Traveling Seeds

Make three different “seed” types and see which design helps it go the farthest.

What you need
Copy of helicopter
Scissors
Paper clip
Paper
Tape
Tape measure

What to do
1. Make three different seed types. Cut out and fold a helicopter, wad a piece of paper, and wad a piece of tape (make sure the sticky part is on the outside).
2. Pretend that you are the parent plant.
3. Send off each seed in the way you think that it would travel.
4. Measure the distance each travels.
5. Record your finding on the data table.

What to ask
• How do a seed’s shape and size affect the way it moves?
• Why is it important for seeds to be dispersed in different ways?
• What value does seed dispersal have for plants, wildlife and humans?
• Could you design a seed that could travel to another continent?

Did you know?
Seeds are tiny plants. Wind, water and animals move seeds. The shape and size of the seed determines how it will be moved. Seeds are designed so that they can “move” themselves to a place that is just right for them!
What’s next?
1. Look for seeds in your neighborhood.
2. Record which types of seeds you find.
3. Design a seed to travel far away.

To learn more

The Tiny Seed
by Eric Carle
In autumn, a strong wind blows flower seeds high in the air and carries them far across
the land. One by one, many of the seeds are lost, burned by the sun, fall into the
ocean, or eaten by a bird. Soon only the tiniest seed remains, growing into a giant
flower and when autumn returns, sending its own seeds into the wind to start the
process over again.

Anno’s Magic Seeds
by Mitsumasa Anno
Jack meets a wizard who gives him two magic seeds and instructs him to eat one,
which will sustain him for a full year and then plant the other. The reader is asked to
perform a series of mathematical operations integrated into the story of a lazy man
who plants magic seeds and reaps an increasingly abundant harvest.

How it helps with school

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) Standards
Measurement: 3.11A, 3.13; 4.12; 5.11A
Probability and Statistics: 3.14A; 5.12B
Underlying Processes and Mathematical Tools: 3.16A, 4.15A, 5.15A

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Standards
Measurement, Data Analysis and Probability, Connections
Traveling Seeds

1. Cut along solid lines
2. Fold top "flaps" on dotted line in opposite directions
3. Fold up bottom on dotted line and paper clip