

Zucchini – Pollinators

20
minutes

We have zucchinis thanks to pollinators like bees!

Materials: zucchini plant with flowers (or photo), 2 beach balls, yellow post it notes, pen, timer

1. Examine a zucchini flower. Notice the yellow grains of pollen in the middle. Zucchini flowers need pollen from other zucchini flowers to grow a zucchini squash; this process is called **pollination**. The problem is that the flowers cannot stand up and walk to other flowers to share pollen. They need a helper - bees!
2. Prepare the supplies: Number sticky notes so that each student has one. For example, place one number per sticky note 1-24. Distribute one sticky note to each student.
3. Sit in a circle and explain the simulation: Each of you is now a **zucchini flower**. Each of you has **pollen**, which is represented with a yellow sticky note. The sticky note has a number to show that it represents your zucchini flower. The beach ball represents a **bee**.
 - When the bee (beach ball) is thrown to you, you need to share your pollen by sticking your sticky note to it.
 - Throw the ball to someone else.
 - They will take a sticky note while also sharing one of theirs. In this way, each flower has a chance to share their pollen while also getting another zucchini's pollen.
4. Play the simulation. Goal: See how many flowers can get pollinated in 30 seconds.
5. Reflect on the learning: How many flowers were pollinated (received pollen from another flower)? How could we be more efficient so more flowers get pollinated? Repeat this round.
6. Play again adding a second beach ball. Does adding pollinators make it easier or more difficult to pollinate? What could increase the number of flowers pollinated? Why are pollinators like bees important?
7. Reflect on the learning: Bees stop by flowers to collect pollen and nectar for their honey. At the same time, they help flowers by sharing some of the pollen with other flowers. The flowers may use this pollen to create fruit which contain seeds. How is this similar or different to other life cycles you have studied? Examine other flowers - can you see their pollen? Are there bees or other pollinators nearby?



Observation

Zucchini

10
minutes

Sometimes the insides and outsides of foods are different. Compare zucchini before and after cutting it open.

Materials: Chart paper and marker, zucchini, cutting board and paring knife

1. Today we are going to compare the inside of a zucchini to the outside. Label one side of the chart paper “outside,” turn it over and label “inside.”
2. Show students a zucchini. What words describe the outside of the zucchini? Note its color, shape, and texture. Record these words on one side of the chart paper.
3. Cut open zucchini. How is the inside different from the outside? What words describe the inside? Turn over the chart paper and record the descriptive words.
4. Follow this activity with a tasting.

Tasting Activity

Zucchini

10
minutes

1. Before passing out any samples, review Brave Tasting Expectations, including “Don’t yuck someone else’s yum” and “We all wait and try together.”
2. Consider offering zucchini prepared in a variety of ways: raw as sticks, stir fried in a griddle, or spiralized and sauteed.
3. After tasting, ask students to voice their thoughts and “Vote with your thumb.” Thumbs up, to the side, or thumbs down. I like it, it’s okay, or no thank you.