

TEACHING NOTES for Unit 16: Poisonous Plants

Objectives

After completing this unit, learners should be able to:

1. Understand, say, and read some common words used to describe plants
2. Recognize some common poisonous plants that grow in Pinellas County
3. Call the Florida Poison Information Network (800-222-1222) for more information about poisonous plants
4. Go to the Internet and download information from the Poison Information Center – Tampa or a similar site

Overview

This unit helps students identify potentially poisonous plants that grow in Pinellas County. It introduces vocabulary to describe some of the most common symptoms of poisoning from plants as well as words that describe the parts of the plant. Use this unit in conjunction with Unit 15 (*Poisonous Snakes and Insects*) to review the vocabulary for shapes and colors. Have students practice describing the poisonous plants by shape (of flowers, leaves), number (of petals, leaves in a cluster) and color.

Unit Segments

Theme Pictures (page 1) – A number of beautiful, but poisonous plants including Angel Trumpet, Oleander, Castor Bean, and Rosary Pea are shown. Teach the main parts of plants from this page: flowers, leaves, and beans or berries. Review colors and shapes of the pictured plants.

Vocabulary (page 2) -- a picture dictionary of the parts of plants and trees as well as words needed to describe plant produced symptoms such as rash, vomiting and difficulty breathing.

Pronunciation (page 3) -- focused study on sound symbol relationships. Some students may have difficulty with the r and l sounds, both a initial consonants or as part of the blends pl and tr. Demonstrate the placement of the tongue and lips when making these sounds. A mirror may be helpful if students have difficulty duplicating these positions.

Clap the Stress (page 3) -- focused study on stress, rhythm and intonation patterns; notice the opportunity for practicing longer words and whole phrases (last two columns).

Conversations (pages 3-5) -- After students have mastered the conversations given, try providing various different responses to the student's answers or giving pictures of other plants for them to describe. (You can use the Practice Describing Plants on page 5.) Do they understand the difference between "it sounds like poison ivy" and "it doesn't sound like poison ivy"?

Practice Describing Plants (page 5) -- Explain that these are the kinds of questions they may expect if they call the poison center or their doctor's office about a physical problem that seems to be related to plants.

Poisonous Plants that Grow in Pinellas County (page 6) – Have students read the selection aloud and check for understanding of vocabulary. Have students practice describing a plant that they have seen. Ask questions to get more details, if necessary. See if others can recognize the plant.

Emphasize that if symptoms are minor, they should call the Poison Information Center or their doctor for help. If a person has trouble breathing, 911 should be called immediately. For severe or prolonged vomiting, a doctor should be notified or the person should be taken to the Emergency Room.

What Poisonous Plants Are In Your Neighborhood? (page 7) -- This is a great homework exercise that students can do alone or with their children. Ask them to take a walk around their neighborhood and report back the following week. Alternately, depending on the time and location of your session, you could walk around with the group and look at the plants in the area.

Internet Activities (page 8) – Have the students go to the sites mentioned and answer the questions on page 8. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to become better acquainted with the many beautiful plants that grow in our state. Perhaps some of the same plants grow in their native countries.

In many countries, including the US, picking wild mushrooms is a common practice. Remind your students that even if a mushroom looks similar to one they are accustomed to eating, it may not be the same plant.

Quiz (page 9) – Have students take the quiz (the answers are on the following page) and see if they can name any of the safe plants shown.

Writing about Plants and Mushrooms (page 10) – Have the students select one of the topics given and write a short paragraph. Review and correct any spelling or grammatical errors. If students are not able to write sentences as yet, treat this as an opportunity to do a language experience story.

NOTE: If students show an interest in knowing both common and scientific names for the plants featured in this lesson, print out the following page for them. It must be printed in color to be a useful guide.

Visual Guide to Poisonous Plants



Rosary Pea
Santa Juana, Peonia
Abrus precatorius



Dieffenbachia
Dicha, Mata Puerco
Dieffenbachia sequine



Brazilian Pepper
Pimienta Roja
Shinus terebinthifolius



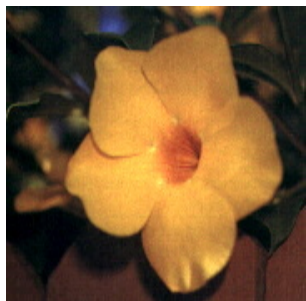
Castor Bean
Higuereta
Ricinus communis



Oleander
Adelfa, Rosa Francesa
Nerium oleander



Philodendron
Malanga
Philodendron selloum



Allamanda
Copa de Mantequilla
Allamanda cathartica



Coral Plant
Pino de Coral
Jatropha multifida



Angel's Trumpet
Chamico, Campana
Datura candida

Source: Florida Poison Information Center/Miami (<http://pediatrics.med.miami.edu/FPIC/plants/plants.html>)