

8. Do-it-yourself Volcano

Summary Use a chemical reaction to make a model volcano erupt.

Apparatus

Bicarbonate of soda
Vinegar
Plasticine (or a volcano shaped cone made from cardboard)
small plastic pot or bottle top
A plate
Washing-up liquid
Red food colouring (optional)
Pipette (optional)
Water



Experiment

Most volcanoes are roughly conical, so you can do this experiment with either a cardboard cone made from packaging, or your own made from plasticine. Using plasticine for your volcano means you can make it any shape you like.

Make your volcano 'mountain' and create a hollow chamber inside the top of the volcano. This chamber will hold the chemical reaction that creates the 'lava' and can either be shaped from the plasticine, or you can use a small plastic pot. The pot needs to be about the size of a

small yoghurt carton cut in half. You may need to experiment with different chambers.

Half fill the chamber with bicarbonate of soda. Mix a little washing-up liquid and red food colouring with about 2 dessertspoonfuls of vinegar.

What do you think will happen when you pour the vinegar mixture into the chamber in the volcano?

Try it!

What did happen when you poured the vinegar mixture into the chamber in the volcano?

The volcano in the photo is about 10 centimetres across.

