Pollinators

Lessons to Grow By, Week 1 Reading Page

Fantastic Flowers

Roses are red, violets are blue, we love flowers, how about you?

Do you have a favorite flower? What color is it? Where do you find it? Why is it special to you?

Flowers can be found in many different sizes, shapes, and colors. They can be as small as a penny or as big as a dinner plate. Their petals come in every color of the rainbow – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and also brown, black, and white. Some of them give off a wonderful scent too (although not all of them – some of them actually are kind of stinky). Most times we see notice them in spring, summer, and fall, but in places where it is warmer, you might find some during the winter months too.

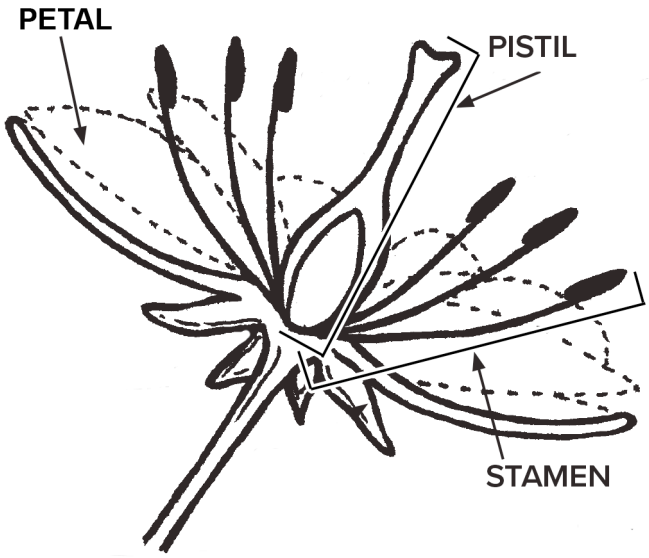
Think back to the plants you have seen around your school or home. Do they all have flowers on them? The answer is no. Most plants have flowers, but there are some that do not. There are also some plants, especially some of our bigger trees that have small flowers that you may not recognize as flowers at all.

So why do plants have flowers? How do they help the plant? Flowers have one very important job to do. Their job is to make seeds. Seeds grow into new plants and ensure that we have plenty of plants living in our environment. Plants are an important source of

oxygen, food, and shelter, and without them animals would not be able to survive on this planet.

Even though flowers on different plants do not look like each other, they are actually made up of the same parts including:

- Petals: The often-colorful structures that surround the seed making parts.
- Stamens: The parts that make pollen, small grain-like cells that are often yellow in color.
- Pistil: The parts where the seeds actually grow.



To make the seeds, the pollen from the stamens must be moved to the pistil. Sometimes the pollen moves from the stamens to the pistil on the same flower and sometimes it moves from the stamens on one flower to the pistils on another flower. In some cases, the pollen moves with the help of wind or water. Other times, animals like bees or butterflies help move the pollen from plant to plant. This process is called pollination.

Flowers have many features to encourage pollinators to help them move pollen. At the base of the pistil of some types of flowers, pollinators can find sweet nectar to eat. Some pollinators also eat some of the pollen too. The bright colors and eye-catching patterns on petals also help flowers attract pollinators.

From sunflowers to petunias, next time you stop to admire a beautiful flower, remember that it is hard at work!

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. True or false: Flowers come in different sizes, shapes and colors.

2. True or false: All plants have flowers.

3. What is the main job of a flower?

4. Which of the following is not a name of a common part of a flower:

    Pistil
    Antennae
    Petals
    Stamen

5. What word do we use to describe how pollen moves from one flower part to another flower part?