

Activity 2

Exploring How Some Seeds Are Carried On the Wind

Outcomes

- Finding out what things float on air
- Finding out how some seeds float on air

Materials

dishwashing liquid plastic bowls bubble wands

Resources

You will need photographs of kites, balloons, seeds carried along by the wind, and floating seeds. Download and print photographs and illustrations for classroom display and student learning resources.

Teacher Notes - Activity 2

Student Book Text

Introduction

In the previous activity young students found out that light objects float to the ground slowly and gently, but heavier objects fall quickly. They also found that heavy objects fall straight down, but light objects drift down to a point away from where they are dropped. The following experiments show how moving air - wind, can carry light objects over long distances.

Activity 2

Explore

Many things can be carried by air.
The wind can carry light objects over great distances.

Look at the pictures.

Which travels through air?
Can seeds travel through air?

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Experiment

Make a soapy liquid using liquid soap.
Take students outside into the play area
and let them experience making bubbles.

Use the bubble wands and short lengths
of plastic tubing to make bubbles.
Students will find out that a square
wand blows a round bubble.

Observe how the wind carries the
bubbles away.

Discuss with your students how the
bubbles float on the wind. Discuss how
far and how high they float. Ask them to
predict how far they will travel.

Questions to Ask

Have you seen

- seeds that are blown by the wind?
- kites flying in the sky?
- birds with open wings soaring in the wind?
- gliders?

Experiment

Drifting Bubbles

You will need:

dishwashing liquid
bubble wands

Blow a bubble.

Does the square wand blow a square
bubble?

Watch the bubbles in the air.

Some bubbles go down to the ground.

Some bubbles float high in the air.

Observe

Discuss other things that are carried along by the wind.

Discuss how some seeds are blown by the wind.

This part of the unit presents a good opportunity to link technology skills with life science.

Observe

Some seeds are heavy and they drop straight to the ground.

Some seeds are light. They drift on the air before landing on the ground.

They can travel great distances.

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Discussion

Students have discovered that birds' feathers are light and have a special shape that helps birds fly. They have found that light bubbles can travel a long way, particularly on a windy day.

Discuss natural objects that travel on the wind. Show your students examples of seeds that use the wind to travel.

Some plant seeds are light and travel great distances when the wind is blowing hard. Ask, "Can you find some seeds that travel on the wind?" It is easiest to find these in the spring and summer months. Or look at photographs and illustrations to see how the seeds fly.

Questions to Ask

Compare the seeds with birds' feathers.

- Are the seeds that are blown away by the wind like feathers?
- Do they look the same?
- Are they heavy or light?
- Do they have a special shape?
- Are they the same as soap bubbles?

Further Observations

Make a collection of plant and tree seeds. Include seeds that are transported by air.

Drop some seeds to the ground and observe how they float. Do they all float to the ground in the same way?

Observe the seeds through a magnifier and make some drawings. Ask students if they can explain why some seeds fall to the ground differently than others.

Make a Display

Make a display of students' drawings. Write down their descriptions of the seeds in a class book.

Extension Task

In the spring or summer months make a screen from light muslin cloth and stretch it out in an area of your school playground. Visit it regularly and see if it has trapped any seeds. Plant them in plastic containers and place them near to a window in your classroom. Make sure you water them regularly. See what plants they grow into.

Explore

Collect some seeds from plants and trees.

Drop each seed to the ground.

Do the seeds float to the ground in the same way?

Use a magnifying glass to look at the seeds. Do the seeds look alike?

Make a drawing of what you see in the magnifying glass.

Why do some seeds fall differently?

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