

Bunsen Burners and Prospects In Chemistry

Chemistry is never a field for the faint of heart or the dim. When introduced to the very basics of chemistry in preparatory school, I had the distinct feeling that I was being taught a language I was doomed never to understand. Though I could understand the terms used for the various pieces of equipment, when the solvents and reagents were bandied about, I had the distinct feeling I was having a migraine.

Understanding the form and function of a Bunsen burner or beaker is one thing; trying to understand the molecular structure of a **aluminum potassium sulfate reagent** is another. No, I never had a head for chemicals. And when my misery was compounded by the introduction of atomic bonding, I was sure I was going to have to steal away on the next express train to London.

Given the fact that science is such a vast field of study, merely failing chemistry should not necessarily doom a person to wander through a liberal arts education. To be sure, failing mathematics did not deter the intrepid Mr. Einstein. No, but there was a kind of complexity to chemistry that managed to nothing more for me than to make my young, pre-pubescent life quite miserable. Give me literature, give me history, give me geometry -- but chemistry? Egad.

Initially, I took a great deal of comfort in the fact that the starting salary for a chemist is only \$30,000. A humble sum for a complex field, but I, for one, am quite pleased to see all that academic work amount to nothing more than an English major's base salary. Though chemists enjoy a bit of social superiority, after all it is a very technician field that yields spectacular results, they struggle with paying the same bills we liberal arts major still contend with.

In the long run, however, it is the chemist who laughs last. Senior chemists can enjoy salaries exceeding \$100,000. This is a bit of right, as my father was fond of saying. By comparison, a English professor can only look forward to a modest salary of \$60,000 at the peak of his professional prowess. Yes, in the end, I should have sought out some sort of chemistry tutoring.

About the Author

Yes, beloved reader, if you have a difficult time understanding a term as complex as [aluminum potassium sulfate reagent ACS](#), then I would encourage you to continue your liberal arts studies in earnest. Best of luck.

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