

Water Quality

Water is used for a number of tasks such as irrigation, farming, swimming, food preparation and of course, drinking. It is not enough to just look at water and decide if it is okay for humans to drink. Even clear water can contain invisible contaminants. The testing of water can help find things in the water like bacteria, nutrients, pesticides, and oxygen. Once the quality of a water source is known, it can then be decided how it should be used.

Scientists analyze water samples by observing its color, cloudiness (turbidity) and odor. They can also test for Ph (acidity) and saltiness (salinity). By using a microscope people may also see small animals like mosquitos, wrigglers, and algae. Things like chemical, bacteria, and animal waste can be difficult to detect without further testing.

1. If water looks clear, it is probably clean and safe for drinking. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.
2. What do scientists analyze when testing water samples?
3. Why is a microscope important when testing water quality?
4. IF water is unfit for drinking, can we still use it? What other purposes could we use it for?