

Awe and Wonder

Clean Pennies

You will need:



A few non-shiny pennies



White vinegar



Bowl or shallow tray made of glass



Salt



Bowl of plain water



Spoon



Nuts and bolts

Method:

1. Pour the white vinegar into the bowl.
2. Add the salt and stir, then add the pennies.
3. Count to 10.
4. Take the pennies out using the spoon. What has happened?
5. Rinse the pennies in plain water, what has happened now?
6. Put some nuts and bolts into the white vinegar and salt, wait for a few moments. What has happened?
7. Why do you think the nuts and bolts have gone copper in colour? Where has the copper colour come from?



The Science Bit

Vinegar is an acid, and the acid in the vinegar reacts with the salt to remove what is called copper oxide which was making the pennies dull and not shiny. When the pennies are taken out, the copper that was making the pennies dull is held in the vinegar. If you put metal nuts and bolts in the vinegar, the copper wants to be with metal and so sticks to the nuts and bolts.