

## “Roll a Spring Story” lesson plan

Duration: 30-60 minutes

Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to six different native wildflower species and pollinators found in the Ottawa area
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of habitats and communities and of interrelationships among the organisms that live in them
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of characteristics and uses of plants and of plants’ responses to the natural environment
- Students will assess ways in which plants are beneficial to society and the environment, and ways in which human activity has an impact on plants and plant habitats
- Students will create works of art that express personal feelings and ideas inspired by the environment or that have the community as their subject

Background:

When we consider interrelationships among organisms and their environment, we can better understand how biotic and abiotic factors interact in an ecosystem. Pollination is a vital ecological service that can occur by interactions with abiotic factors such as wind and water, or more commonly, with organisms such as bees, butterflies, beetles, and birds. These organisms are often referred to as pollinators in recognition of this ecological service. The majority of Ottawa’s local wildflower biodiversity is because of pollinators! This activity will help students explore interactions among native wildflowers and pollinators found in Ottawa’s local habitats.

Materials:

- One “Roll a Spring Story” handout per student
- One “My Spring Story” handout per student
- One writing utensil per student (pencil recommended)
- Colouring utensils
- Dice

Procedure:

1. Ask students, “what is a pollinator?” A pollinator is an insect or animal that eats sweet nectar from a flower and moves pollen (tiny, powdery grains) from one plant to another. As a class, discuss the role and importance of pollinators in maintaining local wildflower biodiversity. What would happen to our ecosystems if we didn’t have pollinators? In your discussion, consider how native plants, wildlife, and humans would be impacted.
2. Give each student a “Roll a Spring Story” handout and a “My Spring Story” handout.
3. Have students roll the dice three times to reveal each different element of their story using the “Roll a Spring Story” handout. The first roll corresponds to a native wildflower, the second roll reveals a local pollinator, and the third roll represents the habitat for their story setting. Students can record their selections at the bottom of this handout.
4. How might your local species interact in this habitat? Have students draw and colour a picture on the “My Spring Story” handout with the wildflower, pollinator, and habitat they rolled. Then ask students to write a short story for their picture about pollination.