



Natural Herbicide

Grade Levels: 4-6

Background

Herbicides, or more often, pesticides, are chemicals that are used to kill unwanted plant life, like weeds. All plants, including weeds, use energy from the sun to grow. A process called photosynthesis allows them to turn the light from the sun into sugar for food. Using a herbicide stops a plant from being able to make the food it needs to continue growing and gathering light from the sun.

Questions

Can you make a natural herbicide?

Possible Hypothesis

_____ can be used as a natural herbicide.

Materials

- 20 Leaves from a black walnut tree
- 4-quart Pot
- Draining spoon
- Water

Procedure

1. Put the leaves in the pot and fill it half-full with water. Have an adult boil the mixture on the stove for 10 minutes.
2. Remove the leaves using the draining spoon and boil the rest of the mixture for 20 minutes. This liquid is the herbicide for testing.
3. Locate weeds around your home. Each day at dusk pour about two ounces of the herbicide on half of the weeds and the same amount of water on the other half of the weeds. These will be the control weeds.
4. Do this for seven days, recording your observations each day.

Analysis and Conclusion

Did the natural herbicide work? Do research on the black walnut tree to discover its properties. Do you think using natural herbicides is a good idea? Do you think the leaves of other trees would work, too?

