

Chromatography

Materials needed:

- coffee filters, quartered
- rubbing alcohol
- plastic cups
- paper towels
- several different types of markers

First of all, discuss safety issues with the kids regarding the rubbing alcohol. Make sure they know not to sniff or drink it. Give each child a plastic cup with some rubbing alcohol in it, as well as lots of coffee filter pieces. Have them draw a line of marker on their coffee filter (the line should be drawn on the border between the smooth and grooved parts of the filter.) Have them dip the filter in the alcohol, leaving the line above the alcohol line. Leave it sitting for a few minutes, and the line will either travel up the filter or the separate colors of the marker will be separated from one another. Have the kids discuss which type and color of marker works best for this experiment, and ask them to think about why.