



# Teaching in the Gardens and Growing the Future

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## Granny's Flower Pressing Adventure

### Lesson Summary

#### When to use this lesson

Granny's Flower Pressing Adventure welcomes students back to Granny's Garden School after summer break.

#### Standard

S1L1.Students will investigate the characteristics and basic needs of plants and animals.  
c. Identify the parts of a plant—root, stem, leaf, and flower.

#### Objective

The activity is an opportunity to review garden rules, teach students about flower pressing, and permit students to pick a small bouquet to take home.

#### Materials

- 4 phone books per class if a class did not save books from the prior year
- Scissors for each student
- Uncut empty water bottle or plastic cup for each student's bouquet
- 4 permanent markers to label water bottles (or cups)
- 4 tall buckets filled with water for each garden area
- Water key
- Pinwheels or small flags to mark plants to use for pressing
- Examples of flowers to press and not to press
- Example of a bouquet
- A table to set up activity if the garden area does not have a table.

#### Estimated Duration

30 minutes

### Set Up in Advance

- Set up table.
- A supply of phone books in each garden area for classes who did not save phone books from last year. However, most teachers saved phone books from the prior year and will bring them to their scheduled time.
- A supply of extra scissors in each garden area. However, teachers will be reminded to bring scissors.
- A container of water bottles in each garden area
- 4 tall buckets filled with water in each garden area
- 4 sharpies
- Pre-mark the plants to use for pressing with pinwheels or flags.

### Activity

- Welcome the students back to Granny's Garden School. Explain that the garden is an outdoor classroom and that many of the rules for their inside classroom apply to their outside

classroom. Ask students in grades 2-4 for some garden rules that they remember. Explain some basic garden rules to all.

- ✓ Show students the difference in appearance between wood chip paths and garden beds. Explain that students should only walk on paths or on grass. We do not walk in or cut through garden beds because we don't want to damage plants or make the soil packed and hard by walking in the beds.
  - ✓ Always walk when you are in the garden areas.
  - ✓ Stop, look, and listen when your garden teacher wants your attention.
  - ✓ Use classroom voices so you can hear instructions.
  - ✓ Listen when others are speaking.
  - ✓ Ask questions if you aren't sure about what to do.
  - ✓ Respect the animals you find by looking but not disturbing their activity. We only pick up the garden animals with the garden teacher's permission.
  - ✓ We only pick flowers and food with the garden teacher's permission.
  - ✓ Explain that students will use a tool today – scissors. Model the correct way to carry scissors in the garden with the point down and the blades covered.
- Explain to students that the activity today has two parts. One activity is to collect flowers and leaves for pressing in phone books. The second activity is to cut a bouquet to take home.

### Pressing Flowers

- Premark some locations of flowers to cut for pressing.
- Explain to students that they will be cutting and pressing flowers and leaves. Pressing means that flowers and leaves are placed in phone books until the flowers and leaves become paper-thin and dry. We are *preserving* them, which means we are preparing them to save them for later use. Explain that petals and leaves contain water and that by placing them between pages of a phone book, the water is absorbed by the pages, and dry, papery petals and leaves result. Later in the school year, the pressed flowers and leaves will be used by students in a project.
- Students will each use their scissors to cut 4 flowers and 1 leaf. Tell students to include the stem when they cut. Show examples of the kinds of flowers to cut and the flowers they should not cut for pressing. Point out some of the marked locations, and explain that students should cut only from the plants that are marked. Most of the time, the flowers and leaves are used for bookmarks, so the size of leaves and flowers should be appropriate.

Leaf and flower examples to pick for pressing	Do not pick for pressing
All colors of cosmos – for orange and yellow cosmos, snip off center Salvia Sweet alyssum Flame celosia Artemisia Dusty miller Variegated herb leaves Purple herb leaves Cornflower Individual hydrangea flowers Caryopteris Rose buds	Marigold, zinnia, gloriosa, black-eyed Susan Other flowers with thick center or thick calyx

- Use a phone book to model the procedure for pressing flowers.
- Pinch a small number of pages (5-10) to open the book as if preparing to read the book.

- Explain that students will place their cut flowers and leaves on the left-hand page so the pieces do not touch each other.
- Take care with positioning so flowers and leaves are flat against the page. Flowers with an open face, like cosmos, are pressed face down so the petals spread flat on the page. Stems with small blooms, like salvia, alyssum, and flame celosia, are just placed on the page.
- After the flowers are on the page, take a small pinch of pages from the right and cover the flowers - again just like reading a book.
- Flowers and leaves are always placed on the left. Pages to cover the flowers are always turned from the right.
- Explain that the turned pages do not need to be pressed down firmly and that students should not go backwards to peek once the flowers have been covered. Explain that it will take several weeks before the flowers and leaves are ready. Taking backwards peeks causes the flowers to move on the page and become stuck together or to fall out.
- Explain that the phone books will be placed on the benches and that students will go to a bench after collecting flowers from the tables.
- Review the process.
  - ✓ How many flowers and leaves total do you collect? 4 flowers and 1 leaf
  - ✓ On what side of the open phone book are the flowers placed? The left
  - ✓ What side of the phone book are the pages that they will turn? The right
  - ✓ Should you go back to peek at the flowers you pressed? No, it will take several weeks for the flowers to flatten.
- Divide the class into groups for each phone book. Place a phone book on a bench, assign a group to the phone book, and let the students begin. Be sure that you or another adult stays at the benches to help students press their as instructed.
- When pressing is finished, the phone book is closed with the back cover facing up.

### **Cutting Flowers**

- Explain the flower cutting activity. Students are permitted to cut 2 flowers and a leaf for a bouquet to take home. This time students cut from plants that are not marked. Reinforce that the plants used for pressing are not the plants to use for bouquets.
- Explain that students need to cut long stems so the flowers reach the water in their bottles. Show an example.
- Each student collects a water bottle. Adults help to label the bottles with the students' names.
- Each student fills a water bottle halfway with water by dipping the bottle in a bucket of water. *If you have helpers, have them prefill water bottles to save time.* Then, students cut 2 flowers and one leaf.
- Review the process.
  - ✓ How many flowers may you cut? 2 flowers
  - ✓ How many leaves? 1 leaf

### **Wrap up**

- The teacher carries the phone books back to the classroom by holding the book horizontally so the flowers and leaves inside are not disturbed. Students carry their bouquet.
- Phone books are stacked and stored in the classroom. Drying time is at least 6 to 8 weeks.



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### About Granny's Garden School

Granny's Garden School was founded in 2002 by a grandmother who wanted to give children the opportunity to pick flowers. She began with a flower garden at Loveland Primary School where her grandchildren were in the first and second grades. Today, with more than 100 vegetable gardens, lots of flower gardens, a ¾-mile nature trail, and an apple orchard, we're now one of the most comprehensive school garden programs in the country.

Granny's staff of garden coordinators use gardens and a nature trail to provide environmental education that complements each grade's curriculum and meets Ohio educational standards. We also guide educators outside of Loveland in the innovative and practical conversion of school grounds into self-sufficient learning environments that encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and appreciation for nature. The main campus of Granny's Garden School is located on the shared campus of Loveland Primary and Elementary Schools with additional gardens for first grade classes at Loveland Early Childhood Center.

Though based on school grounds, Granny's Garden School is not funded by the school district. We are a separate non-profit organization funded by individual donations, foundation grants, and various fundraisers. Services are provided to the school system free of charge.

### Granny's Flower Pressing Adventure

Today we welcomed your student back to school with *Granny's Flower Pressing Adventure*. We preserved a bit of summer by teaching students how to press flowers and leaves using phone books, and reviewed garden rules that students will use as they continue to participate in Granny's Garden School. Their pressed flowers will be used in an activity later in the school year. Ask your student what they found in the gardens today.

### Become a Classroom Volunteer!

You are invited to participate with your child's class in Granny's Garden School. Participation by teachers is voluntary. Teachers select a regular weekly day and time for students to participate. One of our staff will lead the lessons and activities, while you help us to keep the students focused on their tasks.

Watch for our sign-up sheet in your child's classroom on Parent Information Night, or contact us at [granny@grannysgardenschool.org](mailto:granny@grannysgardenschool.org) to let us know you're interested.

