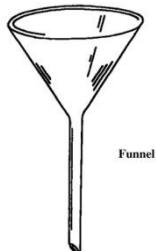


Testing Air Pollution

Air pollution is a part of modern life, and has been since the Industrial Revolution. It must be said that the pollution in our atmosphere is much less now than in years gone by. We are much more conscious of the harm that it does us now. But it is still there, and we need to monitor it so that we can all enjoy cleaner air.

We can do a number of tests for air pollution, such as an acid rain test. We can also measure the pollution in rainfall.

Take a flask, or something similar - a jam jar would do. Into the flask, place a funnel. In the funnel, you will need a



piece of clean filter paper. Leave the flask and filter out when you know it will rain. Later, collect your funnel and look at the filter paper. Is it still reasonably clean? If so, you've not got too much pollution in the atmosphere near you.



If it is particularly dirty, then perhaps something needs to be done to clean up the air around you.

Tip: Plant London Plane trees in your school grounds or local park. (They become quite big, so not really good for your garden.) London plane sheds its bark quite frequently. The bark picks up pollution from the air and then, when the bark drops off, it rots into the soil, taking the pollution with it. Neat, eh?



Another thing you can do is to look for lichens on the trees and buildings around you. (Do an Opal Air Survey - www.Opalexplornature.org) The survey will show you which types of lichens can survive in what types of atmosphere, so to find them growing, means that the air around it is clear of

certain types of pollution.

One thing to watch for is tar spot fungus on sycamore leaves. Tar Spot fungus is a plant pathogen that commonly affects sycamores and maples in late summer



and autumn, causing tar spots. Tar Spot does not usually have an adverse effect on the trees' long-term health. Tar Spot is most commonly found in Europe and North America. It is known as a pollution indicator because it is not found in areas with high amounts of sulphur dioxide.



<http://www.growfruitandveg.co.uk>

This is a simple test that you can do in your own garden. It is always nice to know that the air around us is clean, so check it out.

If you do these tests at home or at school, and the results are not good, what could you do about it? Talk about it with your class, group or friends. Is there someone you could write to in order to share your concerns?

Could you do something in your own life to improve the air around you, e.g. walking or cycling instead of using the car, in order to reduce petrol emissions? Write down some of your ideas below.

The Opal Air Survey showed

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Tar Spot Fungus Tests showed

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The Acid Rain test showed

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What can we do about it?

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