EXPLORING NATURAL DYEING WITH VEGETABLES

Use vegetables – like beets, parsley, spinach, carrot and red cabbage – to create tie-dyed clothing.

You Will Need:

- Vegetables (We used beets, parsley, spinach, carrots, and red cabbage.)
- Blender
- Water
- Salt
- Glass jar
- Old socks
- Funnel
- Squeeze bottles
- Fabric to dye, like a t-shirt or pair of socks
- Large pot (For simmering on stove or heating element.)
- Rubber bands
- Baking tray
- Newspaper
- Baking rack
- Zipper storage bag
- Stove top or electric heating element
- Microwave

Steps

1. Make the dye:
   - Chop the vegetables. Place in blender. For every 2 cups of vegetables, add 2 cups of boiling water and 1 tablespoon of salt. Blend the mixture until it becomes very fine.
   - While blending, cover a jar with an old sock. When the mixture is prepared, pour it into the sock, and squeeze hard to get all of the liquid out into the jar.
   - Then, pour the liquid into squeeze bottles using a small funnel.
   - Repeat for each kind of vegetable you are using.

2. Prepare fabric for dyeing:
   - Make sure the fabric you are dyeing has been washed and dried.
   - Create your tie dye pattern using rubber bands.
   - In a pot, bring ½ cup of salt and 8 cups of water to a boil. Turn down heat to simmer. Place your rubber-banded fabric into the pot and simmer for one hour.
   - Run your fabric under cool water when done, and squeeze out the excess water. Be sure to leave the rubber bands on the fabric.

3. Dye time:
   - Prepare a dye station with a baking tray, newspaper, and baking rack.
   - Squirt the dyes directly onto the fabric between the rubber bands.
   - Place your fabric in a zipper storage bag and heat in the microwave for 2 minutes. Remove the fabric and allow to cool completely.

4. Finish up:
   - When your fabric is cool, rinse under cold water. Remove rubber bands and hang to air dry.
   - When it’s time to launder your fabric, hand-wash only, using very mild detergent. Hang to air dry.

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