Name _____

Scientists Solve a Sticky Problem

Suppose your foot slipped every time you took a step. You would have a hard time walking. It would be like walking on ice.

The force that keeps your foot from slipping is called friction. You get friction when two things rub together. There's a lot of friction when a shoe rubs against the ground. There's less friction when a shoe rubs against ice.

You don't want your shoes to slip when you walk. But there are times when you want things to slip.

Have you ever tried to squeeze the last of the toothpaste out of the tube? You squeeze, but the toothpaste stays put. You want it to slip, but it won't.

A group of scientists solved this problem. They figured out how to make a super slippery surface. Toothpaste doesn't stick to it.

They made a toothpaste tube with this surface on the inside. Toothpaste slipped right out of that tube.

Think of all the ways this invention could help you. What if ketchup didn't stick to the bottle? What if grape jelly didn't stick to the jar? People would be able to use every last bit of toothpaste, ketchup, and jelly.

Life is filled with sticky problems. This new invention will help solve some of them.