**Catalysts**

Today in Science class, Mr. Smith did a demonstration.

Almost Magic

In this demonstration, Mr. Smith taught us about catalysts. He heated a piece of platinum wire until it was red-hot and hung it on a glass tube above a beaker of methyl alcohol. The wire made the water evaporate, and then the red-hot platinum wire burned the vapor without very much heat and without a flame.

Things I learned:

* A catalyst is something that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without it itself being a reactant or product.
* Liquid crystals are neither a solid nor a liquid.
* It takes only a little heat to turn the liquid crystal into a real liquid.
* Liquid crystals are extremely sensitive to heat.
* There is a catalyst called a catalytic converter in your car.
* It burns some of the exhaust before it comes out of your exhaust pipe, so the exhaust isn’t as polluting.
* It is a platinum wire grille.
* It glows red-hot when the car is on.
* When there used to be gasoline with lead in it, the lead would coat the grille and the catalytic converter would not work.
* Gasoline no longer has lead in it.

