

Using flower petals to test for acids and alkalis

For this fun experiment you need different coloured flower petals. Make sure you include blue (the darker the better) and red.



Place your petals one colour at a time in a cup (or a mortar) with a tablespoon of hot water and mash them until you have coloured water. Spoon into the wells of a white ice cube tray. Do the same for each colour.

Add a drop of an acid (vinegar or lemon juice) to one well of each colour and record the colour changes.

Do the same with an alkali. You can make an alkaline solution by mixing sodium bicarbonate with water. Or just mix some ash from the fire with water and then let it settle.

When you have recorded how the colours change and you think you can see the pattern, ask someone to give you an unknown solution. You can test it and tell them if it is acidic, alkaline, or even neutral!

It's fun too, just to add acid and alkali to the mashed petals and see what happens!

Make sure you write down the colour changes as you work. Scientists always record their experiments! You could use a table like this:

		Blue petunia	Red geranium	Yellow nasturium	Orange marigold	
acids	vinegar					
	lemon					
alkalis	sodium bicarbonate					
	ash water					

And don't forget to register your experiment at bigsciexp.com.au



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