

AIM

To learn about the dispersal of seeds.
To understand how plants grow.

PREPARATION

Find a clear, level site suitable for children to run around in.

INTRODUCTION

Discuss different types of seeds, using examples where possible from the heathland.

Ask the children what the seeds will need to grow - warmth, sunlight, water, soil, air.

Discuss what would happen in different situations, for example, if a bird ate a berry, if a seed fell onto the rough stone track, if it didn't rain for a week, if a seed fell into the shade etc.

ACTIVITY

Sow and Grow Game



You will need 5 adults/helpers to represent the different elements. Each 'element' is to wear the labelled card around their neck so that all the children can clearly see it (use a hole punch and string) and will need a pile of cards representing their component. The cards could be contained in a plant pot to keep in with the theme of the game.

Stand the 'elements' in a rough circle to create the boundary.

Gather the children within the circle and explain that they are going to be 'the seeds'.

Each seed needs to run around and collect one card from each adult until they have all 5 items needed to grow.

When children have collected all 5 items they stand in the 'heather' just out of the circle. As successful plants growing. Encourage them to role play as flowering plants.

Now play the game, introducing a goldfinch using a volunteer from 'the seeds'. The bird will eat any seeds she/he can find, so when a child is tagged by the bird they stand to a designated area outside the circle.

Stop the game again before everyone has managed to collect all 5 items. Assess the situation - some seeds may not make it, (haven't received everything they need), some have been eaten by birds, some have managed to grow.

Play the game with fewer water cards given out so not all children will get all 5 cards - illustrating that some plants cannot grow without water. Or reduce the amount of soil - as some seeds will land on tarmac or concrete and will not germinate.

OTHER MESSAGES

Remember that the seeds eaten by the bird still have a chance to grow when the bird deposits them as waste. The seed may be spread far away by the wind, or carried in water as other animal poo to a different site.

On the heath there are many natural threats from human activity - eg fire, drier summers (due to climate change) and even nutrient enrichment (increase in soil fertility due to dog fouling - causing bramble and grasses to thrive at the expense of wildflowers which grow in nutrient poor soil.)

Ask the successful seedlings what may happen if they got sprayed with a herbicide/pesticide or if there was a drought.

Remind the 'unsuccessful seeds' (the children that haven't got all the cards) that some seeds can remain dormant for a very long time until they acquire everything they need to grow.

Discuss what happens if seeds just land below the plant they have come from. Will they grow?

Discuss the different ways that different seeds get carried away/dispersed from their parent plant.



PROPS

Create A4 size laminated cards of the images on the next pages for the adults to wear. (Punch holes and add string necklace.)
Create 30 cards from the set of smaller images that the children have to collect.



air

soil

SUN
WARMTH

SUN
LIGHT

water



Print 6 times
to create 30
cards that the
children have to
collect.



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SUMMER WINTER

Julia

Wulf

