



Beauty and the Natural World: Plant Shapes in Art

For Grades 3-5

Use this resource to look closely at the features of a plant and then use those plant features in an artwork. This activity will help answer the question: How can the natural world inspire creativity?

Supplies: Handouts (provided), pen or pencil, art supplies, scissors, glue

What to do:

1. Take a look at these two art pieces from The Huntington's collections. Think and talk about how the artists use plants in their artwork.
 - a. [Snake Amongst Flowers](#)
 - b. [Fox and Grape](#)
2. Select a plant. This can be done by walking in your neighborhood or choosing a houseplant in your home.
3. Look closely at the plant and fill in [Handout A](#). Use [Handout B](#) to help you describe what you see.
4. To notice new things about your plant, consider:
 - a. dissecting the plant parts (make sure this is allowed and safe first!).
 - b. using a magnifying glass or microscope to study small details.
 - c. using a flashlight to backlight the leaves and petals - this is a great way to see new details.
5. Use [iNaturalist](#) (or a similar app) to identify the plant.



Show and Share:

1. Using your collage materials, cut out the shapes you observed in your plant.
2. Use these shapes to create an artwork inspired by nature.
3. Write your Artist's Statement using [Handout C](#).

Extend your learning:

1. Watch this [video of an artist working with plants at The Huntington](#). How is this artist's project similar to what you did? How is it different? Is there anything this artist did that you would like to try?





2. Take a neighborhood walk and look for plants with similar features. Do you think any of these plants are closely related? Why?
3. Haiku are Japanese poems about nature. [Craft a haiku inspired by the plant you chose.](#)
4. Re-create your artwork using a different medium. How does this change your work?
5. [Take a neighborhood walk and look for fractals in plants.](#)

Share and celebrate your work by emailing us at Teachers@huntington.org

This resource has some alignment with:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NCAS Anchor Standard 1-3 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work, organize and develop artistic ideas and work, refine and complete artistic work.

NGSS 3 Inheritance and Variation of Traits: Life Cycles and Traits.

NGSS 4 Structure, Functioning, and Information Processing.





Handout A: Plant Observation Sheet

Fill in the chart below with your observations of your plant. Try to choose a plant with flowers!

Plant Part	Describe it! (you can use the Describing Plants sheet to help you)	Sketch it! (draw what you see)
LEAVES	<p style="text-align: center;">My plant's leaves are....</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
FLOWERS (What do the petals look like?)	<p style="text-align: center;">My plant's flowers are....</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Optional: What other parts of the plant do you see (e.g. roots, stem, fruit)? Use the back of this sheet to describe and sketch them.

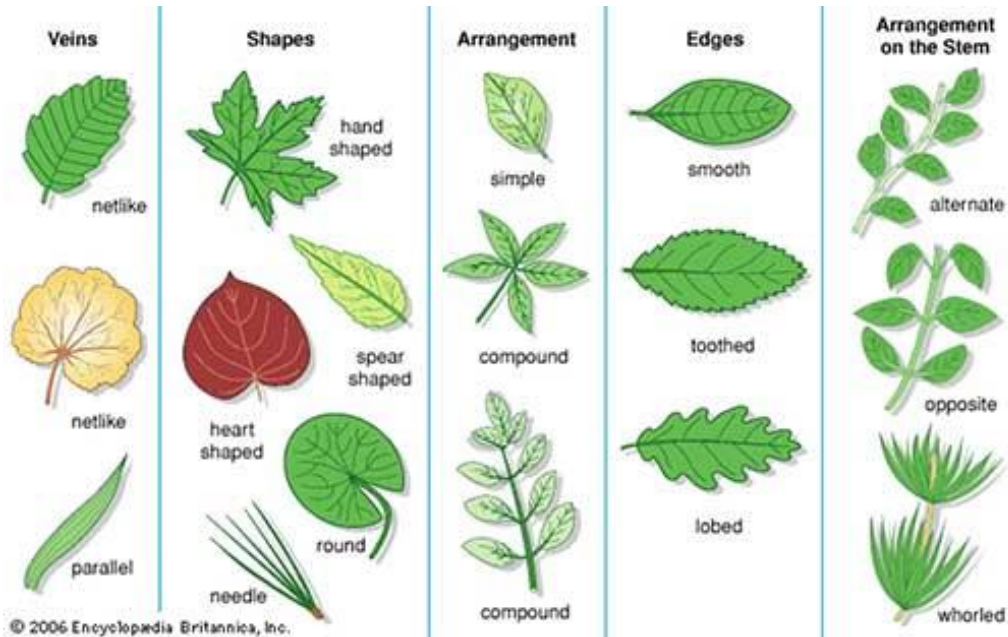




Handout B: Describing Plants

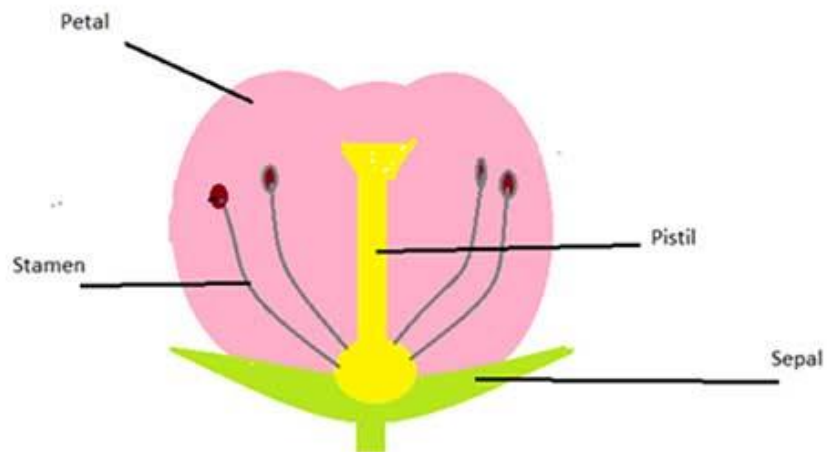
Leaves

When looking at the leaves of your plant, consider the veins, shapes, arrangement, edges, and arrangement on the stem.



Flowers

When looking at the flowers, consider the different parts of the flower:





Handout C: Artist's Statement

Artist's Name: _____ Title: _____

Plant Inspiration: _____

I made a.....

Drawing Painting Collage Sculpture _____

My artwork is about...

I used these materials to make my artwork...

I hope people notice these things about my artwork...

