



IDENTIFY A GRASS PLANT

Study the characteristics of grass



GRADES 2-4

MATERIALS

- samples of grass
- samples of other plants
- sheets of waxed paper or newspaper
- heavy books
- sticky notes or permanent marker

KEY WORDS

- stem
- leaves
- veins
- sheath
- blade
- roots
- rhizomes
- stolons

STANDARDS

- SCI.3.3.1

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify the different components of a grass plant.

PROCEDURE

- Collect a sample of grass and a wild plant for each student. Try to provide a variety of grasses, if possible. Check out rural roadsides or a field that has not been mowed. Grasses with flower heads are especially interesting. Collect roots along with the samples if you can. Shake the soil from the roots before bringing the samples to the classroom. For wild plants, choose flowering plants and small plants with slender leaves.
- Give each student two plant samples (a grass plant and a wildflower, for example). Ask students to guess which of the two is a grass plant. Tell them to place the grass plant on the left and the other plants on the right.
- Give each student two copies of the worksheet (one for each plant). Ask students to study the drawings, answer the questions, and decide if they guessed correctly. With younger students, you may want to read the questions together and examine the plants step-by-step.

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT

- Assess the students based on completion and accuracy of worksheet.

EXTENSIONS

- After students have decided which of their samples is grass, tell them they will preserve their sample. Give each student a sheet of waxed paper or newspaper. Fold the sheet of paper in half and carefully place the grass sample inside the folded sheets. Ask each student to write their name on the paper or attach a self-sticking note to the sample. Place all of the samples between the pages of several heavy books. Pile more books on top. Let the grasses dry for about a week before using the pressed grasses for another purpose.
- Dried grasses can be used in the activity “Label the Parts of a Grass Plant.”





IDENTIFY A GRASS PLANT

Look carefully at a plant you think is grass and then answer the questions below. If you answer **yes** to each questions, they your plant is grass.



Name _____



Questions

1. Are the stems smooth and shiny?
2. Do the stems have joints?
3. Does one leaf grow at each joint?
4. Are the leaves long and narrow?
5. Do the veins in the leaves all run in the same direction?
6. Does each leaf have two parts, a **sheath** and a **blade**?
The sheath is the lower part of the leaf. It fits closely around the stem. The blade is the long, slender part of the leaf.
7. Are the roots like tiny threads?

Here is some more information to help you decide:

- Some grasses have hollow stems.
- Some grasses have creeping stems called *rhizomes* that grow below the ground.
- Some grasses have creeping stems called *stolons* that grow along the ground.
- New grass plants start from rhizomes and stolons.

