

RAINBOW TEST TUBE

★ GRADES K-2 ✪ SCIENCE SKILLS: SOLUTIONS / MIXING / COLORS ★

What you need:

- 1 lidded, giant test tube or clear water bottle with lid for each student or group
- Water beads in red, yellow and blue. (Available at SteveSpangler.com or Amazon.com.)
- Water
- Paper towels



What to do:

1. Separate the beads by color and place them in three containers. Add water. Soak the beads for 2 to 3 hours. You'll know they are ready when they look like big, slimy marbles.
2. Have your students pour the water beads onto paper towels that will absorb excess water. Have students then crush the beads into small "crystals." (Make sure to keep the 3 colors separate so that the colors mix later.)
3. Carefully pour an equal amount of "crystals" of each color into the test tube, in this order: first red, then blue, yellow, and then red again. Close the lid.
4. Wait a few minutes and observe as the red starts to mix with the yellow to make orange, the yellow starts to mix with the blue to make green, and the red on the very bottom starts to mix with the blue to make purple.
5. Set the test tubes aside for a few days and you'll notice your rainbow will get even brighter.



How does it work?

When you first look at the rainbow tube, the color mixing is caused by light passing first through one color and then through the other. After a day or two (if you've really stuffed the tube), you'll see both the purple and green bands getting wider. The colored water in the blue crystals mixes with the colored water in the yellow crystals and makes green-colored water. The gel takes the new color and you have a green crystal. So cool!

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