Flower to Fruit

Objective: You know that plants make seeds. How are seeds related to flowers? Do you eat peas or beans? Those yummy foods started out as flowers and became pods filled with seeds! Let's see if we can follow a plant's flower to seeds.

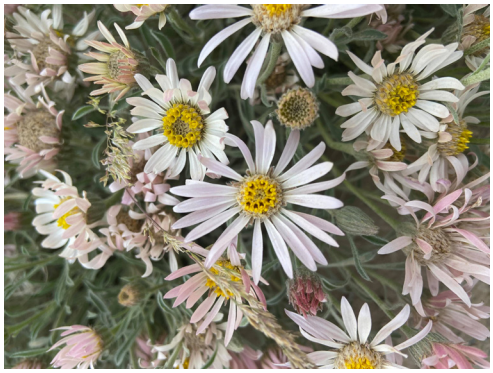
Background: While flowers are beautiful for us to look at and smell, their primary purpose is to produce seeds to continue the lifecycle of the plant. Once a flower is pollinated (pollen from the anther of one flower reaches the ovule or egg of another flower of the same kind), the flower petals dry up and the ovary of the flower matures into a fruit or a seed pod.

Materials:

- A six inch strip of colored cloth, ribbon, string or yarn
- Pencil
- Magnifying glass (optional)

Activity:

1. Locate a flower on a plant outside that is nearby and that you can easily return to. The flower could be on a plant growing on its own in the back alley or in a crack on the sidewalk. The flower could be growing in your yard for decoration or on a food plant growing in your garden. The ideal flower is on a pea, bean or kale plant.
2. Look closely at the flower you have chosen and make three observations out loud about your flower. What traits (characteristics or details) do you notice about the flower?



Worksheet

3. Draw a picture of the flower, noting the color, shape, and how many petals it has.

Day 1 Date: _____

4. Tie your ribbon or yarn around the stem of the flower to mark it so that you may easily find it again to make follow up observations.
5. Make predictions about what will happen to the flower over the next two weeks. How will it change?

Predictions:

- After 1 week:_____
- After 2 weeks:_____

6. Return to the flower marked with string one week later. Draw a picture noting how it changed.

Day 7 Date: _____

Worksheet

7. Return to the flower you marked two weeks after you first found it. Flower petals and other flower parts might be gone or might look very different.

- What happened to the flower? How has it changed?

_____

_____

- Why did the flower change?

_____

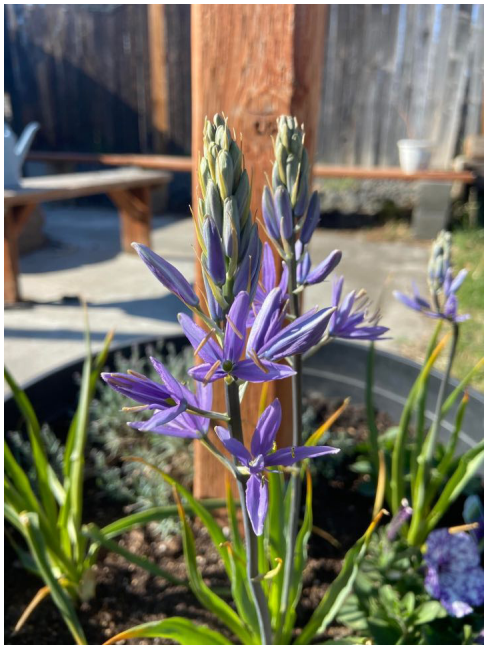
_____

- How does the flower help the plant complete its lifecycle?

_____

_____

Extension: Look around your plant for younger flowers just starting to bloom and older flowers turning to fruit or pods. Check back to see if the fruit or pods grow bigger. Look for other flowering plants and see if you can notice flowers turning to pods or fruits. How many can you find?



Camas flowers blooming

Camas seed pods two weeks later