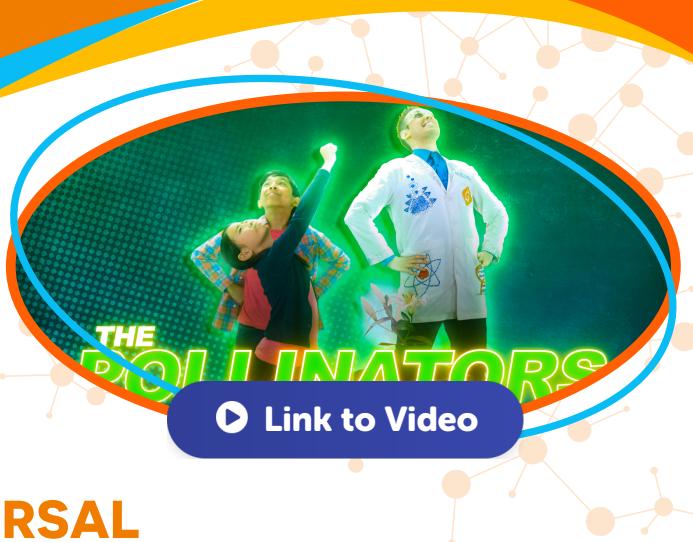




TEACHER GUIDE



POLLINATION AND SEED DISPERSAL GRADES K-2

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Young children commonly struggle with the idea that plants are living things. They also may not understand that plants go through a life cycle just like people. Part of this life cycle includes creating more plants (offspring).

The sheer variety of plants is also overwhelming for young students. Young students may not think that trees, grasses, weeds and vegetables are all types of plants.

Pollinators come in all shapes and sizes. Young students may be familiar with bees as pollinators, but perhaps not as familiar with butterflies, birds and bats. Even hummingbirds, spiders, flies and wasps can pollinate.

POLLINATION

Pollination is the process that allows plants to reproduce. Most plants need the help of animals, wind, rain or water to successfully carry out the process.

Bees, small birds such as hummingbirds and insects such as butterflies help move pollen from one flower to another. Essentially, pollen from one plant sticks to the legs or bodies of the insect or bird. As the insect or bird travels to the next plant to obtain nectar, some of the pollen gets rubbed off onto the new plant. Now the new plant is fertilized and a seed can grow.

SEED DISPERSAL

Seed dispersal is the process of moving seeds from one area to another. Animals, wind and water are three common ways that this process is possible. Some seeds are structurally designed to stick to animal fur. Many pet owners have had experience with removing burrs from a dog's fur. Animals also eat fruits and vegetables and move to new locations where they poop out the seeds. New plants grow in the fertilized soil. Other seeds float on water and are moved from one place to another by water. Wind also plays a role in seed dispersal. We've all blown on a dandelion before and watched the seeds float through the air.