



RESEARCH:

History, Science, and Technology



While dyeing with indigo, you may have wondered:

- how do natural indigo and synthetic indigo differ?
- where does the indigo plant grow?
- how is the indigo plant processed into dye?
- how have other cultures used indigo?
- what role has indigo played in the world economy?
- what other plants yield blue dyes?
- what plants yield dyes of other colors?

Surfing the web is a great way to gather information and begin to answer your questions about indigo, but you can also hit your school and public library. You might compare the many recorded methods for dyeing with indigo. Perhaps, you want to explore the economic impact of indigo on dye-producing countries. Who gained and who lost when the dye was synthesized in the laboratory? Calculate how many acres of indigo plants are needed to produce a pound of dye and decide if it is beneficial for the soil. Find out what the term “ring-dyed” means and what it has to do with the special look of worn Levi blue jeans. Investigate the psychology of the blue color. Learn more about indigo plantations in the U.S. and the purpose of the Winyah Indigo Society. Indigo-resist prints were made in 18th century America. Study how those fabrics were made and locate museums where they are displayed. Find out how you can grow indigo plants in your garden.

Keywords Related to Indigo Dyeing

PLANTS	SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY	TEXTILES
Acanthus species (SE Asia shrub) <i>Strobilanthes flaccidifolius</i>	Adolph von Baeyer	Cellulosic fibers
Dyers' Knotweed/Japanese Indigo <i>Polygonum tinctorium</i>	Chromophore	Colorant
Gara (West African plant) <i>Lonchocarpus cyanescens</i>	Fermentation	Cotton
Indigo	Indican	Denim
<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i>	Inkodye	Dye
<i>Indigofera suffruticosa</i>	Oxidation-Reduction	Jeans
Milkweed species (SE Asia vine) <i>Marsdenia tinctoria</i>	Paste resist	Ring-dyed yarns
Woad	Solubility	Resist
<i>Isatis tinctoria</i>	Stencil	Tie-dye
	Vat dyes and dyeing process	

References:

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