

Ghastly gas contest



Fluorine

Five scientists were poisoned trying to make this gas. French scientist Henri Moissan (1852-1907) eventually made it using platinum equipment that the fluorine wouldn't dissolve. Nowadays, tiny safe amounts of fluorine are present in toothpaste to help protect your teeth.

Methane

This gas bubbles up from marshes and catches fire to make ghostly lights called will-o'-the-wisps or jack-o'-lantern. You'll also find methane in cows' (and humans') farts. It's true!



Ozone

These gas molecules are made of three oxygen atoms. They smell of freshly-mown hay and were discovered when a scientist noticed a funny pong in his lab. Ozone kills germs. It also kills people if they breathe too much of it. Luckily, most ozone is 25km up in the air. Protecting us from the Sun's rays.

Chlorine

Pollution by gases containing chlorine caused a hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica. But this horrible yellow-green gas has been causing problems for centuries. Over 600 years ago an alchemist bubbled chlorine through water and said it was good for salad dressings. Wrong! Chlorine is really poisonous.



Tasks

- ① Draw a scale and put the gases in order of most ghastly to least ghastly.
- ② It is obvious gases can be very dangerous, name gases which are helpful or essential to us.
- ③ Create a safety poster on one of the gases above. Include a safety symbol which would warn others of the dangers associated with the gas.