



Pollen and climate change

Duration	2-3 hours
Time of year	Any
Place	Classroom
Materials	Paper, poster paper
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To highlight the importance of gaining knowledge about climate change, pollen and health
Methods	Games, discussion, brainstorming

DISCUSSION

Identifying allergies

- ▶ Ask the children if they have ever felt any irritation in their eyes or nose on the way to school.
 - Is it seasonal? Is it worse on hot days?
- ▶ Ask the children how many of them have a diagnosed pollen allergy, and how many think they might have a pollen allergy. If they are unsure, suggest what they might do to find out (go to the doctor; ask their parents etc.).

GROUP WORK

Does climate change affect pollen allergies?

- ▶ Divide the class into groups of four to six children to discuss the following statements:
 - Plants exposed to carbon dioxide and ozone may produce pollen with more allergenic proteins, thus increasing the incidence of pollen allergies.
 - Plants are slowly migrating (from South to North), which means that their allergenic pollens are being introduced in other regions. As a result, more people are affected by pollen in different European regions.
- ▶ The group discussions should take around 15 minutes. After the discussion the groups should present the outcomes to the rest of the class. The class can then discuss where the group opinions coincide or differ.



**GROUP WORK****How would you design a green and healthy school environment that addresses the problem of pollen allergy?**

- ▶ Divide the class into small groups to discuss the principles of the design. To help get them started, suggest that they focus on the following questions:
 - What species of trees should be planted around the school?
 - Is there a busy road nearby? Where is the school yard in relation to the road?
 - How do the children get to school?
 - Are there any products in or around the school that might cause allergic reactions or irritation?

- ▶ The group discussions should take around 30 minutes. After the discussions, each group should present its ideas to the rest of the class in the form of a poster. A class discussion should then follow about the principles of a green and healthy school environment that addresses the problem of pollen allergies.

