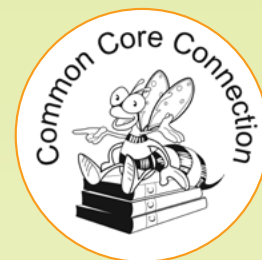


FACTivity



Time Needed

- One class period

Materials

- Roll of paper towels
- Markers
- Plastic bowls
- Construction paper (optional)
- Snack food with sticky residue like cheese doodles/puffs or something similar
- Individually wrapped candy (enough for three pieces per student)

FACTivity Background

In “The Bee Frequency,” you learned that pollinators need certain habitat qualities to thrive. In the case of bees, they used lawns with food resources available (in the form of flowering plants) more frequently than lawns without food resources available. Flowering plants contain the nectar that pollinators need to survive.

In the “Welcome to” section of this monograph, you learned that pollinators carry pollen from flower to flower without knowing they are helping the pollination process. Pollen, which humans often associate with allergies, is very sticky, and it coats the pollinating insects as they move from flower to flower. In this FACTivity, we’ll demonstrate the pollination process, and will see how effectively pollinators can move pollen between flowers.

FACTivity **Methods**

Your teacher will first have all students wash their hands thoroughly. Then your teacher will divide your class into groups of three students. The teacher will then provide you and each student in your group with a paper towel and a marker. Use the marker to draw a big flower on your paper towel.

Next, your teacher will place a bowl of snack food in front of your group which has a dust or residue. You will notice that the bowl has some additions that make it look like a flower. Your teacher will have placed nine pieces of candy in the bottom of each bowl. The candy represents the nectar that you, a pollinator, are in search of for food.

Taking turns, each student in your group will reach into the bowl to grab one piece of candy. After each turn, you will all wipe your hands clean on your paper towel flowers. Each student in your group should go three times, and each student should end up with three pieces of candy.

Note: Please do not eat any snack food or candy until after the activity, or until your teacher gives you permission to eat the items.

As a class, compare the paper towel flowers that you used to wipe your hands between turns. What happened to the snack food residue on your hands after each turn reaching for a piece of candy? Considering that the bowl was a flower and each of your paper towels was also a flower, how does this activity imitate pollination? What role did each person in your group play in the pollination process?

Pollen is sticky, just like the snack food dust/residue that covered your hands as you searched for your candy in the bowl. It sticks to pollinators who bring it to other flowers in their search for food (nectar). They do not transfer pollen on purpose, however; they are just searching for food as they visit flowers. This is similar to your actions in this activity; you weren't looking to collect snack food dust/residue, but it stuck to you as you searched for pieces of candy.