

April Experiment: Grow Your Own Rainbow!

To support children's scientific learning outside of school, each month I'll be sharing a fun and simple experiment that families can try at home.

April's experiment is all about colour, water, and a fascinating scientific process called capillary action. Let's grow a rainbow!

What You Need:

Kitchen roll or paper towel
Felt-tip pens
Two small bowls of water
Paperclip
Thread or string



What To Do:

- 1) Cut your kitchen roll into the shape of a rainbow.
- 2) Use felt-tip pens to colour a rainbow at each end of the kitchen roll, about 2cm up from the bottom. (Remember: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet!)
- 3) Clip a paperclip to the top of the rainbow and tie a piece of thread to it – this will help you hold the rainbow up.
- 4) Fill both bowls with a little water.
- 5) Hold your rainbow by the thread and dip both coloured ends into the bowls of water.
- 6) Watch as your rainbow grows up the paper towel!

What's Going On?

This experiment works thanks to a scientific process called capillary action – how water moves through materials.

Here's how:

Cohesion: Water molecules stick to each other.

Adhesion: Water molecules also stick to other surfaces – like the fibres in the kitchen roll.

The paper towel has tiny holes between its fibres. When water touches the bottom, it adheres to the towel and climbs upward, pulling other water molecules with it in a chain.

As the water moves, it carries the colour from the felt-tips with it, and the rainbow begins to grow!

Try Taking It Further:

Does it work with different types of paper?

What happens if you only colour one end?

Try using different types of pens or different colours. What changes?

If you have any questions or would like to share your learning at home, please do email me at newzealand@lainesmeadprimary.co.uk

Mrs Smith