



# **Salt of the Earth**

**Salt has been an important substance for thousands of years. People used it for cooking and preserving food – important in the days before fridges and freezers! They got salt from different sources: the sea was the main one, but it could also be mined, or extracted from urine. In this activity you will find out how people in the past did this!**

## **You will need:**

- Water
- Salt
- Yellow food colouring
- Night light or other heat source
- Evaporating dish or other shallow, heat proof vessel
- Tongs
- Heat resistant mat
- Safety goggles
- Matches or splint

## **Activity:**

Mix the salt with the water and yellow food colouring. For best results keep adding salt until the solution is saturated; this yellow liquid then becomes your fake urine for the test.

Put the solution in an evaporating dish and heat it over a night light or other heat source. Watch as the liquid evaporates and the salt crystallises around the edge of the dish.

## **Useful questions:**

- Why did people in the past need salt?
- What process allows us to collect the salt from the urine?
- Why aren't the salt crystals yellow?
- How else could people have got salt in the past?

## **Research Opportunities:**

- Map out salt trading routes
- Research the range of purposes salt was used for e.g. preservation of food, cooking etc

## Useful Websites:

[www.saltinstitute.org](http://www.saltinstitute.org)

[www.saltmuseum.org.uk](http://www.saltmuseum.org.uk)

	National Curriculum	QCA Unit
<b>KS 2</b>	Science: Sc1, Sc3 History: 2a, b; 4a, b; 6	Science: Unit 4d; 5d; 6d History: Unit 6; 8

**This activity was donated by the Young Archaeologists Club.**

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## creativeminds



The Creative Minds project works with museums libraries and archives across the Yorkshire region, to provide young people with learning opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (S.T.E.M.). This ground-breaking project is the first of its kind in the country and is managed by MLA Yorkshire. This pack was developed by Creative Minds with funding from Yorkshire Forward.