

Testing a property fairly: which is the most absorbent?

materials

What you need: paper towel pieces (same size, about 10 cm square) · cotton fabric samples (same size as paper pieces) · felt fabric samples (same size as paper pieces) · nylon fabric samples (same size as paper pieces) · jug of water · plastic syringe or dropper marked in ml · shallow tray or dish · kitchen or balance scales (optional — only if the whole class has agreed the mass-gain method; omit for the preferred syringe leftover method) · stopwatch or timer · cloths for wiping spills · paper towel and tea towel for the hook demo

Words to use

Fair test · Absorbency · Average

Our question

Which material soaks up the most water?

I predict...because...

How much water did each material hold? (in ml)

Material	Average water held (ml)

Draw a bar chart of our results

Which bar is tallest? What does that tell us about absorbency?

Was your prediction supported by the evidence?

What would have made this test unfair?