

Follow the Garden Path Botany Identification Game

Target age group: Any age

Materials needed: Copies of flower cards printed onto card stock (These cards can be of photos you have taken or copied from the web with a focus on flowers/plants in your vicinity- For the Sacramento area, I suggest going to the University of Davis Botanical Gardens site and click on their “all star” plants... a list of 100 plants that grow well in this area.) Also you will need: a pen or pencil, scissors, and laminating plastic if you want to make the cards durable)

Number of players: 2 to 6

Time needed to play: 15- 45 minutes (depending on how many players and how many cards you use)

How to prepare:

Copy or print the flower cards onto heavy card stock paper. Before cutting the cards apart, write the names of the flowers on the back of each card. If you use a marker, test it first to make sure it won't bleed through the paper onto the picture on the front. After you have the names printed, cut apart the cards. (If you know some of these flowers by other names, use the names you know.)

If you want to make the cards very durable, laminate them in plastic. You can buy laminating plastic at office supply stores or you can have the lamination done for you at the printing department of most office supply stores. (If cost is a factor, transparent contact paper can be used; it is not as durable, but will protect the cards from getting dirty.)



Example of the “Garden Path” created by the flower cards laid down in the game.



suggested size of cards (Aster)

How to play see next (or back) page

How to Play: (similar to “Grandmother’s Trunk”, if you know that game)

1. Distribute the cards equally among all players. (You don’t have to use all the cards. If you have a small group or limited time, select the cards you want to emphasize.)
2. The first player chooses one of his cards and lays it down (picture side up), saying its name very clearly so that all the other players can hear it.
3. The second player must remember and repeat the name of that first flower, then he can lay down a card from his hand, saying its name.
4. The third player must remember and repeat the names of the first two flowers before he is allowed to add a third card to the growing “garden path.” Play continues like this, with each player reciting the names of all the previous flowers before adding one of their cards to the path.
5. If a player forgets the name of a flower, he has to stop at that point and can’t add another card to the path on that turn. (Emphasize to the players how important it is to listen carefully as other players take their turns. In this game, you can’t “tune out” between your turns!)
6. The winner is the first person to get rid of all of their cards. You may have several players that get rid of their last card on the same round, in which case you can call it a multiple-way tie.
7. You can de-emphasize competition and adjust the rules to suit your situation. For younger players, you might want to add a rule that says that players get two (or more) “peeks” — two chances to turn over a card and read the name on the back. Or you can scrap competition completely and let the players give each other hints. Adapt the game to suit your students.