

Wool in Schools

Activity sheet



Science: Bleach test

Is it really wool? Let's test different samples of fabric to see if they are actually wool.

Please make sure you have a teacher or parent to help you do this test.

What do you need to do?

1. Get a teacher or parent to help you with this test.
2. Cut small pieces of different types of fabric, about 5cm square.
3. Place each fabric in a separate bowl.
4. Cover each fabric with bleach.
5. Put the bowls in a well-ventilated area for 8 hours (or overnight.)
6. After 8 hours, have a look and see which fabrics have disintegrated.

What happened?

Which fabrics look the same? Which ones look different? Have any fabrics completely disappeared?

How do you tell if it is really wool?

- Wool disintegrates in bleach the fastest of any fibre! Even other natural fibres like cotton don't disintegrate as fast as wool
- Synthetic fabrics are made of plastic and often don't disintegrate at all – they look the same

Why does wool do this?

Wool is biodegradable which means it disintegrates easily in the soil (and really fast in bleach!)

This is a good thing because you can bury it in soil when you are finished with it. It will not hurt the planet because it disappears quickly...in fact, it will actually put nutrients back into the soil and make the soil healthier.

When you bury plastic in the soil, it stays there for hundreds of years.

That's gross!

