



# POLLINATION



**Summary:** A fun and creative activity to visually portray how bees pollinate while teaching about pollination and its importance in gardening. Students will get to creatively learn and demonstrate how bees and other pollinators carry pollen and nectar on their bodies to pollenate flowers, allowing the plant to make fruits, vegetables, and more.

## Materials needed:

- Markers or colored pencils
- 1 coffee filter
- Cornmeal
- For pollinator assembly: (can do one or both)
  - Bee: 1 black and 1 yellow pipe cleaner
  - Butterfly: coffee filter, pipe cleaner & markers

## Optional/additional materials:

- Extra coffee filters
- Paper plates
- Cardstock/construction paper
- Paperclips/clothes pins



## Procedure:

1. If time allows, begin by reading-aloud a book about different types of pollinators. We recommend: What is Pollination? by Science and STEAM Team. Discuss what the students know about pollinations and various pollinators.
2. To start the craft part of the activity, have students creatively decorate their coffee filter to look like a colorful flower. Remember to discuss why/how bright colors and patterns might attract pollinators. (**Optional time saver** – If you would rather have students spend more time on making the pollinators later in this lesson instead of both, you could provide pre-made flowers (coffee filters, paper plates or cardstock) prior to the lesson).
3. Place “flowers” (i.e. coffee filter/plate/cardstock) around the room. Spread them out as much as possible to help demonstrate how some plants are far away from others and need the help of pollinators to share pollen.
  - a. **Optional:** Bring paper clips and clothes pins to help secure the flowers to whatever they’re sitting on if conditions are windy.

4. Once “flowers” are placed around the room, sprinkle some cornmeal in each one, explaining how the cornmeal represents the flower’s pollen.
5. Next, make the pollinators. Can do one or both:
  - a. **Butterfly**: see our “coffee filter butterfly” lesson here:



<https://docs.google.com/document/d/14VWm2Ycu9veXwivFablnk35jBNz0WyX8/edit?usp=sharing&oid=105268170224060431697&rtpof=true&sd=true>

- b. **Bee**: Wrap a yellow and black pipe cleaner around your index finger, alternating colors to look like the stripes of a bee.



6. Pretend that your finger is a honeybee and/or butterfly and hold the pollinator in the air like it’s flying.

7. Have students stand up with their pollinator and “fly” around the room looking for flowers. Once they get to a flower instruct them to put their “bee” and/or “butterfly” on the inside of the “flower.” Notice that the powder, or “pollen,” is stuck to the “bee/butterfly.”

8. Have them visit a couple of different flowers in the room to represent how pollinators visit different flowers, picking up and dropping off pollen.

9. Reflect on what just happened. Why do you think the “pollen” stuck to the “bee?” Why might this be important when it comes to gardening and growing fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds?

Questions? More info? Please visit us at [www.communityfoodinitiatives.org](http://www.communityfoodinitiatives.org)  
Lesson adapted from Edmonton & Area Land Trust