

### Big Idea

# Capillary Action



### Materials & Equipment

- 6 Wide mouth cups or jars
- 6 Sheets of paper towel
- Food colouring (Red, Blue, Yellow)
- Water



### Procedure

1. Fold each sheet of paper towel three times length wise. Make sure it will fit to the bottom of one glass and bottom of the other beside it without standing too tall.
2. Line up the 6 glasses. Add 5 drops of **RED** food colouring to **Glass 1**, **YELLOW** to **Glass 3**, and **BLUE** to **Glass 5**
3. Add water to glasses 1, 3 and 5.
4. Place the glasses in a circle (each glass touching the one beside it) and add the paper towel
5. Place one end of the paper towel in the red water and the other end into the empty glass
6. Continue around the circle until the last piece of paper towel is placed in the red glass
7. Watch as the colour travels up the paper, and then after a short while back down the paper.

### What Happened?

The water travels up the paper towel by a process called capillary action

This process allows water to flow upwards (against gravity)

This is the process that moves water from the ground up a tree to the top leaves. Because paper towel is made from trees it has the same ability to pull the water up through the cellulose fibers of the paper towel.

