



DNA double helix



30 minutes



- DNA double helix instruction sheet (one per pupil, or pairs)
- Pairing rules (one or two per table)
- Jelly babies, four different colours
- Cocktail sticks
- Containers for the jelly babies and cocktail sticks



Please be aware that this activity may not be suitable for children with allergies. Please consult your school's own health and safety policy before conducting this activity.



Begin the activity by discussing with your pupils that DNA contains the instructions for making all living things, made up of four chemical letters, A, C, G, and T, and that it makes a special shape called a double helix. Show the class an illustration of DNA (included in the resource pack). What does it look like? This shape looks like a spiral staircase or a squashed ladder. It makes this shape because the four chemicals in DNA always pair up in the same way: A always with T, C always G.



Before starting the activity stick four jelly babies to the pairing rule sheets.

For example: green for A, red for T, purple for C and orange for G.

Set up each table with a pot of jelly babies and a pot of cocktail sticks and one or two pairing rule sheets. Provide each pupil with a DNA double helix instruction sheet, or one per pair.

Demonstrate to the pupils how to attach one jelly baby to the other to get them started, and remind them to check the pairing rule sheet when it's time to pair up their DNA letters. We have included some supporting PowerPoint slides 'DNAdoublehelix_05_slides.ppt' if needed.