

this looks something right up your alleys!

From: biology-request@list.nsta.org [biology-request@list.nsta.org] On Behalf Of Heather Bradstreet [hbradstreet@bcs.rochester.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 8:36 PM
To: Pmr18@aol.com
Cc: Biology NSTA
Subject: Re: potassium chlorate and gummy bears/M and M experiment

Yes, this is a great discrepant event and sooooo much fun to ham up. I have had the test tube crack but by staying cool, nobody notices. I like to use the P.O.E model for demonstrations.

I also recommend practicing in a safe back yard location a few times so you get it right. Plus, incinerating gummy bears is very satisfying.

I use this procedure, sorry I can't cite it. I have long forgotten where this came from...

Materials: Gummy bears, large test tube you are willing to sacrifice, test tube clamp, retort stand, potassium perchlorate, a propane torch (kitchen torch is fine), long tongs, a high ceiling but a hood is good too. Having everyone wear goggles is safe but also helps ham up the death of the gummy bear.

Procedure: Fill the test tube that is attached via the clamp to the retort stand with about half a cm of potassium perchlorate. Make sure the test tube is pointing straight up and is not directed at anyone!! Now, heat the bottom of the test tube for a few seconds with the torch or until the potassium perchlorate is melted and bubbles. Using the tongs drop the bear in. Now step out of the way! Once it gets going, you should see a lot of purple sparks and flames and sugary smoke. It's best if you can do this one in the dark (to really see the sparks) and in a well-ventilated area. If the test tube is too small you can pack the chlorate and the bear in all at once and melt with the torch until you see some action.

On Nov 19, 2008, at 8:19 PM, Pmr18@aol.com wrote:

Does anyone have a procedure for the experiment with potassium chlorate and gummy bears? I would like to use this to demonstrate cellular respiration. How much potassium chlorate is used?
Thanks, Pat

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