

Name: _____ Date: _____

Seed Dispersal Experiment - Field Study

Objective: Learn about seed dispersal by performing an experiment mimicking a dispersal technique found in nature.

Materials: scissors, a clean sock, plant mister, flower pot full of damp potting soil, uncut grassy field in September

Procedures:

1. Students will take turns putting the sock on one hand and walking through the tall grass sweeping the sock-covered hand through the tall grass.
2. After all the students have had a chance to “collect seeds”, cut the sock up one side and spread over the pot full of damp soil.
3. Mist the sock until it is damp every day (not soaking wet). Place pot in a sunny spot.
4. Over the next two weeks, mist the sock every day and note if there is any green growth.
5. After a month look at all the plant growth on the sock and talk about how the seeds got there.

Conclusions:

Talk about the physical structures seeds might have to help them be spread from one place to another – sticking, floating, blowing. Talk about how milkweed and dandelion seeds blow in the wind, how maple seeds spin away as they fall and how burrs stick to your clothes (and animals) when they are touched.

Critical Thinking:

Which human inventions may have mimicked these adaptive structures in plants?

NGSS: Performance Expectations:

2-LS2 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

- Plan and conduct an investigation to determine if plants need sunlight and water to grow. 2-LS2-1
- Develop a simple model that mimics the function of an animal in dispersing seeds or pollinating plants. 2-LS2-2

