Distinguishing between organic substances (Level 3) exam tips: Read these please!

• This is a logical problem solving question

• Common questions are asked such as distinguishing...

aldehydes from ketones *and for Excellence be able to justify the "Tollens" reagent test with equations*  
 amines from amides

• When distinguishing between substances, write down the reaction for BOTH not just one of the two and

remember to write down if there is no reaction  
• A classic student error is not mentioning damp, yes DAMP litmus

• Always state both initial and final colours

• Either KMnO4 or MnO4-

• Either K2Cr2O7 or Cr2O72-

• Be aware the both KMnO4 and K2Cr2O7 are aqueous solutions so they contain water  
• Be sure to familiarise yourself with all of these tests  
• In particular, know how to distinguish between aldehydes and ketones, a FREQUENTLY ASKED question

don’t be daft!

We’ll say it again… DAMP litmus

Carbon dioxide is produced" is NOT an OBSERVATION, "bubbles of gas" are produced IS

RTQ2 - read the question TWICE

Use only REAGENTS suggested to you in the question

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