FAMILY ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Painting with plants

Run out of paint? No problem! Many of the plants in your kitchen contain colourful chemicals called pigments that you can use to make paint.

Plants don’t just make pigments for fun, most pigments do important jobs for plants. For example, chlorophyll, the pigment that gives leaves their green colour, captures energy from the sun and uses it to make food. Another pigment, anthocyanin makes some fruit and flowers colourful so they can attract animals.

Warning! May get messy!
Protect your clothes and surfaces when painting with plants.
Plant Pigment Recipes

Follow these recipes to make plant paints. Make sure an adult in your house is happy with you using these ingredients and helps with using the blender. If you don’t have a blender you can try mashing up the ingredients by hand in a bowl instead.

**Green paint**
Pigment: Chlorophyll
You will need: Spinach or kale
Method: Add ¼ cup of water to ½ cup of spinach. Blend or mash up to make green paint.

**Red paint**
Pigment: Betalain
You will need: Cooked beetroot
Method: Add ¼ cup of water to ½ cup of cooked beetroot. Blend or mash up to make red paint.

**Yellow paint**
Pigment: Curcumin
You will need: Turmeric spice
Method: Mix 2 tablespoons of turmeric spice powder with 4 tablespoons of water to make a yellow paint.

**Blue paint**
Pigment: Anthocyanin
You will need: Blueberries
Method: Add ¼ cup of water to ½ cup of blueberries. Blend or mash up to make a paint that turns blue on paper. Save half of your mixture to make grey paint (below).

**Blue/Grey paint**
Pigment: Anthocyanin
You will need: Blueberries + Bicarbonate of Soda
Method: Take mixture you have saved from making the blue paint (above) and add 2 teaspoons of bicarbonate of soda to this to make a blue/grey paint.

Try experimenting with other ingredients or even plants from your garden. Just remember not to eat them!