

## **Teacher Reading: How to Make a Plant Press**

Unit: Plants (Middle and High School)

### Items Needed:

1. large piece of cardboard
2. four thick rubber bands
3. sheets of old newspaper
4. scissors
5. flowers and leaves

### Making the Plant Press:

1. Cut the cardboard into four 4" x 4" squares.
2. Cut the newspaper into twelve 4" x 4" squares.
3. Place four sheets of newspaper in between each cardboard piece.
4. Place the four rubber bands around the outside of the cardboard, so that the contents are secure and tight.

### Pressing the plants:

1. Gather the flowers and leaves that you would like to press.
2. Cut the plants so that they are no bigger than 4" x 4".
3. Separate the sheets of newspaper and neatly place the plant between the four sheets of paper (two sheets on top, two on the bottom). Spread out the flower petals and leaves.
4. F.Y.I.: Newspaper absorbs excess plant moisture.
5. Place the newspaper between two pieces of cardboard.
6. Repeat this process until the plant press is full. You may stack several specimens at once.
7. Secure the press with rubber bands. The tighter the press, the better.
8. Place the press in a dry place and do not open for at least forty-eight hours.
9. After forty-eight hours, you may remove the plants and mount them on paper using glue or tape.

### Optional Extension:

Creating a Lewis and Clark Herbarium

Students will:

- use the specimens that have been drying to create a large specimen page for display with the name of the plant noted in the lower-right-hand corner, date collected, and place collected, as well as the habitat clearly noted somewhere on the mounting sheet
- mount this on a poster board next to your journal entry, written in Lewis's style, describing the specimen that is mounted (use plant descriptors, detailed measurements, shape, color, any Native American connections to the plant)
- display specimen page and journal entry on poster board
- students, one at a time, will stand next to their herbarium entry, describe what they collected, read their journal entry, and read their favorite part of this exercise or new fact they learned