



Age 5-7



Time

Preparation and growing time -
2 to 2.5 months

Activity - 30 to 45 minutes

Before the lesson begins

You should encourage the children to sow their seed mixture in trays or pots. Plants can be started off indoors but seedlings should be transplanted to an outdoor site to reach maturity. An ideal time to plant seeds indoors is late March, moving to an outside location in April.

Materials

Trays or pots of mixed flowers.

Coloured pens and paper.

Extension: Narrow bore plastic pipette.

activity 4

Through this activity children can learn:

- that flowers come in different shapes and sizes
- that some flowers are coloured and scented to attract insect pollinators
- that insects can see and smell

Skills developed:

- observation • comparison
- recording data • observational drawing

The activity:

- Introduce the children to a single flower and allow them to examine it and make general observations.
- Split the children into smaller groups and introduce the trays or pots of flowers. Ask each group to examine the flowers and list the different colours they can see in the petals.
- Ask each group to smell the flowers. Are they scented?
- Ask the children to draw and colour their favourite flower.

Key questions:

- Q1. How many different colours can you see in the flowers in your tray?
- Q2. Why do you think the flowers are beautifully coloured and have a nice smell?
(Answer: to attract insect pollinators).

Fun with flowers

Extension activities:

- Ask the children to count the number of petals on different flowers.
- In Summer the trays can be placed outdoors and insect visitors can be observed. Alternatively, you might like to ask the children to sow some of their seeds directly into the soil in a protected area of the school grounds and compare growth here to growth in trays in the classroom. Sowing outdoors also provides an opportunity to create space ready for a minibeast pitfall trap. This allows children to examine minibeasts and think about habitat and whether the animals they catch are helpful or harmful to plants.
- *Nasturtium* flowers have a large nectospur at the back of the flower and the nectar can be extracted using a narrow pipette. Show this to the children and explain this is a sugary gift from the flower to the insect.

