



Launch Activity

Find your story

*This activity supports the theme:
Small Worlds, Big Futures: Reporting from a
Pollinator-Powered 2030*



Young Reporters
for the Enviroment

LAUNCH ACTIVITY

This short activity introduces students to “**Small Worlds, Big Futures: Reporting from a Pollinator-Powered 2030**” through direct observation. It helps them move from noticing something in their surroundings to identifying a possible YRE investigation.



The activity can be used as a stand-alone introduction to the theme or as the starting point for a longer YRE project. For investigation routes, research prompts, evidence, and safeguarding guidance, see the YRE Pollinators Guide for Educators.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Notice an overlooked species, relationship, or change in a local place.
- Gather simple first-hand evidence.
- Turn something they notice into a question they can investigate.
- Explain what makes them curious about it.

RESOURCES

- YRE Pollinators Student Guide
- Notebooks or observation sheets
- Phones/cameras, if available
- Pens/pencils
- Access to a suitable observation space, or prepared photographs, maps, and local records



TIME

45 minutes - *can be adapted to suit your timing needs.*

ACTIVITY

0-5 MIN INTRODUCE SMALL WORLDS, BIG FUTURES

Introduce the theme with a simple challenge:

What might be happening around us that we usually do not notice?

- Explain that pollinators can be a starting point for discovering much bigger stories about plants, other species, food, climate, water, places, and human decisions.
- Invite students to choose something small to pay attention to. It could be a flower, insect, patch of soil, tree, light source, food plant, water source, or another feature of the place.
- **Their first task is simply to stop and look closely.**

5-20 MIN LOOK CLOSELY

Take students to an accessible outdoor space (or share prepared photographs, maps, and local records) and give them 10–15 minutes to observe.

Encourage them to slow down and record what they notice through notes, photographs, sketches, counts, or sound.

Use prompts such as:

- What is here?
- What is happening?
- What catches your attention?
- What seems connected?
- What seems abundant or missing?
- Can you see signs of insects or other animals interacting with plants?
- Can you see signs of human decisions, such as mowing, planting, lighting, paving, or pesticide use?
- Is there anything you expected to find but cannot see?

Students are gathering their first evidence, so encourage them to record specific observations rather than only general impressions.



20-30 MIN DEVELOP A STORY LEAD

Ask students to choose one observation that makes them curious.

Use the following sequence to turn it into the beginning of an investigation:



I NOTICED



I WONDER



I COULD INVESTIGATE



For example:

I NOTICED... very few insects visiting the flowers in one part of our school grounds.

I WONDER... why some areas seem to attract more nocturnal wildlife than others.

I COULD INVESTIGATE... the plants, management, and pollinator activity in different areas of the school grounds.

Or:

I NOTICED... lots of insects gathering around outdoor lights.

I WONDER... how artificial light affects nocturnal pollinators.

I COULD INVESTIGATE... insect activity around differently lit areas and how outdoor lighting is managed.

At this stage, students are finding a story lead, rather than deciding the conclusion of their investigation.

30-40 MIN SHARE AND REFINE

Invite students to share their story leads in pairs, small groups, or as a class.

Help them refine broad ideas into questions they can realistically investigate.

A useful investigation question is:

LOCAL: connected to a real place or community.

OPEN: allows students to investigate rather than confirm an answer.

INVESTIGABLE: can be explored using observations, evidence, research, or perspectives.

For example:

Broad: How does climate change affect pollinators?

More investigable: Where historical records are available, have flowering times of a local plant changed, and what could this mean for the pollinators that depend on it?

40-45 MIN CHOOSE THE NEXT STEP

Before finishing, ask each student or group to identify:

1 One piece of evidence they already have

For example:

An observation, photograph, count, sketch, or map.

2 One thing they need to find out next

What information or evidence would help them understand what they noticed?

3 One person or source that could help

For example:

A gardener, farmer, scientist, community member, older resident, land manager, local knowledge holder, biodiversity database, historical record, or scientific source.



STUDENT OUTCOMES



By the end of the activity, each student or group should have:

- **ONE INITIAL INVESTIGATION QUESTION**
- **ONE PIECE OF INITIAL EVIDENCE**
- **ONE NEXT STEP**

This story lead can now become the starting point for Step 1: Investigate and can develop as students gather more evidence, follow connections, and discover where their story leads.

Want to continue?

Use the 4-Lesson YRE Sequence or Extended Project Guide to develop students' story leads into a full YRE investigation.