

Light Color and Heat

When you're out in the sun on a hot summer day it pays to wear some light colored clothes, but why is that? Experiment with light, color, heat and some water to find out.

What you'll need:

2 identical glass jars

Water

Thermometer

2 rubber bands or some tape

White paper

Black paper

Instructions:

1. Wrap the white paper around one of the glasses using the rubber band or tape to hold it on.
2. Do the same with the black paper and the other glass.
3. Fill the glasses with the exact same amount of water.
4. Leave the glasses out in the sun for a couple of hours before returning to measure the temperature of the water in each.

What's happening?

Dark surfaces such as the black paper absorb more light and heat than the lighter ones such as the white paper. After measuring the temperatures of the water, the glass with the black paper around it should be hotter than the other. Lighter surfaces reflect more light, that's why people where lighter colored clothes in the summer, it keeps them cooler.

Adapted from: <http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments/lightcolorheat.html>