



What you will need:

- 1 colored pipe cleaner per person
- 5 small paper cups (about 4oz)
- 5 white pipe cleaners (about 6 inches in length)
- Masking tape
- Water in a spray bottle
- A teaspoon

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Flowers Love Pollination

Overview and Objective

Use household items to construct a flower and insect model in order to understand the process of pollination.

Pollination is the process where pollen is transferred from one flower to another in order to allow fertilization. If pollination were not able to occur, plants would not be able to grow seeds and plants would not be made.

Pollen is produced by flowers and is spread by wind, insects or other animals from flower to flower. Pollination occurs when pollen lands on the stigma of flower and the genetic material travels and fertilizes the plant.



Process:

1. Create an insect: Take the colored pipe cleaner and bend into an “insect” shape. The insect should be small enough to fit inside the cup. Leave a few inches of pipe cleaner to serve as a handle for your insect.
2. Create a flower cup: Use the tip of a pipe cleaner to carefully poke a hole in the center of the bottom of a paper cup. Insert the white pipe cleaner through the hole in the bottom of the cup and pull it through the cup to create the flower pistil.
3. Create a flower stigma: Wrap a piece of tape, sticky side out, around the top of the white pipe cleaner. You might need to first wrap a piece of tape, sticky side in, to make the sticky side out piece stick to the pipe cleaner. Reposition the white pipe cleaner so that the taped end is just inside the cup and it is not touching the sides of the cup. Coil the extra pipe cleaner around the bottom of the cup and tape down the extra pipe cleaner on the underside of the cup. Tape over the hole you made if it is wider than the pipe cleaner.
4. Add pollen to your flower: Carefully add about 1 teaspoon of colored gelatin powder into the bottom of each cup. Make sure there is only one color per cup and try not to get any on the white pipe cleaner. Each flower/cup should have a different color of gelatin powder to represent the different types of pollen from different flower species.
5. Be an insect: Move around the room and fly their insects in and out of multiple flower cups by touching the gelatin powder and the tape on the white pipe cleaner. Try and get as much gelatin powder into the tape as you can.

Observations: After several trips to the various cups, do you notice the gelatin (pollen) stuck to the tape? Lightly spray water to see the colors brighten!