

Image Sequence Captions, Buttons + Menu

When a pitcher is placed over burning candles in a plate of water, the water level rises significantly when the candles burn out.

(direct access to a specific image: click the image to display the image menu)

Common explanations include:

- **Burning oxygen?** As the candle burned, it “used up” the oxygen that was trapped under the pitcher.
- **Temperature?** The lower temperature created when the candle goes out causes lower air pressure; outside air pressure is greater.
- **Vacuum?** Vacuum is created inside the glass by the burning candle, which sucks the water up.
- **Air pressure differential?** When the flame uses up all of the oxygen in the pitcher, the candle goes out. This causes the air to cool rapidly, and causes condensation to form on the inside the pitcher.



1 Burning candles in a shallow plate with water...

See “[Getting the Facts Right](#)” by Oliver Knill for a thorough discussion.