Practical activities

Notes for the teacher - If your children need to review their learning, you can use these activities to support them.

With bees / without bees plates

The resources required for this activity include paper plates (or sheets split into two halves), images of food (see lesson resources), scissors and glue sticks.

Activity: Children sort the food pictures between two labelled plates: '**With bees**' - Foods that rely on bee pollination (fruit, vegetables, chocolate, bananas) and '**Without bees**' - Foods that don't need bees (bread from wheat, potatoes, fish). Discuss the following questions with the children:

- Which plate looks more exciting?
- Which plate has more choice of foods?
- What would it feel like to live with only the 'Without bees' plate?

World map bee trail

The resources required for this activity include a simple world map (either a large wall map, A3 maps on tables, or a projected digital version), bee cards (a simple bee icon), string or arrows (optional, to show trade routes) and food cards/pictures (see lesson resources): apples (UK)/bananas (Portugal)/peppers (Morocco)/cocoa (Brazil) and oranges (Spain).

Activity: Place the cards of UK-grown bee-pollinated foods (apples) onto the map. Add a bee card nearby. Now, add the imported foods onto the map – place bananas on Portugal, peppers on Morocco, cocoa on Brazil and oranges on Spain. Explain to the children – "These foods all need bees where they grow."

Use string/arrows/your finger to show a bee trail. Support the children to explain the following: Bees pollinate crops in one country → the food grows → it gets sent/traded → it ends up in UK shops. Sentence starters might be useful. Example - Bees in Brazil help pollinate coffee plants. That coffee is traded across the ocean and arrives in UK shops.

Ask the children: "What would happen in the UK if the bees in these countries disappeared?" Discuss that there would be fewer foods in shops, less trade, farmers abroad losing money and less choice for us.

Pipe cleaner pollination

The resources required for this activity include pipe cleaners, egg cartons, coloured card, scissors, coloured powder paint and paintbrushes.

Activity: First, create flowers by cutting out petal shapes from the coloured card. Use a single egg carton in the middle to hold the 'pollen'. Fill the centre of each flower with coloured powder paint (one colour per flower) and place the flowers around the classroom. Next, create pipe cleaner bees by wrapping them around your finger to create a spiral. The pipe cleaner acts like the bee's legs with its bristles to which pollen sticks. This helps to hold and carry the pollen from flower to flower. Give all the children a bee to visit as many flowers as possible, dipping the pipe cleaner 'legs' into the flowers. Then, check the pollen baskets in the centre of each flower and see how the bees have transferred pollen between them. This is like the process of pollination.

Food chains

The resources required for this activity include a large sheet of sugar paper, picture cards of plants (flower, clover, apple blossom), bees, fruits/vegetables (apple, cucumber, strawberry), animals (bird, mouse, cow) and people (see lesson resources).

Activity: Label the sheet and add arrows → Plants (top) → Bee (middle) → Fruits/Crops → Animals → People (bottom). Children place the cards in the correct places, following the arrows. Remove the bee card to show how the chain breaks down. **Discuss:** "Which arrows stop working without bees? Who loses food first? Who else is affected after that? What does this show about interdependence?"