

Easter – Coloured Chalk

Colour sidewalk chalk is usually inexpensive but the material is often soft and of lower quality. You can have fun making your own while producing a better product with colours of your own choosing.

Materials:

- dry Plaster of Paris
- Measuring Cups
- Water
- Tempera Paints
- Paper towelling tubes
- Mixing container and spoon
- Old clothes
- Utility scissors
- Masking tape
- Newspapers



Procedure: (Remember to have your parent's permission and have them watch and help you.)

- Cut the paper toweling tube into two or four sections of the same length.
- After cutting, completely cover one end of each tube with masking tape.
- Change into old clothes and cover your work area with newspapers to make clean up easier.
- Measure three cups of plaster of Paris into an old mixing container (ice-cream bucket works well)
- Slowly add one cup of the water.
- Stir in enough tempera paint to create vivid color. (Create your own colours by mixing in different colours of paint.)
- The mixture will begin to thicken so add the remaining one-third of a cup of water
- Spoon the colored plaster of Paris into the prepared cardboard molds.
- Place the tubes of colored sidewalk chalk in a warm dry location, and allow it to dry completely (patience - one week or longer).
- Once the colored sidewalk chalk is solid and dry, remove the cardboard molds by carefully ripping it away. (Snip one end to create a starting point.)

What's Happening:

When plaster of Paris is made it starts out as gypsum power that is heated to drive off some of the water molecules. When you add water to the power it turns back into gypsum when it dries.

Extension:

The oversized coloured chalk will look as good as or better than the store-bought varieties, and it will last longer since it is a harder material. You can make multi-coloured chalk by putting more than one coloured wet plaster into the mould. You can also use your chalk to colour salt and use this to make bottles filled with layers of coloured salt. See Krafty Kiddos video for instructions: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhMn9jR5lpQ>.

This chemistry activity is based on our Easter and Chemistry kits. The source for this lab was: <http://voices.yahoo.com/how-colored-sidewalk-chalk-7403828.html>. Our teaching kits (described on our website) are loaned out FREE to provide classroom teachers and parents of home schooled children an opportunity to explore Science in interesting ways. Please consider volunteering as a classroom guest speaker or allow your business as a field trip location.



Praxis will be hosting Operation Thoth, a conference for grade nine boys, on April 19th. There are still a few openings so please contact us ASAP to reserve a spot for that important family member in this popular event.

<http://praxismedhat.com/services-operation-thoth/>.

Lorne Cooper, Regional Executive Director

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