

Flowers & Pollinators

Key Concepts:

- Flowers are important because they make fruit and seeds
- Some flowers need help from animals called pollinators to make their seeds
- Pollination is when pollen from one flower is moved to another flower
- Pollinators are very important to us and to all living things

Activity: Make a Flower

Overview: Use craft items to make your own flowers and learn about pollinators.

Materials:

- Short plastic cups (can be washed and reused)
- Construction paper (can cut out petals ahead of time or let the kids do it)
- Clay or play dough
- Pipe cleaners/chenille sticks
- Pompoms
- Tape
- Scissors



Instructions:

Prep Work: Depending on the skill level or your students, you may want to pre-cut flower petals from construction paper for this activity. You can also have them make their own.

1. Show students the common parts of a flower using a real flower, an artificial flower, or a sketch of a flower. You can find a sketch of a flower at: <https://kidsgardening.org/lesson-plans-petal-attraction/>. Point out the pistil that contains the future seeds, the stamens that hold the pollen, and the petals. Explain to students that the pollen needs to move to the pistil of one flower to the pistil of another in order to make seeds and many times it needs help getting there from pollinators.
2. Give each student a cup, 6 pipe cleaners, 5 pompoms and petals (or construction paper if they are making their own) and tell them you are going to create your own flower.
3. First make the stamens and pistil. Wrap a pompom on the top of 5 of the pipe cleaners. Leave one pipe cleaner without a pompom to represent the pistil. For the pistil, craft a loop at the top.
4. Place a ball of clay or play dough into the bottom of the cup. Stick your anthers and pistil into the cup.
5. Next add the petals. Either use pre-cut petals or make petals and then attach them to the sides of the cup using tape. If you want, the kids can decorate their petals.

6. Finally, students can pretend to be pollinators and move their 'pollen' (the pompoms) from plant to plant. They can drop the pompoms through the hoop of the pistil (miniature flower basketball).

Discovery Station Ideas:

- Gather an assortment of artificial flowers for student to play with and explore. They can practice sorting them by color and size, set up their own flower shop, or use them to decorate the room.
- Out in the schoolyard, lead kids in a flower scavenger hunt. Look for flowers in different colors, shapes, and sizes. Look for flowers that have pollinators visiting them.

Related Books:

The Reason for a Flower by Ruth Heller

Plant a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert

Bea's Bees by Katherine Pryor

Flower Garden by Eve Bunting

Additional Resources:

For information on how gardening activities align with Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Early Learning Outcomes Framework, download the National Farm to School Network's excellent resource - Growing Head Start Success with Farm to Early Care and Education available at:

<http://www.farmentoschool.org/resources-main/growing-head-start-success-with-farm-to-early-care-and-education>

More gardening resources for early childhood educators are available at <https://kidsgardening.org/ece-resources/>