

**teacher guide**

**Hydrocarbon chemistry 2:**

**Biodiesel**

# Components

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|  | NAME | DESCRIPTION | AUDIENCE |
|  | *Biodiesel*  teacher guide | This shows how the resource can be used to improve students’ understanding of the preparation and benefits of biodiesel as an alternative to petroleum. | teachers |
|  | *Making biodiesel*  procedure sheet | This provides students and teachers with a procedure for the preparation of biodiesel from vegetable oil. | students |
|  | *Comparing fuels*  procedure sheet | This procedure sheet explores some properties of biodiesel and other hydrocarbons commonly used as fuels. | students |

Purpose

To develop students’ understanding of the role of biodiesel as a possible fuel alternative

To enable students to make informed judgments about the sustainability issues associated with moving towards using biodiesel as a large scale alternative to petroleum fuels.

# Activity summary

Outcomes

Students:

* explain how biodiesel can be prepared in a laboratory;
* describe properties of biodiesel and other common hydrocarbon fuels;
* describe economic and environmental benefits of using biodiesel as an alternative to petroleum fuels;
* describe economic, environmental and social costs of large-scale biodiesel production; and
* explain how science may be used to develop solutions to diminishing energy resources.

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| ACTIVITY | POSSIBLE STRATEGY |
| Distribute and use the fact sheet, *Biodiesel dilemma*, from *Hydrocarbon chemistry 1: Coconut oil* to give students an understanding of the potential of biodiesel as an alternative to petroleum diesel. (See **Notes for teachers** below) | KWL or PMI chart |
| Distribute the procedure sheet *Making biodiesel*. Biodiesel product from the experiment should be saved for comparison with other fuels. | group |
| Students perform experiments on the procedure sheet, *Comparing fuels*, then answer questions on the sheet. | group, individual |

# Technical requirements

The guide and procedure sheets require Adobe Reader (version 5 or later), which is a free download from [www.adobe.com.](http://www.adobe.com/) The procedure sheets are also provided in Microsoft Word format.

# Notes for teachers

The fact sheet, *Biodiesel dilemma*, included in *Hydrocarbon chemistry 1: Coconut oil* provides students with introductory information about biodiesel and its production. It may be useful to use a **KWL** strategy to help probe students’ thinking about the topic. In groups, students could complete the first two columns:

* what I **K**now about biodiesel.
* what I **W**ant to know about biodiesel.

As students continue to learn more about biodiesel production through later activities, they can add to their questions and write their own answers in the third column:

* what I have **L**earned.

Another strategy could be to use a **PMI** (**P**lus, **M**inus, **I**nteresting) to help them assess the sustainability issues in relation to the production and use of biodiesel.

A background sheet with information for teachers on biodiesel (*What is biodiesel?*) is included in the SPICE resource *Hydrocarbon chemistry 1: Coconut oil*.

## Making biodiesel

The procedure sheet, *Making biodiesel*, provides students with a method for making biodiesel in a laboratory. Safety precautions must be emplyed as chemicals used are harmful in contact with skin and eyes. See procedure sheet for details.

Students should retain a small sample of biodiesel for comparison with otehr hydrocarbon fuels in the procedure, *Comparing fuels*.

## Comparing fuels

The procedure sheet, *Comparing fuels*, provides students with an opportunity to compare properties of common hydrocarbons used as fuels with their sample of biodiesel from the previous activity, *Making biodiesel*. Hydrocarbons are flammable.

Safety precautions such as wearing safety glasses are detailed in the procedure sheet.

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