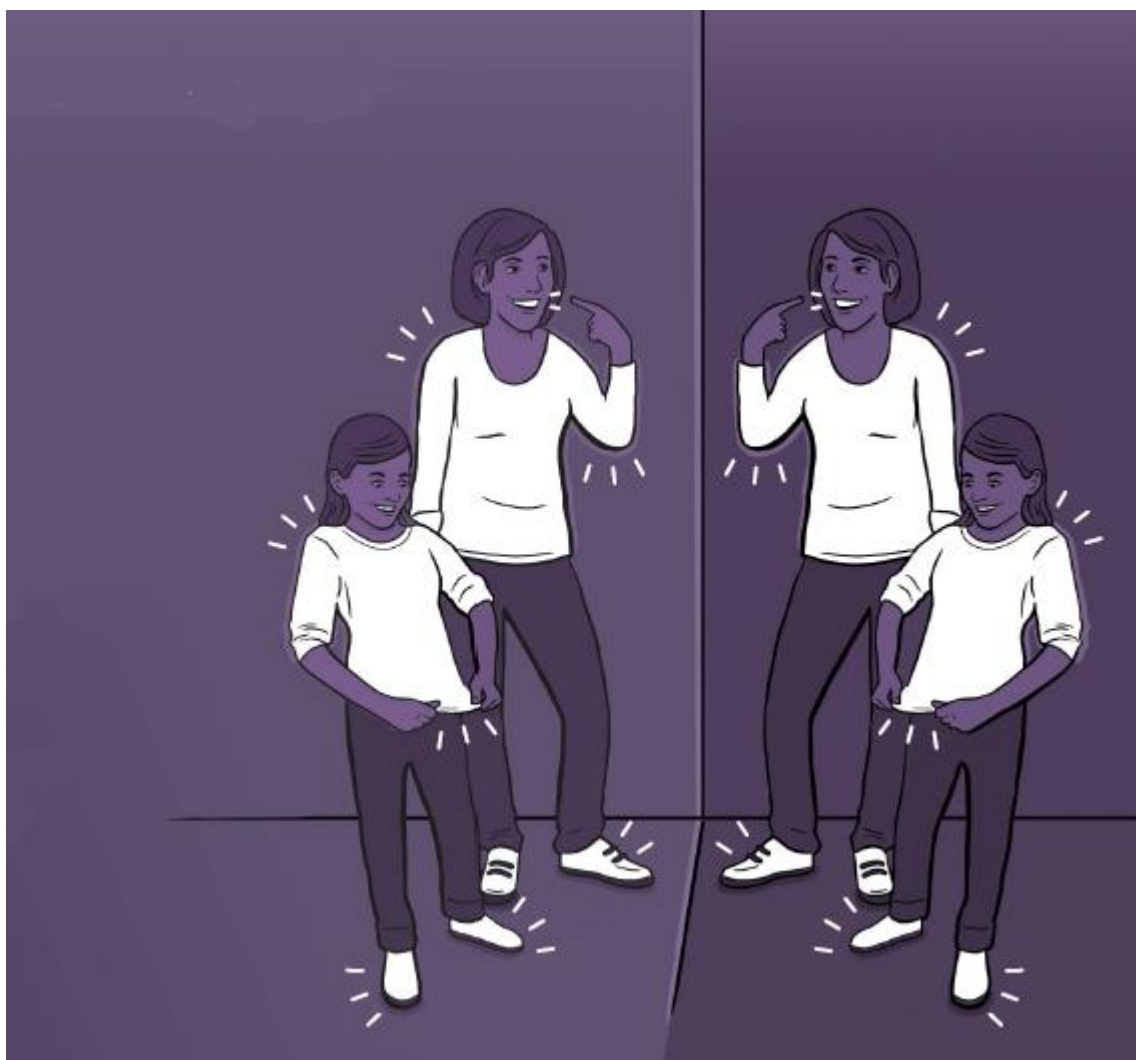


What is UV light?

UV ROOM



| (Type) | Ages | Topic | Time |
|--------------------|--|-------|----------|
| Science background | 3-14 | Light | <10 mins |
| | Skills used Observation - Curiosity | | |

Overview for adults

This room is full of ultraviolet light – light that our eyes can't see. In this room you can explore the effect that ultraviolet light has on you, your clothes and the objects in the room.

What's the science?

Ultraviolet (UV) light is light just beyond what humans can see. Most of the UV light around us comes from the sun, but we can also create it using special light bulbs. This room is purple because ultraviolet sits just beyond purple on the colour spectrum. When these lights produce UV, they also produce a little bit of visible purple light so that we know that they are working. Some things glow when UV light shines on them. You can't see UV, but you can see this glowing effect.

Science in your world

Police can use UV light to prevent and detect crime. Money is something that we don't want to be copied or forged, so banks protect it by putting markings on it that are invisible under normal light, but can be seen under UV light. We can also use UV to protect things we don't want to get stolen with invisible labels.

Things to think and talk about ...

- Some animals can see UV light. How do you think the world looks different to them?
- Is anyone in your group wearing sunblock? What does that look like under UV light?

Things to investigate ...

- Check out what you have in your pockets. Do any of them have invisible UV markings?
- Have a look at your clothes, do any of them glow? Why?

Museum links

UV light is just one part of the electromagnetic spectrum, just like visible light (rainbow colours). Other parts of the spectrum are used by thermal cameras (infrared), regular cameras (visible light) and our FM radios (radio waves). You even cook your food using microwaves.

Did you know...?

Although we can't see UV, bees can. UV light from the Sun lights up flowers like little landing strips for bees.