Temperature of a Flame
-authored by Paul Robinson, laserpablo.com

Topic: Specific Heat and Thermal Equilibrium

Purpose
To indirectly measure the temperature of a flame.

Equipment and Supplies
- brass ball and ring apparatus (the ball needs to be removable)
- Fisher (preferred) or bunsen burner
- 400 mL beaker
- 100 mL graduated cylinder
- balance
- thermometer

Discussion
How hot is a typical flame? Certainly hot enough to shatter any thermometer placed in it, so don't! Instead, you can measure the temperature of a flame indirectly. If a brass ball is held in a flame and becomes red-hot, at some point the ball and flame are in thermal equilibrium. If we determine the temperature of the hot ball, then we'll know the temperature of the flame.

Procedure
Step 1: Unscrew the brass ball of a ball and ring apparatus and measure its mass using a balance. Record the mass of the ball. Re-attach the brass ball to the handle.

Step 2: Use a graduated cylinder to measure 250 mL of water into a 400 mL beaker. Warm the water until it's about 60°C. Measure and record the temperature of the water. Record the mass of the water below.

Step 3: Heat the brass ball until it's red-hot. Caution: Do not touch anything or anybody with the ball! While still red-hot, carefully thrust the ball into the beaker of water. Try to hold it steady in the middle of the beaker. For best effect, you might try either turning down the room lights or turning them off completely. What do you observe? After the ball has completely cooled down, record the final temperature of the water.

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Initial temperature of the water, \( T_i = \) ______

Final temperature of the water, \( T_f = \) ______
change in temperature of the water, \( \Delta T_w = \) _________

mass of water, \( m_w = \) _________

mass of ball, \( m_b = \) _________

**Analysis**

1. The quantity of heat in calories lost by the ball equals the quantity of heat gained by the water. Calculate this quantity of heat gained by the water. Remember, the specific heat of water is 1 cal/g °C.

\[
Q_{\text{lost}} = Q_{\text{gained}}
\]

\[
c_b m_b \Delta T_b = c_w m_w \Delta T_w
\]

\[
c_w m_w \Delta T_w =
\]

2. Since the heat gained by the water equals the heat lost by the ball and the specific heat of brass is 0.09 cal/g °C, calculate the change in temperature of the brass ball after it was cooled down by the water.

\[
Q_{\text{lost}} = c_b m_b \Delta T_b
\]

\[
\Delta T_b = \frac{Q_{\text{lost}}}{c_b m_b} = \frac{Q_{\text{gained}}}{c_b m_b} = \frac{c_w m_w \Delta T_w}{c_b m_b}
\]

3. What is temperature of the flame? Remember, the final temperature of the water and the ball is higher than room temperature.

4. What would have been your calculated flame temperature if the change in water temperature were 1°C greater than what you actually measured? Show your calculations.
5. What are sources of error for this experiment? Considering your sources of error, does your calculation for the temperature of the flame more likely represent a minimum or maximum value?