

SEED DISPERSAL

Explore how seeds travel in nature with this fun and hands-on seed dispersal experiment using real seed pods and simple household tools!

INSTRUCTIONS:

STEP 1: Observe the Seeds

STEP 2: Test Wind Dispersal. Place lightweight seeds in front of a hair dryer or fan.

Blow gently and observe how far they travel.

STEP 3: Test Water Dispersal

Drop seeds (like acorns) into bowls of water.

See which seeds float or sink.

STEP 4: Test Animal Dispersal

Roll or stick seeds (like burrs) into a square of blue painter's tape.

Stick the tape ball to fabric or your arm—do they cling like velcro?

STEP 6: Test Exploding/Mechanical Dispersal

Gently press or twist open a dried seed pod (like thistle).

Observe how the seeds "pop" out when released.

THE SCIENCE

Plants rely on seed dispersal to colonize new areas.

Here are the four main types:

Wind Dispersal – Lightweight seeds with fluff or wings (like dandelions or maple helicopters) can catch the breeze.

Water Dispersal – Some seeds float and travel by rain or rivers (like coconuts or some acorns).

Animal Dispersal – Seeds stick to fur or are eaten and passed out later (like burdock or berries).

Mechanical Dispersal – Pods explode and fling seeds outward (like touch-me-nots or thistle).

Each seed has special adaptations that increase its chance of survival and growth in new soil.

Materials

Variety of real dried seed pods
(e.g., dandelion, burdock, acorn, milkweed, thistle, etc.)

Small glass bowls

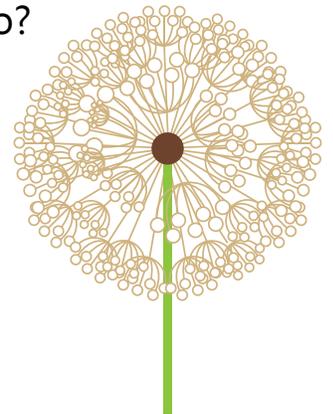
Water

Hair dryer (or fan)

Blue painter's tape

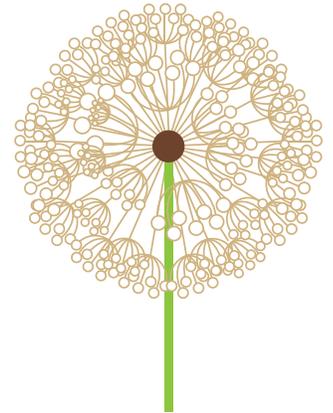
Paper towels

Scissors



Seed Dispersal Observations

Use this worksheet to process and evaluate your work.



What do all the seeds look like? Describe their size, shape, and texture.

How are the seeds similar? How are they different?

Which seeds do you think will travel the farthest? Why?

Which seeds might survive in a stream or puddle.

Describe how seeds hitch a ride on animals or humans.





