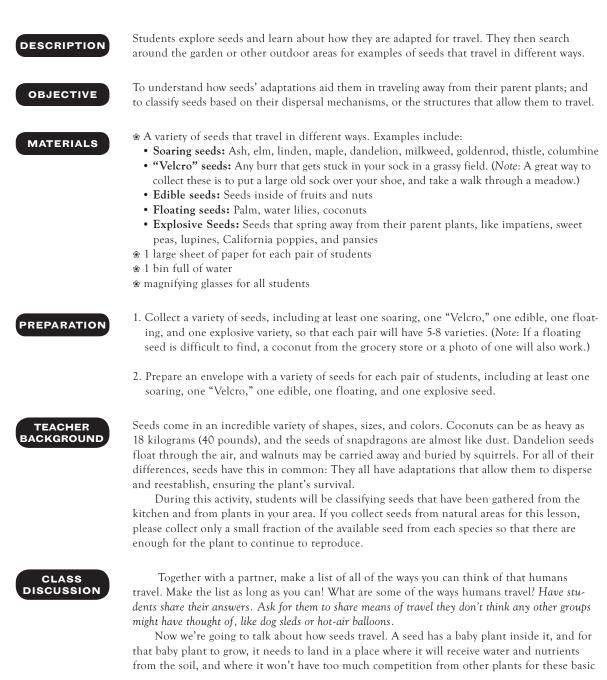
INDOORS, OUTDOORS & GRADES 2-6 & FALL & ACTIVITY

## 🕅 Seed Ya Later



resources. Since a parent plant can drop thousands of seeds at a time, many seeds will need to end up at some distance from their parent plant to survive. But seeds can't walk! So how do you suppose they are able to travel away from their parent plant?

Seeds travel in a variety of ways. Some soar on the wind. Has anyone every blown a dandelion flower and watched the seeds fly away? (*demonstrate*). Some float on water (*float an example on water*). Some have little hooks that allow them to stick to the fur of animals that are passing by. These seeds fall off much later in faraway places. Has anyone ever had a seed stuck to their sock? (*show an example*). Did you know that Velcro was, in fact, invented in 1941 by a Swiss engineer named George de Mestral, who was inspired by the seeds stuck in his dog's fur after a hunting trip? He looked carefully at the hook-and-loop design of the seeds and fur, and mimicked this natural model to make Velcro!

Still other seeds travel by being stored or eaten by a bird or other animal, and then being deposited somewhere else. Has anyone ever seen a squirrel bury a nut somewhere? Or has anyone seen a bird eat a berry and then deposit it (or poop it out) in another location? Did you realize that that bird might have been planting a berry bush?

Still other plants disperse their seeds by ejecting them forcefully so that they fall well away from their parent plant. When a sweet pea pod dries in the sun, for example, it opens up in a tight spiral, pushing the seeds away. Note: You can show students a very engaging 3-minute video of seeds dispersing at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buZV0h4vfmQ or by searching YouTube for David Attenborough Seeds.

Today each of you will get an envelope full of seeds. With a partner, you'll look carefully at the seeds and then classify them based on how you think they travel.

ACTION 1. G

- 1. Get students into teams of two.
- 2. Have each pair of students fold a large piece of paper in half, and then into thirds, creating six sections. Have them write the following words, one in each section: Soaring, Velcro, Edible, Floating, Explosive, and Unknown.
- 3. Hand each pair of students an envelope of seeds. Have them look at the seeds carefully and put each one in the box in the section of their paper where they think it belongs. They can throw the seeds in the air to see if they fly; stick them to their socks; try to float them on the water in the bin, and do further investigations. But they should not taste any of the seeds! Remind them that any given seed might travel in more than one way.
- 4. Ask pairs to share how they think each seed travels, and what evidence they used. Discuss as a whole class.
- 5. Take a walk around the garden and other outdoor environments and collect seeds. Look carefully at each one to guess how it might travel.

## WRAP UP

What kinds of structures help seeds travel? Which seeds do you think are able to travel the farthest? Why? How do you think habitat impacts seed adaptations? (In areas with a lot of water, more plants make floating seeds; in areas with high winds, more plants have seeds that can soar on the wind).

## DIGGING DEEPER

Have student pairs design their own seeds with various adaptations that would help them travel, and share with the class.