

Pollination Relay



Concepts to cover...

What is pollination?

The movement of male pollen from the male part (stamen) to the female part (pistil) of a flower.

What are some ways plants are pollinated?

Wind, water, animals – bees, butterflies, birds, bats, moths, beetles, flies

How do bees and flowers benefit each other?

Bees pollinate flowers as they forage for food. Flowers attract bees with nectar, and the nectar and pollen feed the bees.

How do bees communicate?

Dancing!

Suggested Guidelines for Relay...

- Divide the group into bees and flowers (if there is time, they can switch after one round).
- The flowers stand behind the flower signs with their pollen balls.
- The bees are divided into two teams (yellow and purple) and stand in their “hive” at the opposite end of the field.
- To be able to “fly”, the bees must have their vest (“wings”) and antennae on. The foraging bee carries a cup to represent its crop and a dropper to represent its mouth parts.
- When the leader says go, the first bee on each team can fly to the flowers where it collects nectar (water) from the cups within each flower. It can visit all of the flowers of its kind.
- As the bees collect nectar, the flowers drop their pollen balls onto the bee’s fuzzy body. As the bee moves to a new flower, the flower players can collect pollen from the bee’s body to pollinate their pistils. If the pollen ball drops to the ground, it is out of play.
- When the first bee flies back to the hive, it tells the other bees where to go with a waggle dance, then tags the waiting bee. The next bee can fly to the flowers and repeat.
- The bees in the hive collect the pollen and nectar from the first bee and then the vest and antennae are exchanged, so that the next player can be ready when the foraging bee returns.
- After each bee has flown, bring everyone together to discuss. How do the bee teams’ collections of nectar and pollen compare? Why do the bees need to collect the nectar and pollen? Have the flowers been pollinated? Is any of the pollen “lost”? Which organism benefits from this relationship?