

Bottle 'Em Up



Did you know some bottled water comes from municipal water systems?

This exercise is a blind taste test to see if all types of bottled water are the same and to determine participant preferences.

Equipment/Materials

survey sheet for each participant
pen or pencil for each participant
small paper cups (six per participant)
small pitchers or decanters (six identical)
tap water
distilled water
bottled drinking water
spring water
mineral water
seltzer water

Time Required: Approximately 20 minutes



Procedure

1. Refrigerate the sample waters to chill them thoroughly.
2. Set up a sampling table by filling each decanter or pitcher with one of the samples and labeling it with a number. (Record the number and the type of water included in a suitable place.)
3. Place a stack of small paper cups (bathroom cups or tiny condiment cups are large enough) at each sampling station.
4. Have the participants sample each of the bottled water samples and record their observations on taste as well as their likes and dislikes next to the number of the sample. (An assistant at each of the sites might be helpful to prevent spills and other accidents.)

Discussion and Analysis

1. Have participants discuss their observations on each of the samples using the numbers listed with the samples.
2. Ask them to rank the samples from best to worst in flavor and to rank them in order of their preference.
3. Provide them with the list of products by numbers, so they can fill in the product name next to their observations.
4. Lead a discussion on the reasons for the differences in taste among the samples.
5. Ask how the bottled water samples compared to the tap water sample. Where does the tap water rank in comparison to the other types of water available?
6. Review the types of water and their definitions.

"Bottle 'Em Up"

Directions: Taste small samples of each of the six types of water provided and record your observations and preferences below. Rank the samples by taste and preference. After the samples have been ranked, look at the content label and list the content of each sample to assist in the discussion.

Example:

Sample A (tap water) good flavor, slight chlorine taste and slight mustiness, ranked #4 in flavor and

#3 in preference by me, surface water from lake

Sample 1 ()

Sample 2 ()

Sample 3 ()

Sample 4 ()

Sample 5 ()

Sample 6 ()