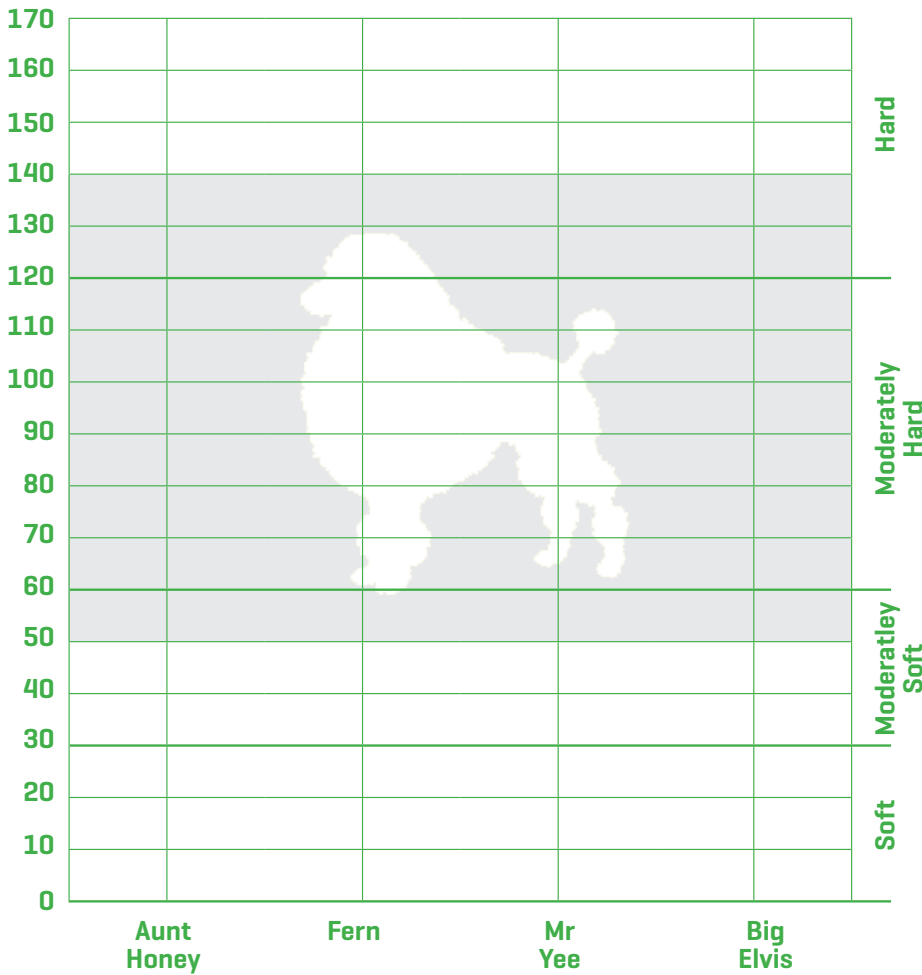
Silvia's 'do was a disaster! The water from the water treatment plant had sabotaged her shampoo! Super hard water was leaving a gummy film on her fabulous fur. The Doggy Digest folks were due on the doorstep directly so something had to be done quickly!

The Inspector skedaddled off to the water treatment plant to find out why the water was wonky. Ajax dashed through the neighborhood to find if any of the houses that got water from their own wells, instead of the city water treatment plant like Pierre's Pampered Pet Palace, had water that could fix Silvia's floppy fur. He got a water sample from Mr. Yee who was in the garden trimming his prize-winning red roses. Ajax hopped up the steps of the house next door and went into Aunt Honey's kitchen where he snagged a piece of a warm cinnamon bun AND a water sample. Down the block, Fern was just bringing in bright green vegetables from her organic garden and was happy to fill a bottle for Ajax. He made one last stop at Big Elvis's house. Ajax wasn't fond of the sad hound dog that lived there [he was always cryin' about something] but this was an emergency! With any luck, one of these water samples would have the perfect amount of hardness to resuscitate Silvia's silky tresses.

## Where Should Silvia Take a Bath? Experiment

### Procedure

<p><b>1.</b> Use the measuring cup to add 4 cups of distilled water to each of the 2-liter bottles. Label the bottles - Aunt Honey, Fern and Big Elvis. Use the left over distilled water for Mr. Yee's sample.</p>	<p><b>2.</b> Prepare a hardness concentrate in the measuring cup. Dissolve a level <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> teaspoon of Epsom salts in <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of distilled water.</p>	<p><b>3.</b> Prepare the following water samples:  <b>Aunt Honey:</b> 4 cups of distilled water + 1 teaspoon hardness concentrate  <b>Fern:</b> 4 cups of distilled water + 3 teaspoons hardness concentrate  <b>Big Elvis:</b> 4 cups of distilled water + the remaining hardness concentrate  <b>Mr. Yee:</b> 4 cups of distilled water</p>
<p><b>4.</b> Label the cups with the water sample name - Aunt Honey, Fern, Big Elvis and Mr. Yee.</p>	<p><b>5.</b> Pour some of each sample into the matching cup.</p>	<p><b>6.</b> Use a test strip or test kit to test each sample for hardness.</p>
<p><b>7.</b> Graph the results. Put a dot (●) on the graph for the result for each sample.</p>	<p><b>8.</b> Look on the graph. Which water samples had a hardness concentration that would make the best amount of bubbles for Silvia's fur? The water with a result in the silver box would be perfect!</p>	<p><b>9.</b> Where should Pierre take Silvia for a bath to restore her beautiful fur before the photo shoot?</p>



## Rub a dub dub... Silvia is in the tub!

Disaster was averted and Silvia's emergency shampoo session was well underway. There would be just enough time for Pierre to fluff her drying fur in the warm sunlight before the photo shoot. Meanwhile, back at the water treatment plant, the Inspector was flummoxed until he discovered that Clueless Carl had set the water treatment gauges to not remove ANY hardness from the city drinking water. He figured that if some hardness made water taste good - a whole lot would make the water taste great! The inspector explained that too much hardness was just as bad as not enough hardness. The perfect amount was somewhere in between if you didn't want to have pouting poodles or crusty coffee makers. The Inspector straightened out Carl and the amount of hardness in the city drinking water. After that problem was solved, he went back to Pierre's Pampered Pet Palace and found everyone clustered around a fluffy and shyly smiling Silvia. The photo shoot had been a great success but Ajax and the Inspector knew that their day would not be done until they could help their neighbors adjust the hardness levels in their well water. Some of their water was much too soft and some of their water was much too hard. That explained Big Elvis's crusty-looking helmet hair!

A hardness test measures dissolved minerals. Water with not many minerals is called "soft". Detergent, shampoo and soap may make so many bubbles in soft water that they are hard to rinse off. Water with a lot of dissolved minerals is called "hard" and it's difficult to create lots of bubbles. Hard water leaves a crust when it evaporates. Water softeners treat hard water to remove some of the minerals.



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