AQA GCSE Chemistry | 8462

SPECIFICATION POINT 4.8.3.1

Flame tests

Past-paper questions

Tier	**Higher**
Question groups	**9**
Available paper years	**2008–2025**

Using this booklet

1. Answer the questions in order and show your working.
2. Original question numbers and marks are retained.
3. Print at actual size (100%) for measuring questions.
4. Use the companion answer booklet to check your work.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Whole questions are retained for context, so some parts assess other specification points. Current and legacy sources are labelled. Continue on extra paper if needed.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 01

6 (a) Four bottles of chemicals made in the 1880s were found recently in a cupboard during a Health and Safety inspection at Lovell Laboratories.



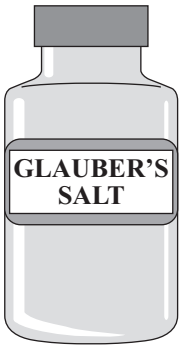
Sodium carbonate



Sodium chloride



Sodium nitrate



Sodium sulfate

The chemicals are correctly named.

You are provided with the following reagents:

- aluminium powder
- barium chloride solution acidified with dilute hydrochloric acid
- dilute hydrochloric acid
- silver nitrate solution acidified with dilute nitric acid
- sodium hydroxide solution.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 01 · continued

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(i) Describe tests to show that these chemicals are correctly named.

In each case give the reagent(s) you would use and state what you would see.

Test and result for carbonate ions:

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Test and result for chloride ions:

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Test and result for nitrate ions:

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Test and result for sulfate ions:

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.....

(5 marks)

(ii) Suggest why a flame test would **not** distinguish between these four chemicals.

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(1 mark)

(b) Instrumental methods of analysis linked to computers can be used to identify chemicals.

Describe **two** advantages of using instrumental methods of analysis.

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(2 marks)

8

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 02

4 Alums are salts. They have been used since ancient times in dyeing and medicine and still have many uses today.

Three alums are shown in the table:

Name	Ions present		
Ammonium alum	NH_4^+	Al^{3+}	SO_4^{2-}
Potassium alum	K^+	Al^{3+}	SO_4^{2-}
Sodium alum	Na^+	Al^{3+}	SO_4^{2-}

4 (a) These alums contain sulfate ions (SO_4^{2-}).

Describe and give the result of a chemical test to show this.

Test .....

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Result .....

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(2 marks)

4 (b) These alums contain aluminium ions (Al^{3+}).

Describe how sodium hydroxide solution can be used to show this.

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(2 marks)

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 02 · continued

for mark

4 (c) Aluminium ions do not give a colour in flame tests. However, flame tests can be used to distinguish between these three alums.

Explain how these three alums could be identified from the results of flame tests.

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(2 marks)

6

Turn over for the next question

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 03

January 2011 | CHY3H | Original Q5 | Legacy

5 Read the information in the box and then answer the questions.

Seidlitz Powder is the name of a medicine.

Seidlitz Powder comes as two powders. One powder is wrapped in white paper and contains tartaric acid ($C_4H_6O_6$). The other powder is wrapped in blue paper and contains potassium sodium tartrate ($KNaC_4H_4O_6$) and sodium hydrogencarbonate ($NaHCO_3$).

The contents of the blue paper are completely dissolved in water and then the contents of the white paper are added.

The equation which represents this reaction is:

$$C_4H_6O_6\,(aq) + 2NaHCO_3\,(aq) \longrightarrow Na_2C_4H_4O_6\,(aq) + 2H_2O\,(l) + 2CO_2\,(g)$$

5 (a) Describe and give the result of a test to identify the gas produced in this reaction.

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(2 marks)

5 (b) One of the chemicals in Seidlitz Powder is potassium sodium tartrate ($KNaC_4H_4O_6$).

Suggest why it would be difficult to identify **both** potassium ions and sodium ions in potassium sodium tartrate using a flame test.

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(1 mark)

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 03 · continued

5 (c) Some Seidlitz Powder was bought on the Internet. However, when tested, it was found to be only magnesium sulfate.

5 (c) (i) Describe and give the result of a chemical test to show that magnesium sulfate contains sulfate ions.

Test .....

.....

Result .....

.....

(2 marks)

5 (c) (ii) Magnesium sulfate contains magnesium ions.

Describe what you **see** when sodium hydroxide solution is added to a solution of magnesium sulfate.

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(1 mark)

6

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 04

7 This question is about chemical analysis.

7 (a) A student has solutions of three compounds, **X**, **Y** and **Z**.

The student uses tests to identify the ions in the three compounds.

The student records the results of the tests in **Table 1**.

Table 1

	Test			
Compound	**Flame test**	**Add sodium hydroxide solution**	**Add hydrochloric acid and barium chloride solution**	**Add nitric acid and silver nitrate solution**
X	no colour	green precipitate	white precipitate	no reaction
Y	yellow flame	no reaction	no reaction	yellow precipitate
Z	no colour	brown precipitate	no reaction	cream precipitate

Identify the **two** ions present in each compound, **X**, **Y** and **Z**.

[3 marks]

X .....

Y .....

Z .....

7 (b) A chemist needs to find the concentration of a solution of barium hydroxide.
Barium hydroxide solution is an alkali.

The chemist could find the concentration of the barium hydroxide solution using two different methods.

Method 1

- An excess of sodium sulfate solution is added to 25 cm^3 of the barium hydroxide solution. A precipitate of barium sulfate is formed.
- The precipitate of barium sulfate is filtered, dried and weighed.
- The concentration of the barium hydroxide solution is calculated from the mass of barium sulfate produced.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 04 · continued

Method 2

- 25 cm^3 of the barium hydroxide solution is titrated with hydrochloric acid of known concentration.
- The concentration of the barium hydroxide solution is calculated from the result of the titration.

Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods.

[5 marks]

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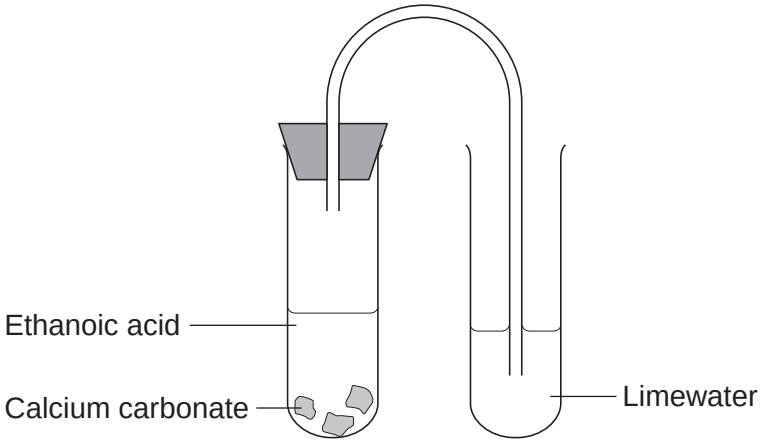
4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 05

1 This question is about reactions of ethanoic acid and the analysis of salts.

1 (a) **Figure 1** shows the apparatus used to investigate the reaction of ethanoic acid with calcium carbonate.

Figure 1



1 (a) (i) Describe a change that would be seen in each test tube.

Give a reason for each change.

[4 marks]

Test tube 1 _____

_____

_____

_____

Test tube 2 _____

_____

_____

_____

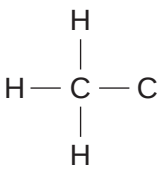
Question 1 continues on the next page

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 05 · continued

1 (a) (ii) Complete the displayed structure of ethanoic acid.

[1 mark]



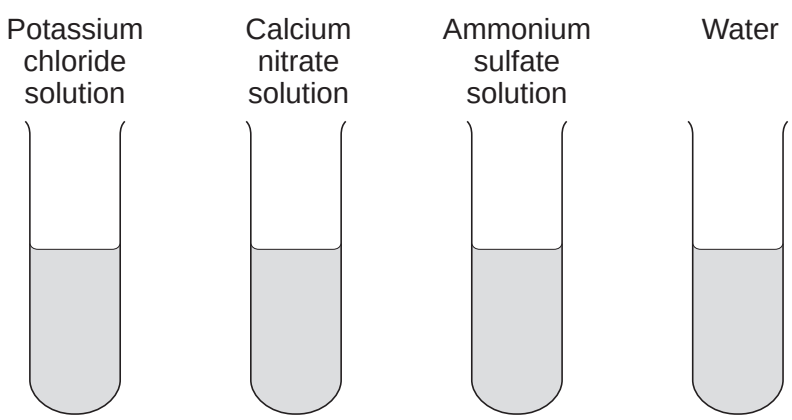
1 (a) (iii) Ethanoic acid is a carboxylic acid.
Complete the sentence.

[2 marks]

Carboxylic acids react with alcohols in the presence of an _____ catalyst to produce pleasant-smelling compounds called _____ .

1 (b) **Figure 2** shows four test tubes containing three different salt solutions and water.

Figure 2



Each solution and the water was tested with:

- silver nitrate in the presence of dilute nitric acid
- barium chloride in the presence of dilute hydrochloric acid.

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 05 · continued

Complete the table of results.

[2 marks]

	Potassium chloride solution	Calcium nitrate solution	Ammonium sulfate solution	Water
Test with silver nitrate in the presence of dilute nitric acid			no change	no change
Test with barium chloride in the presence of dilute hydrochloric acid		no change	white precipitate	

1 (c) Flame tests can be used to identify metal ions.

1 (c) (i) Complete the following sentences.

[2 marks]

The flame colour for potassium ions is _____ .

The flame colour for calcium ions is _____ .

1 (c) (ii) Give **one** reason why a flame test would **not** show the presence of both potassium ions and calcium ions in a mixture.

[1 mark]

_____

_____

_____

12

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 06

3 This question is about elements and compounds.

3 (a) In 1869 Mendeleev produced an early version of the periodic table.

Figure 4 shows part of Mendeleev's periodic table.

Figure 4

H						
Li	Be	B	C	N	O	F
Na	Mg	Al	Si	P	S	Cl
K	Ca		Ti	V	Cr	Mn

3 (a) (i) Why did Mendeleev leave gaps in his periodic table?

[1 mark]

3 (a) (ii) Give **one** reason why the elements Ti, V, Cr and Mn should **not** be where Mendeleev placed them.

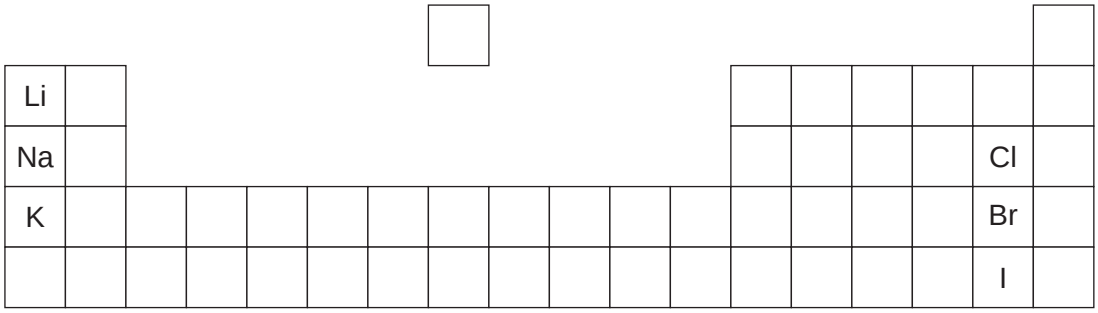
[1 mark]

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 06 · continued

3 (b) **Figure 5** shows an outline of the modern periodic table.

Figure 5



3 (b) (i) Why, in terms of electrons, is bromine in Group 7?

[1 mark]

3 (b) (ii) Bromine reacts with sodium iodide.

The word equation for the reaction is:

bromine + sodium iodide ⟶ sodium bromide + iodine

This reaction shows that bromine is more reactive than iodine.

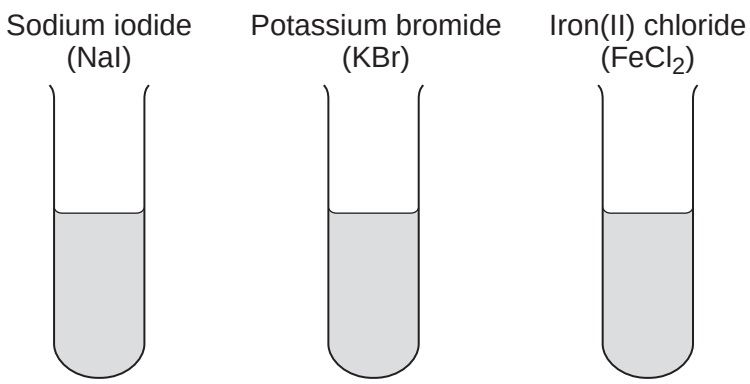
Explain why, in terms of electrons.

[3 marks]

Question 3 continues on the next page

3 (c) **Figure 6** shows test tubes containing solutions of sodium iodide, potassium bromide and iron(II) chloride.

Figure 6



3 (c) (i) A student tested each solution with silver nitrate in the presence of dilute nitric acid.

Write the result for sodium iodide solution in **Table 1**.

[1 mark]

Table 1

	Sodium iodide solution	**Potassium bromide solution**	**Iron(II) chloride solution**
Result of adding silver nitrate		Cream precipitate	White precipitate

3 (c) (ii) The student tested new samples of each solution with sodium hydroxide solution.

Write the result for iron(II) chloride solution in **Table 2**.

[1 mark]

Table 2

	Sodium iodide solution	**Potassium bromide solution**	**Iron(II) chloride solution**
Result of adding sodium hydroxide solution	No precipitate	No precipitate	

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 06 · continued

3 (d) A flame test is done on a mixture of sodium iodide and potassium bromide.

Why would a flame test **not** show the presence of both sodium ions and potassium ions in the mixture?

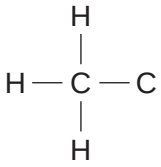
[1 mark]

3 (e) Carboxylic acids are compounds containing carbon.

3 (e) (i) Complete **Figure 7** to show the displayed structure of ethanoic acid.

[1 mark]

Figure 7



3 (e) (ii) Explain why ethanoic acid has a higher pH value than hydrochloric acid of the same concentration.

[2 marks]

12

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 07

June 2018 | 8462/2H | Original Q1

0 1 This question is about chemicals in fireworks.

Coloured flames are produced because of the metal ions present in fireworks.

0 1 . 1 What colour flame would sodium ions produce?

[1 mark]

0 1 . 2 Name a metal ion that would produce a green flame.

[1 mark]

0 1 . 3 Some fireworks contain a mixture of metal ions.

Why is it difficult to identify the metal ions from the colour of the flame?

[1 mark]

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

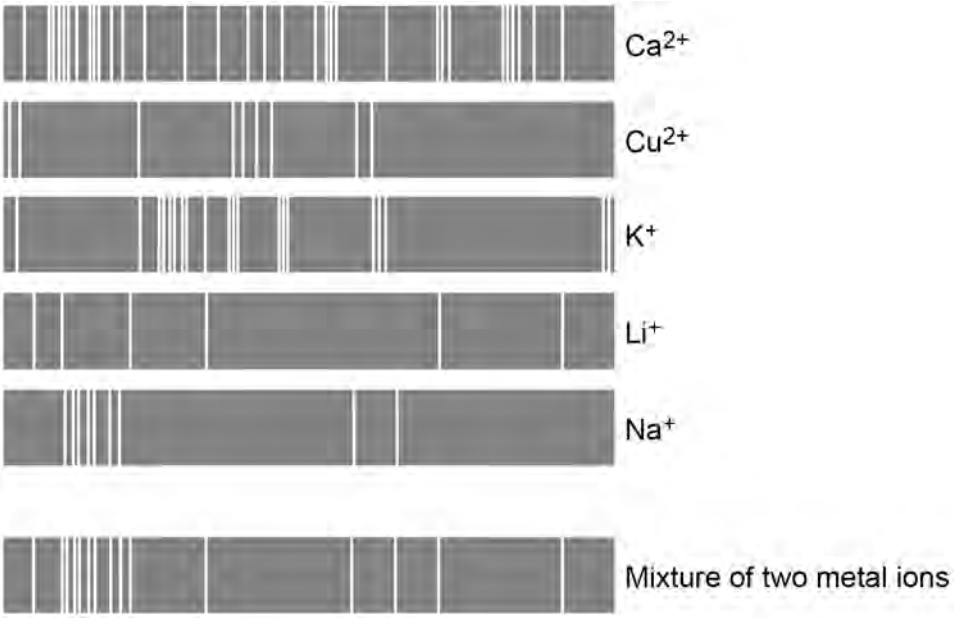
Question 07 · continued

0 1 . 4 Flame emission spectroscopy is used to identify metal ions in a firework.

Figure 1 shows:

- the flame emission spectra of five individual metal ions
- a flame emission spectrum for a mixture of two metal ions.

Figure 1



Which **two** metal ions are in the mixture?

[2 marks]

Tick **two** boxes.

Ca^{2+} ☐

Cu^{2+} ☐

K^+ ☐

Li^+ ☐

Na^+ ☐

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 07 · continued

The compounds in fireworks also contain non-metal ions.

A scientist tests a solution of the chemicals used in a firework.

0 1 . 5 Silver nitrate solution and dilute nitric acid are added to the solution.

A cream precipitate forms.

Which ion is shown to be present by the cream precipitate?

[1 mark]

0 1 . 6 Describe a test to show the presence of sulfate ions in the solution.

Give the result of the test if there are sulfate ions in the solution.

[3 marks]

Test

Result

9

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 08

November 2020 | 8462/2H | Original Q1

0 1 This question is about chemical analysis.

A student tested copper sulfate solution and calcium iodide solution using flame tests.

This is the method used.

1. Dip a metal wire in copper sulfate solution.

2. Put the metal wire in a blue Bunsen burner flame.

3. Record the flame colour produced.

4. Repeat steps 1 to 3 using the same metal wire but using calcium iodide solution.

0 1 . 1 What flame colour is produced by copper sulfate solution?

[1 mark]

0 1 . 2 Calcium compounds produce an orange-red flame colour.

The student left out an important step before reusing the metal wire.

The student's method did **not** produce a distinct orange-red flame colour using calcium iodide solution.

Explain why.

[2 marks]

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 08 · continued

0 1 . 3 The student added sodium hydroxide solution to:

- copper sulfate solution
- calcium iodide solution.

Give the results of the tests.

[2 marks]

Copper sulfate solution _____

_____

Calcium iodide solution _____

_____

0 1 . 4 To test for sulfate ions the student added dilute hydrochloric acid to copper sulfate solution.

Name the solution that would show the presence of sulfate ions when added to this mixture.

[1 mark]

_____

0 1 . 5 To test for iodide ions the student added dilute nitric acid to calcium iodide solution.

Name the solution that would show the presence of iodide ions when added to this mixture.

Give the result of the test.

[2 marks]

Solution _____

Result _____

_____

8

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

Question 09

0 6 A student analysed three solutions, **A**, **B** and **C**.

Each solution contained one ionic compound.

The student added a few drops of sodium hydroxide solution to solution **A**.

Solution **A** produced a white precipitate.

Aluminium ions produce a white precipitate with a few drops of sodium hydroxide solution.

0 6 . 1 Name **one other** metal ion which produces a white precipitate with a few drops of sodium hydroxide solution.

[1 mark]

_____

0 6 . 2 Describe how the student could confirm the presence of aluminium ions in solution **A**.

Give the result of the test.

[2 marks]

Test _____

_____

Result _____

_____

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

The student tested solution **B** to identify the ions present.

0 6 . 3 The student did a flame test on solution **B**.

An orange-red flame was produced.

Write the symbol for the metal ion in solution **B**.

[1 mark]

0 6 . 4 The student added dilute nitric acid followed by silver nitrate solution to solution **B**.

A white precipitate was produced.

Write the symbol for the non-metal ion in solution **B**.

[1 mark]

Question 6 continues on the next page

4.8.3.1 Flame tests

The student added 1.0 mol/dm^3 nitric acid to solution **C**.

Bubbles of gas were produced.

0 6 . 5 Describe a test on the bubbles of gas that confirms that solution **C** contained carbonate ions.

Give the result of the test.

[2 marks]

Test _____

_____

Result _____

_____

0 6 . 6 The student repeated the test on solution **C** using 1.0 mol/dm^3 ethanoic acid instead of 1.0 mol/dm^3 nitric acid.

Bubbles of gas were produced more slowly using ethanoic acid.

Explain why.

[4 marks]

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