**ACTIVITY: Seed dispersal puppet play**

**Activity idea**

In this activity, students use stick puppets to explain the various methods plants use to disperse their seeds.

By the end of this activity, students should be able to:

* explain some components of seed dispersal via wind, water, animals, explosion and fire via a written script and/or spoken word
* begin to use scientific terms relating to plants, seeds and dispersal
* use research skills to locate information about plants, seeds and dispersal
* present information about seed dispersal in an informative and accurate manner.

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**Introduction/background**

Seeds are dispersed by many different methods including wind, water, animals, explosion and fire. In this activity, students use a series of puppet plays to explain and demonstrate the various dispersal methods. They also use literacy skills to research and write the accompanying script.

For example, to demonstrate dispersal by wind, students draw a background depicting a dandelion habitat – a lawn or garden. They create stick puppets of a dandelion plant in flower, a dandelion seedhead, an individual seed or seeds and a dandelion seedling. A student narrates or reads the voiceover describing the location and method of seed dispersal while others use the stick puppets to demonstrate how the seeds are formed, blown loose by the wind, float and then settle into a different area to grow into seedlings.

**What you need**

* Access to the article [Seed dispersal](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/103-seed-dispersal)
* Access to the internet for video and images
* School Journals and other readers (see the teacher resource [Literacy and numeracy learning links](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/1824-plant-reproduction-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-links) for a selection of early readers and *School Journal* articles)
* Copies of the student handout: [Planning sheet and storyboard template](#handout)
* Craft materials for stick puppets (ice block sticks, cardboard, crayons, felts, glue, beads, coloured paper, etc.)
* Art materials for background scenes (A3 cartridge paper, paint, crayons, felts, etc.)
* Paper, pencils or computer to record script
* Table or other structure for the puppet theatre
* Video camera or handheld device to record the puppet play (optional)

**What to do**

1. Begin the activity by reviewing the article [Seed dispersal](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/103-seed-dispersal).
2. Watch a You Tube video on seed dispersal, for example, [this series of short videos about different dispersal methods](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzjxOakH8hY&list=PLoJ5_Qo5-l5omjToGI4NZ0NmhGg2NxYd1) or an [animated version](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hcjxaBz8mw).
3. Discuss the ways in which the information was presented: voiceover, viewing plants and seeds in their environments, viewing how the seeds are dispersed and where they might end up.
4. Watch the video(s) a second time. Pause the video(s) to discuss presentation techniques. Record key vocabulary.
5. Split the class into five groups and assign each group one of the methods of seed dispersal: wind, water, animal, explosion and fire. Each group is responsible for:
* finding information and images about the method of seed dispersal
* writing a script for the voiceover
* creating the stick puppet plants, seeds, animals etc.
* creating the appropriate backgrounds.
1. Each group uses the student handout [Planning sheet and storyboard template](#handout) to plan their section of the puppet play.
2. If appropriate, give an extension group the task of writing an introduction and conclusion.
3. Present the plays. Video if possible.

**Student handout: Planning sheet and storyboard template**

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| **Seed dispersal puppet play planning sheet** |
| Seed dispersal method |  |
| Name of the plant |  |
| The background scene |  |
| **People in my group** |
| Who will write the script? |  |  |  |
| Who will read the script? (the voiceover) |  |  |  |
| Who will make the puppets? |  |  |  |
| Who will draw the background? |  |  |  |
| **Some scientific words we can use** |
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| **Name(s):** | **Title:** |  **Date:** |
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