

The Pollinator Game

By getting students to play the part of a flower they can learn in a fun and active way about how flowers are pollinated. It's not expensive to make a bee and flower kit, it just takes a little time and imagination. Below we have listed the materials we used to make our kit.



For the flowers:

- Petals. These can be made out of cardboard. You need to make 8 individual petals.
- Stigmas. Woolly hats or balaclavas.
- Anthers. 8 woolly socks.
- Pollen. 32 pingpong balls with Velcro stuck on. The Velcro is to help the pingpong balls stick the "stigma", "anthers" and "bee." We painted half the pingpong balls yellow and the other half orange to distinguish the pollen in the two flowers.
- Nectar. 2 drinking containers with straws in them. Bicycle bottles are good.

For the bee:

You can make the bee's outfit as simple or elaborate as you like. We used:

- A woolly jumper
- Black and yellow striped trousers
- A hat with antennae
- Sun glasses
- Wings made out of wire coat hangers and a pair of nylon tights

How to Play the Pollinator Game

First build the flowers. You need nine students for each flower:

- Four for the petals
- Four for the anthers (get them to put the woolly socks on their hands)
- One for the stigma (get one of the students to put the woolly hat on their head)

You can use fewer student by getting those students who are holding the petals to also be the anthers.

Stick the pollen (pingpong balls) to the anthers, making sure you keep the colors separate on each set of anthers. Ask the students to arrange themselves as a flower and put the nectar in the center.

Discuss with the students why they think bees visit flowers and what they think happens when they do.

Bring in the bee! Ask the bee to buzz over and visit one of the flowers. Transfer the pollen from the anthers to the bee. Discuss with the students what they think happens next.

Ask the bee to visit the second flower. Transfer the pollen from the bee to the stigma, and the pollen from the anthers to the bee. Discuss with the students about what is happening and what will happen next.

Activity is from BGCI Roots Education Review
(<http://www.bgci.org/resources/article/0459/>).