

Plastic Bottle Wildflowers

Overview:

Reuse plastic water bottles to create wildflowers. Pairs nicely with “The Reason for a Flower.”

Objectives:

Identify Iowa’s native wildflowers. Review the parts of a plant.

Links to Iowa Core:

Life Science (Grades K-2): Students will understand and apply knowledge of the characteristics of living things and how living things are both similar to and different from each other and from non-living things. Students will understand and apply knowledge of life cycles of plants and animals.

Life Science (Grades 3-5): Students will understand and apply knowledge of organisms and their environments, including structures, characteristics, and adaptations of organisms that allow them to function and survive within their habitats.

Time: 30-45 minutes

Materials:

- Clean plastic drink bottle
- White craft glue
- Scissors
- Scraps of construction paper
- Sand or soil
- Pebbles or rocks
- Drinking straw, twig, or wooden pencil
- Guide to wildflowers in Iowa (optional)

Procedure:

1. Remove the label from the plastic bottle.
2. Cut the bottle in half, setting the bottom half aside.
3. Keeping the lid on, cut slits on the top half of the bottle. These will eventually be the “petals.” The number of slits will vary depending on what flower the student is making. For example, a wild rose has 5 petals, but a purple coneflower has close to 20. Bend the petals outward.
4. Glue colorful scraps of paper to the petals and use scissors to cut the flowers into desired shape.
5. Squeeze some glue into the lid. Insert the straw, twig, or pencil into the glue for the stem. Then, wad up the bottle wrapper or small piece of paper and surround the stem. This will give it some stability. Alternatively, use masking tape to tape the stem to the back of the flower.
6. Cut out leaves from construction paper scraps and glue to stem.

7. Put some sand or soil into the bottom half of the bottle. Back it down a bit and insert the bottom end of the stem.
8. Add pebbles or stones to the top of the sand for added stability.

Discussion:

Ask students to orally run through the different parts of a plant. Why do plants have flowers? Older students could also write short research papers on their particular flower.

* Note: For younger students, you may want to cut the bottles for them ahead of time. Also, for students of all ages, maybe allow them to create a flower from their imaginations.

