

Capillary Action

Grades: 3rd grade - 5th grade

NGSS: 3-LS2-1

Materials: *Women in Botany/Las mujeres en la botánica*, white flowers, four cups of water, four shades of food coloring

Skills: Critical thinking, making references

Subject: Osmosis

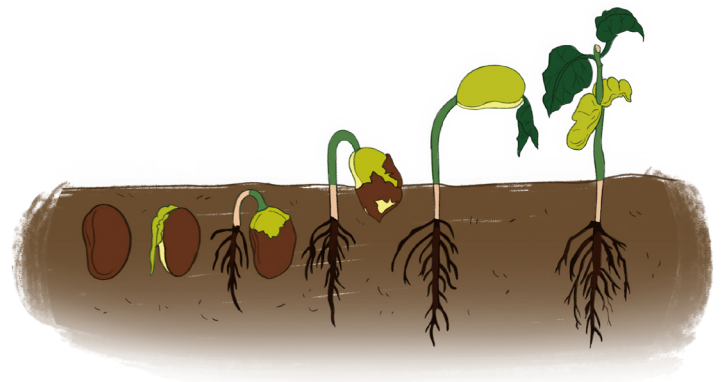
BACKGROUND

Flowers need water to grow. The roots and stem “drink” the water to help the petals grow and then the stem and roots bring the water up to the rest of the flower’s body. This is called capillary action.

This experiment is going to demonstrate firsthand how capillary action works, as we will actually see the water we use to help our flowers grow.

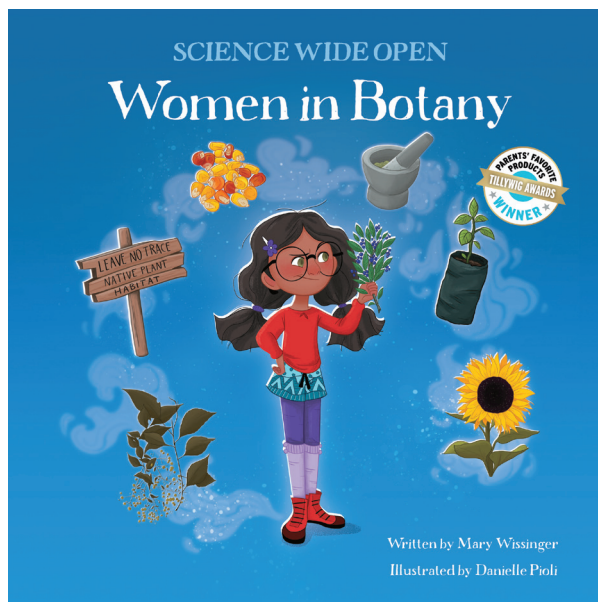
ACTIVITY

1. Bring out four white flowers, four cups of water, and four different colors of food coloring.
2. Allow students (if old enough) to help you color the four cups of water a different color. Then cut the tip of the stems to help the flower soak up the water quickly. Place the waters in a sunny spot and let them sit for a day.
3. The next day, allow the students to make notes of what changes occurred since yesterday. Note: the white petals should have turned to whatever color was in the water. Explain to them what occurred to the flowers.



DISCUSSION

Why do you think the flower changed colors? How do flowers drink water?



This activity was excerpted from the Teacher's Guide to:
Women in Botany / Las mujeres en botánica

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