

Colorful Paper Chromatography

Discover how scientists use color to study materials, and make your own colorful artwork!

Colorful Chemistry Chromatography

Paper chromatography is a method to separate the parts of a mixture. In this activity, water moves through the paper, separating the different color inks in each marker. The inks contain a number of different molecules, each with unique characteristics such as size and solubility (ability to dissolve). Because of their different properties, the water carries different color molecules at different speeds. For example, pigments in the orange ink separate out to show a range of yellows and reds.

