Scorching Silicon

Make silicon from sand
with a massive explosion!

Educators' notes at www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/educatorsresources

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GRAB THIS STUFF...*

- 100 ml of hydrochloric acid (0.1M)
- 500 ml of water
- Sand
- Magnesium powder
- Boiling tube
- 1 litre heatproof beaker
- Stirrer
- Tongs
- Tweezers
- Spatula
- Bunsen burner
- Heatproof gloves
- Lab coat
- Goggles

*Must be performed by an adult in lab conditions

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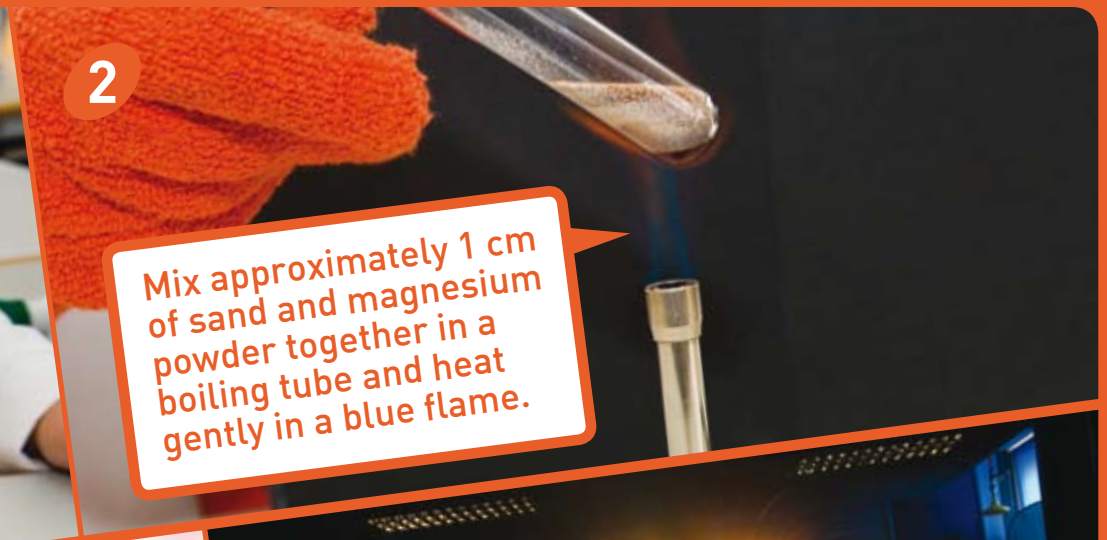
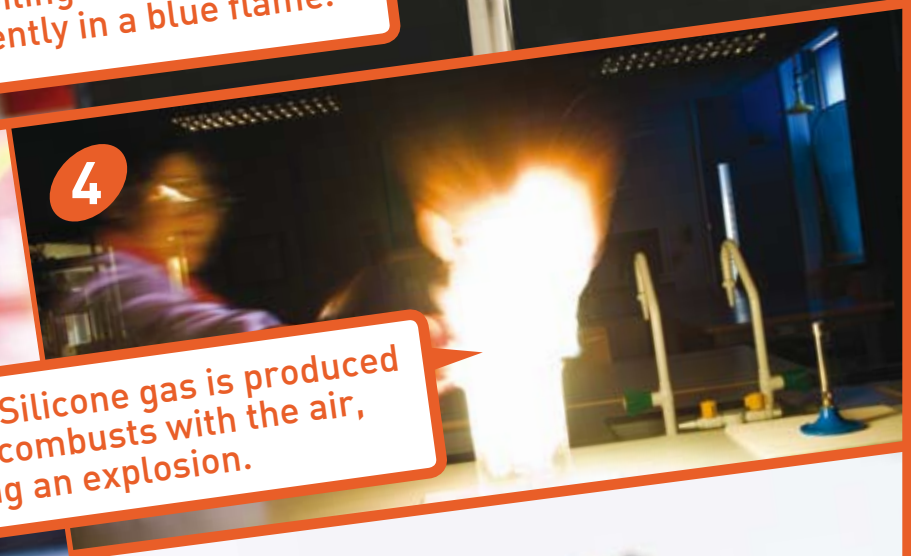
1 Add the acid to the beaker of water.



2 Mix approximately 1 cm of sand and magnesium powder together in a boiling tube and heat gently in a blue flame.

3 As soon as the contents start to glow, empty them into the solution.



4 Flash! Silicone gas is produced which combusts with the air, causing an explosion.

5 Silicon pieces are formed at the bottom of the beaker. Carefully pick them out with tongs.