

Hello Families,

Kindergarten – 3rd graders, join us today for some explorations with seeds!

It's important for seeds to travel away from their parent. Just imagine if all the coconuts from a coconut palm sprouted around the mother plant: as those seeds grew into trees, they would compete with their parent for water, sunlight, and nutrients in the ground – resources plants need for survival. This is why seeds are pretty great at traveling. Whether it is by water, air, or hitching a ride with somebody else, seeds are going to get out there and explore.

FLYING SEED EXPERIMENT

Blow on the top of a dandelion fluff. How far did the seeds travel?

Wet a fluffy dandelion top, then blow on the wet seeds. How far did the seeds travel this time?

When dandelion seeds are scattering, what kind of weather would be best?



HITCHHIKER SEED COLLECTION

Find a clean old sock (the fuzzier the better) and a field full of weeds. Wear, or drag, the sock through the weeds in the field. If you use a grownup's old sock, you might be able to wear it over your shoes.

Did you get any hitchhiker seeds on your sock?

Do you think certain times of year are better for collecting hitchhiker seeds? If you didn't get many seeds on your sock, look at the plants in the field. If it's spring, many of the plants may have just started growing. Do you think more of the plants will have seeds if you visit this field in a month or two?



SEED PLANTING ACTIVITIES

After collecting hitchhiker seeds on an old sock, plant the sock in a pot just like it's a seed. Water it regularly. Soon you will have a weed garden. How many different kinds of seeds did you collect in your sock?

Now, see if you can find some other seeds where you live. Discover seeds in a variety of fruits and vegetables. Plant some of these to see if they will grow. Place in a sunny window and keep the soil moist. Examples: apple, avocado, bean, corn, peanut, pear, plum, olive, pea, peach, sunflower seed, tomato.

How do you think these plants spread their seeds around? Did you just help the plants spread their seeds?

Place some seeds in water only. What happens? What if you just leave them in the water? Will they grow?

Did you enjoy these activities? Looking for some more? Check out our Youth Tour Teacher Packets, available on the Idaho Botanical Garden's website, here:

<https://idahobotanicalgarden.org/learn/youth-education/>

Click on the arrow next to each youth group tour to view and download the associated packet.