



Flower and Leaf Press Activity

(April 5, 2021)

Black Belt Museum

www.blackbeltmuseum.com

Background Information:

Spring has sprung in the Black Belt! The landscape has started to become a multicolored wonderland. In a few short weeks the landscape will change again to a new hue of colors before the leaves change in the fall and to the ground. Have you ever wanted to preserve a small part of the landscape to remember down the road? Here is one way to do it.

Create Your Own Press:

There multiple versions of a press you can make with commonly found items at home. The basic materials needed are:

- Cardboard (cut into 6x6 inch square pairs)
- Wax paper (cut into 6x12 inch rectangles)
- Rubber Bands
- Flowers/Leaves to press

Advanced Version:

- Plywood cut into 8x8 inch squares (pairs)
- Cardboard (cut into 6x6 inch square pairs)
- Wax paper (cut into 6x12 inch rectangles)
- Old belts, straps
- Flowers/Leaves to press

No matter which version you use it is important make sure have enough equal pressure to press the flowers or leaves.



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(Activity Instructions)

1. Create your press(s). Feel free to use either version above. You can also make modifications to create a better press.
2. (Optional) cut paper into 6x6 inch squares to place in between the wax paper and flowers/leaves.
3. Go out and collect! Go into your backyard and collect flowers/leaves you want to preserve and identify. Bonus tip: Mark location of item collected & take picture of flower to help with identification. Use apps like iNaturalist or Seek to help with identification in the field.
4. Place your items (with ID tags) between folded layers of wax paper and place between layers of cardboard.
5. Press together alternate layers of flowers with cardboard.
6. (Optional) Place cardboard layers between plywood and tighten to press flowers/leaves. Wait at least 1 week to remove items from press.

Now What?

1. Use a glue stick to glue your dried flowers to construction paper to make bookmarks, gift tags or cards.
2. Make a dried flower window display. Preserve your dried flowers in between two pieces of clear contact paper. Cut the contact paper into a circle or trim off the edges to make a neat rectangle or square. Hang your creation in a window or put it on your refrigerator for display.
3. Coasters and trays.