

Where Do the Colors Come from?



A tree needs a lot of light to grow. In the fall, when the Northern Hemisphere moves away from the sun, the quantity and quality of sunlight decreases. This means that the leaves don't receive enough light. As a result, the tree enters a dormant state and the leaves die.

Leaves often die a spectacular death, especially those from hardwood trees. Before they fall, leaves lose their green hue, revealing a festival of colors for a short time.

Experiment

This experiment must be carried out in the fall, just as the leaves change color. Remember to always ask an adult before you perform your experiments.

Require Material :

- Some small pieces of black or very dark construction paper or tape.
- Paper clips.
- A leaf from a hardwood tree (preferably a maple, ash, red oak, or staghorn sumac).

Cover part of the leaf with a piece of black construction paper, using a paper clip to hold it in place. You can cut the paper into different shapes (circle, star, or letter) to make the experiment a little more fun. You can also cover part of the leaf with a piece of tape.



After a few days, remove the construction paper or tape.

What color is the part of the leaf that was covered? Is it different from the rest of the leaf that was exposed to light? What has happened?

