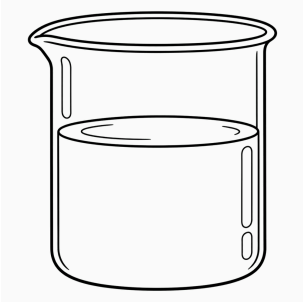
Paper Chromatography

Name / chosen name: _____

Work with an adult. Predict before testing; observations describe what actually happened.

Materials

Coffee filter strips, washable water-based marker, cup, pencil and a small amount of water.



Instructions

1. Draw a small marker dot above the bottom of a strip.
2. Predict whether the ink has more than one colour.
3. Stand the bottom in water with the dot above the water line.
4. Watch the water rise. Remove and dry the strip; record separated colours.

1. My prediction

Observation

Safety: Use washable water-based markers and water only. No solvents, tasting or permanent markers. An adult manages spills.

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Record and explain

1. What happened?

2. Was it different from my prediction?

3. What did I change or keep the same?

Scientific explanation: Water travels through the paper. Some ink components dissolve and move different distances. This can separate a mixture into visible bands; not every marker separates visibly.

1. One further question

2. How I could test it safely with an adult

Background source: https://www.acs.org/education/activities/mystery-markers.html