

Why do leaves change colour in the fall?

Have you ever wondered why leaves change colour in the fall?

This chemistry lesson will teach you all about photosynthesis and chlorophyll. In the spring of the year new leaves emerge on the trees and plants as a bright green colour....

This bright green colour is due to the large amount of chlorophyll present in the leaves. Chlorophyll is produced through photosynthesis which needs water, sunlight and carbon dioxide to happen. In the spring all of these requirements are available; the melted snow and rain provide the water and the sun is at an advantageous angle in the sky.

In the fall or autumn however, the sun is at a much lower angle with fewer daylight hours. The soil around the base of the trees contains much less moisture in the fall than the spring. Without adequate sunlight and water, photosynthesis shuts down, no chlorophyll is produced, and the leaves on the trees turn red, yellow, orange and brown...

That is your chemistry lesson on why the leaves change colours! These colours on the trees are very pretty to look at, especially here in Canada and the northern USA where the roadsides are cloaked in them. Get out and enjoy the colours of fall today!