



# Pollination

## Activity #9: Pollen, Pollen, Everywhere

### Objective:

Students learn how pollen can be transferred from one flower to another by way of insects and wind.

### Preparation:

At home, prepare three bowls of instant rice using three different colors of food coloring in the water. When rice has absorbed the water, spread each color of rice out on waxed paper to cool and to keep grains from sticking together. Once the rice is cool and slightly dry, place each color of rice in a large plastic bag.

### Materials:

Three colors of cooked instant rice, newspaper, hairbrushes (one for each team)

### Note:

This is a fun but messy activity. A broom and dustpan is a necessity!

### Essential Skills:

Science

### Discussion:

What are different ways plants are pollinated? What is the best method of pollination?

### Procedure:

- Divide class into teams of 4-5 students.
- Give each team the following supplies:
  - Newspaper to cover work area
  - Hairbrush to represent a bee
  - A handful of each color (A, B, and C) of cooked rice (pollen) placed in piles at least 12" apart
- Have students place the bristles of the hairbrush in color 'A' of rice and then into color 'B' of rice.
- Discuss what happens to the rice (pollen) when the hairbrushes (bees) move from one pile to the other. (The rice gets mixed up.) Tell the students that flowers must receive pollen from the same kind of flower to make seeds or fruit.
- Next, have the students blow on the color 'A' pile in the direction of the color 'C' pile. What happens to pile 'C'? Is there as much color 'A' mixed in with color 'C' as there is 'A' mixed with 'B'? Which method wasted more rice (pollen)?
- Ask the students to come up with other ways they could imitate pollination.
- Clean up.

### Estimated Time:

1 class period