

♥ Blueberry is a merry color ♥

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Research Project



## Introduction

This assignment is about researching natural dyes and applying new methods to fabric dyeing by using 100% natural dyes. Natural dyeing dates back to the neolithic settlement in southern Anatolia where traces of red dyes were found possibly from ochre iron oxide pigments from clay. Natural dyes usually come from animal or plant sources.

I started out my project by laying everything out that I'm going to need for this project. It consists of a 100% white cotton t-shirt, a pot, two kinds of strainers, two boxes of fresh blueberries and thread.



## Process

Some things are not shown in the picture above but I did add and include later throughout the project are gloves, salt and a blender to help me smash the blueberries to an even finer consistency.

First step was filling the pot with water, adding salt then bringing the water to a boil which took about 20 minutes. The salt is my resistant which will help the color stick better to the shirt.

I then added the t-shirt to the boiling water and let it boil for about 30 minutes. When adding the t-shirt into the boiling water I noticed the water wasn't fully covering all the fabric so I added about 3 cups of water so the shirt can be fully submerged. While the t-shirt was boiling I was preparing the blueberries. I started out by simply smashing them with a fork but soon realized that the fork alone won't give me the consistency I'm looking for. Here's a picture of how the blueberries were looking at this point:





\So I further smashed down all the whole blueberries left but this is when I realized putting them in a blender would give me an even better consistency, so I blended it all up then strained it in a separate plate getting rid of all the little seeds and this is what it looked like:



Meanwhile I let the t-shirt sit in a bowl of cold water to cool down after boiling. I then took it out to dry a little bit and started folding it using the shibori method I saw in the youtube video by “shmoxd” called “How to tie dye (with fruits & veggies)”, added the rubber bands then put it in

the pot with the dye. I noticed the dye wasn't covering the shirt all the way so I added a little bit



of water to cover the shirt and let it sit in the dye..

After about 16 hours I took the shirt out of the dye and rinsed it with just water, I was scared to mix it with anything else because I was really happy with my results and I didn't want the color to change. These are the wet results right after I rinsed it:







## Findings

I found that dying with natural resources is not as easy as I thought it was going to be. I had no prior experience with tie dying this way so I had no idea what to expect.

The hardest part for me was placing the rubber bands around the shirt and where I wanted it to be. There was a specific technique in one of the videos that I wanted to attempt but everytime I scrunched up the fabric and went to tie it, I would lose the shape of it so I decided to change the folding method all together. I'm so glad I changed the way I folded the shirt because the way it turned out is super unique. Doing this project I doubted myself a few times along the way with thinking I might not get a nice color or that I was doing something incorrectly but I'm so pleased with the results. I initially used blueberries because my favorite color is pink but the color turned out way more purple than i expected but it's still a very pretty shade. I was truly amazed when I took the rubber bands off the shirt because the pattern of tie dye turned out extremely well and neat. When I was placing the shirt in the dye I had a feeling that the color would bleed all over

but thankfully it didn't. I believe it turned out this way because I used more blueberries (two boxes) and used less water so the color is more potent. I was ecstatic to see the color pay off from just the blueberries. The first thing that came to mind when I saw these super fun results is that I need to try this again with different natural dyes and different folding techniques. I thoroughly enjoyed this project because it made me aware of a new activity and introduced me to a different way to express myself as an artist. After letting the shirt dry overnight the color did fade from the initial shade we saw when I took it out. Here's how it looked the next morning:





References:

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural\\_dye#Origins](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_dye#Origins)

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