

## Ink Chromatography

### Activity Summary

Students will be given chromatography paper, pens, and completed chromatography samples associated with a particular note to determine which pen wrote which note. They will then use this information to determine the person who wrote the note.

### Materials

Chromatography strips (3)  
Pens (3, different brands)  
Plastic cup (1)  
Water (1-2 Tbsp)



### Instructions

1. For each pen, label a chromatography strip with the brand/type of pen. Labels should be at the top of the chromatography strip.
2. Using the pen matching the label on the chromatography strip, draw a small dot about 0.5 inches from the bottom of the chromatography strip.
3. Fill the cup with a small amount of water, enough to cover the bottom of the cup and not to touch the dots on the chromatography paper.
4. Place the paper strips in the cup, so the bottom is in contact with the water and let them sit for 5 minutes to soak up water.
5. Watch the ink from the pens move on the paper!
6. After 2-3 minutes, remove the paper strips from the cup and place them gently on a dry surface.
7. Compare the chromatography strips. Which matches the one from the pen used to write the note?



