

Ethnobotany Adventure Activity Cards

Print each card on a separate piece of paper and hand out to students before beginning script reading.



Apache plume- Branches bound together can be used as brooms, branches can also be used to make arrows, tea can be made from its flowering tops, can be used as a shampoo to promote hair growth, can be made into a cream to treat arthritis and sprains.



Douglas-Fir- Needles can be chewed and are very high in vitamin C, which is known to boost the immune system. A tasty tea made from the needles helps with joint pain. Indians use fir branches in many ceremonies. Fir is extensively logged for use as lumber. Firs make great Christmas trees.

Douglas Fir has single flat needles- “flat and friendly fir”. Grows high on the mountain or in low shady places.



Indian Paint Brush- Used to treat rheumatism and as a bath rinse to make hair shiny, also has potential to be used as a treatment for cancer. It also really has been used as a paintbrush. The roots have been used as a dye. It can be eaten raw in moderation or used as a salad garnish.



Mountain Mahogany- The twigs can be boiled and used as a laxative. The leafy branches can also be put under your mattress to repel bed bugs.

Mountain Mahogany has many small oval leaves. The leaves have rough (toothed) edges. You may see long, fuzzy seeds that curl.



Mullein- Making tea or inhaling smoke from the leaves and flowers can be used to treat chest congestion, coughs and asthma. The flowers can be soaked in olive oil and used to treat ear infections. Its leaves can be used as toilet paper.



Oak- Oak leaves can be chewed and used to treat small cuts or insect bites. They have an antiseptic and help clot blood. They are also good to treat diarrhea. Chewed bark can treat a toothache. Bark tea can help sore throats, mouth infections and stomach problems. Treated acorns can be ground into meal and used to make bread. Ground up acorn shells can be used as a coffee substitute. Acorn oil can be used as a fuel and in cooking. Acorns have a bitter taste that can be overcome by boiling or soaking in water.

Oak is usually a bush, but sometimes is tree- sized.



Oregon Grape/Holly grape-The root can be used as a laxative, an antibacterial skin wash, and to reduce fever. The yellow flowers make a good dressing to prevent infection. The berries can be used for fevers, a laxative and for sore gums. The berries can also be eaten or used in jams or jellies.

Oregon Grape is a low growing vine in the forest.



Penstemon- A salve of finely chopped penstemons mixed with olive oil and beeswax can be used to treat or prevent irritations of the skin and lips.



Piñon Pine- Tea made from the needles helps congestion. Sap can be used to draw out splinters and as a rub to treat arthritis, sprains and burns. The sap can also be chewed like gum. The nuts can be eaten raw, roasted or made into a paste and used like peanut butter. (It is New Mexico's state tree.)

Piñon Pine Tree – Short 1 ½ to 2 inch needles grow in pairs (bundles of 2).



Ponderosa Pine- In times of famine, the inner bark can be eaten to prevent starvation. The needles make a pleasant tea and are high in vitamin C. Sap or “pitch” the size of a small raisin is chewed and swallowed to get mucus out of your chest. This tree is also used for lumber.

Ponderosa Pine trees have thick orange bark and 5 inch long needles in bundles of 3.





Juniper- Berries can be used to treat urinary tract infections and to help digestion. They can also be roasted and ground into meal or used as a substitute for coffee. Berries are used for flavoring with meat and in gin. Skin from the berries can be made into wax. Juniper branches are often burned as incense which is believed to keep away bad spirits. Juniper is used in soaps and lotions for its nice smell.

Juniper Trees are evergreens with “scales” instead of needles.





Snakeweed- It can be made into a bath to help with arthritis and sore muscles.



Yucca- The roots can be used to make soap and shampoo. A tea from the root helps with joint pain. Fibers in yucca leaves have been used to make shoes, paintbrushes, floor mats, clothing, and string. The leaf points are also sharp enough to be used as sewing needles. The fruits can be baked like potatoes and eaten. (It is New Mexico's state flower.)

Watch for yucca in sunny, dry places.