

Broad or Narrow?

Asking Scientific Questions



Asking The Right Questions

People learn about the world by being curious and asking questions. Scientists may ask a broad question which may be broken down into a series of more specific questions.

Scientific questions have an answer that can be measured or observed through experimentation. The answers are not based on opinions.



A Broad Question:

Why does mould grow on food?

There are too many variables to consider. A single experiment will not give you the answer to this question.

To find out more about how mould grows on food you need to ask more specific questions that can be tested.

Narrow it down:

Ask more specific, testable questions.

Does mould grow faster on dry bread or moist bread?

Does mould grow faster on bread that is exposed to sunlight?

These questions can be answered by conducting an experiment. Factors that lead to mould growth will be observable.

Results of experimentation
may lead to further
questions.



Examples:

What types of food allow mould to grow the fastest?

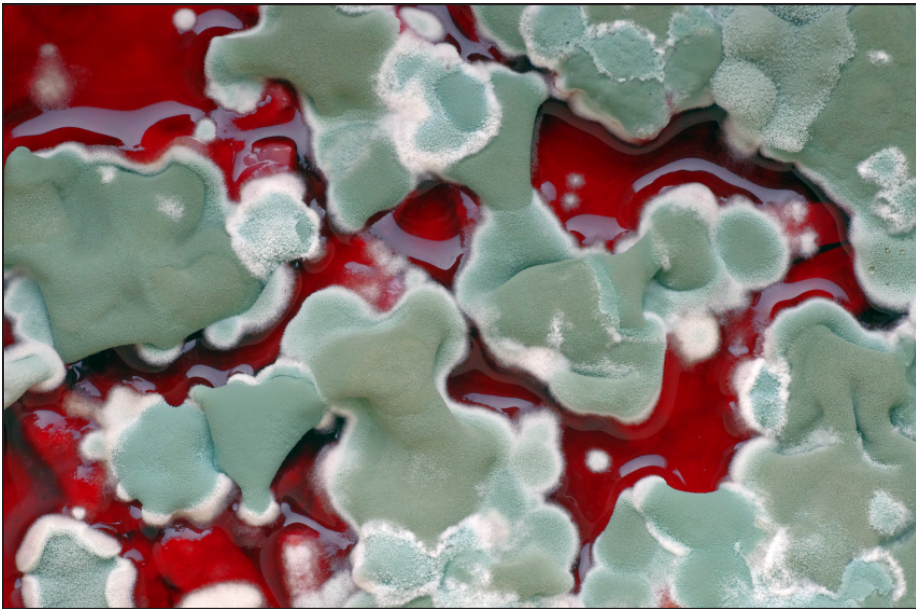
How effective is refrigeration at preventing the growth of mould?

Which storage containers are better at preventing the growth of mould?

Avoid questions that are answered with opinions.

Which is the ugliest looking mould?

Opinions cannot be tested. One person may think mould looks ugly. Another person may see colours or patterns in the mould that look beautiful. Opinions cannot be right or wrong!



What
questions
do you
have about
mould?

