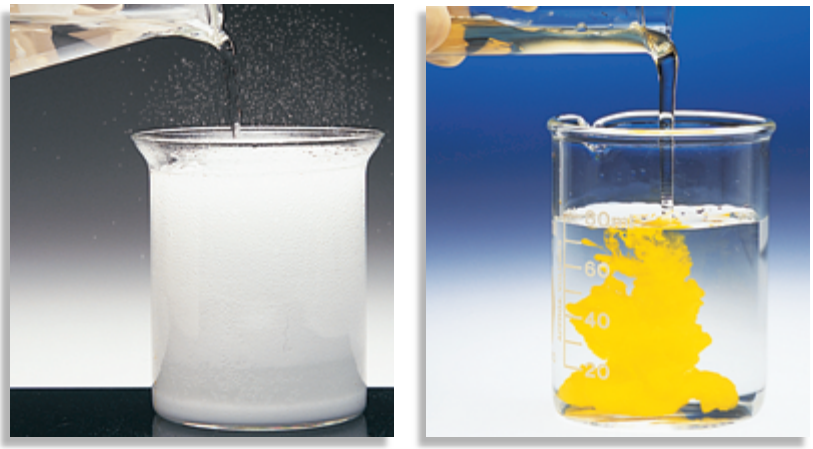

(a) (b)

FIGURE 2 (a) The reaction of vinegar and baking soda is evidenced by the production of bubbles of carbon dioxide gas. (b) When water solutions of ammonium sulfide and cadmium nitrate are combined, the yellow precipitate cadmium sulfide forms.

2. *Production of a gas.* The evolution of gas bubbles when two substances are mixed is often evidence of a chemical reaction. For example, bubbles of carbon dioxide gas form immediately when baking soda is mixed with vinegar, in the vigorous reaction that is shown in **Figure 2a.**
3. *Formation of a precipitate.* Many chemical reactions take place between substances that are dissolved in liquids. If a solid appears after two solutions are mixed, a reaction has likely occurred. *A solid that is produced as a result of a chemical reaction in solution and that separates from the solution is known as a* **precipitate.** A precipitate-forming reaction is shown in **Figure 2b.**
4. *Color change.* A change in color is often an indication of a chemical reaction.

Characteristics of Chemical Equations

A properly written chemical equation can summarize any chemical change. The following requirements will aid you in writing and reading chemical equations correctly.

1. *The equation must represent known facts.* All reactants and products must be identified, either through chemical analysis in the laboratory or from sources that give the results of experiments.
2. *The equation must contain the correct formulas for the reactants and products.* Remember what you learned in Chapter 7 about symbols and formulas. Knowledge of the common oxidation states of the elements and of methods of writing formulas will enable you to supply formulas for reactants and products if they are not available. Recall that the elements listed in **Table 1** exist primarily as diatomic molecules, such as H_2 and O_2. Each of these elements is represented in an equation by its molecular formula. Other elements in the elemental state are usually represented simply by their atomic symbols. For example, iron is represented as Fe and carbon is represented as C. The symbols are not given any subscripts because the elements do not