



Design With Plants

Plants come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, provide places for animals, insects, and even humans to live, and produce fruit for us to eat and flowers to enjoy. In this artistic challenge, use your senses to observe the plants around you, then make your own masterpiece out of found plant material.

Materials

Blanket or sheet (to sit and place natural material on)

Natural materials (grass, sticks, leaves, rocks, dirt, etc.)

Watch or clock (optional; time limits can help generate creativity or ideas, but aren't necessary, especially for younger ages.)

Directions

1. **Go outside** to an area like a backyard, park, or greenspace. (Be sure to get an adult's permission first!)
2. **Look around** for natural materials for 10 seconds to one minute. What plants do you see? Are there trees with leaves? Small or large rocks? Patches of grass, dirt, or sand?
3. **Gather materials** like grass, sticks, leaves, rocks, and dirt for a few minutes. (Take only a small amount of anything you find, and only things that have already fallen to the ground. Be sure not to disturb any animals' homes!)
4. **Design or build!** Think about a plant or something else you saw outside. Using your found materials, try to recreate it. (For example, if you saw a tree, you could lay sticks on the ground, like a trunk, and put grass on top, like leaves). It



does not need to look exactly like what you saw. Be creative, it's ok to make mistakes!

5. **Share** what you made with a friend or family member. Can they guess what you made? Now, look around again and take a minute to try and make something different!
6. **Repeat** steps 2 through 5. Try observing for longer and building for less, or the other way around.
7. **Challenge:** Design and build your own plant that stands up on its own! What features does your plant have? Stems? Leaves? Flowers? Can you make a "plant" one foot tall that stands on its own? Enjoy creating with nature and designing with plants!

