

Pollinator Stimulation Activity

Objective: In this pollination activity for kids, you will develop a simple model that mimics the function of a butterfly, or any insect, pollinating flowers. Pollination is an important process in the life cycle of plants and a fun one to demonstrate.

You will need:

- 1 packet of macaroni & cheese powder
- paper plate for each group
- pipe cleaner
- cut paper flower template
- juice box
- hand lens

First to prep your pollinators, you will need a paper plate with about a third of a packet of cheese powder. Cut a pipe cleaner in half. To make the butterfly, fold over the pipe cleaner and gently twist it around your index finger. Bend the ends slightly to form butterfly “feet”.

Have students identify and explain how the pipe cleaner mimics the natural structure of a butterfly or insect’s legs. The answer of course is the bristles. Bees, butterflies, and other insects have fuzzy legs and bodies to which pollen sticks. These help to hold and carry the pollen from flower to flower.



Hoyt
Arboretum
Friends



Pollinator Stimulation Activity

Next, cut out a paper flower and place through the juice box straw. This represents a flower with nectar inside. You will simulate pollination by having their “butterfly” (finger) fly to the paper plate, gently landing on in the cheese powder before flying back to the flower on their juice box.

Finally, the butterfly flies back to the juice box flower, landing and gently tapping to see the drop and transfer of pollen.

Discuss what you have learned from the transferring of pollen.
What role does the butterfly have in transferring pollen? How do you think that this helps the plants? Can you see examples of this out in nature?
(Hint: look on flowering plants during a sunny day)



Hoyt
Arboretum
Friends

