

Ethnobotany Adventure

Student Copy

Cactus Casualty

Narrator: **Two weeks ago Bob and his Aunt Janice were playing Baseball at the Center. Near the end of the game Bob ran into a Cholla Cactus!**

Janice: You got two left feet, McFly?!

Narrator: **Bob was in bad shape! He had cactus spines in his leg, butt, and arm, and his ankle hurt like the dickens. He had various cuts, scrapes, sore muscles, and a splinter. Luckily Janice was an experienced herbalist and always carried a little first aid kit with her. Bob also knew a little herbalism and had some medicinal plants around.**

Janice: Are you OK? Where do you hurt?

Narrator: **When he told her she got her kit and started treating him.**

Bob: First get me some duct tape and I'll work on getting these cactus spines out.

Narrator: **When Janice came back with the duct tape she started treating him.**

Janice: Hmm, sore muscles. I think some _____ cream would help that. We can use another plant for both your swollen ankle and your cuts and scrapes - a very powerful medicine... It reduces inflammation (like swelling) and fever if you swallow the tea. It's also antibacterial so it will help prevent your cuts from getting infected. The root is bright yellow...the brighter the yellow, the stronger the medicine...here it is! _____

Bob: What about the splinter?!

Janice: Silly boy! Do you still have that _____ sap stash you keep in the kitchen for chewing gum? It'll help get the splinter out.

Narrator: **He did, so she stuck the warm sap to his hand, and the splinter came out with the cool, hardened sap.**

Bob: That's better. I should take some extra vitamin C to help me heal, too. Maybe some pine needle tea."

Janice: Oh, I have some _____ needles. They're really high in vitamin C. They even taste sort of citrusy - like oranges or something."

Bob: (Chewing on the needles) Thanks, Janice. Are you hungry?

Janice: I'm starving. I could eat a horse!

Bob: Should we get lunch?

Janice: Yes, please. Unless you want that horse in your backyard to disappear!" (smiles sweetly).

Bob: What horse?!

Janice: Exactly. I told you I could eat a horse!

Narrator: **They laughed as she helped him go inside for lunch.**

Lunch

Narrator: **For lunch they had acorn pancakes from acorns (Oak tree seeds) with maple syrup (a type of tree sap), along with _____ pine nuts, _____ flowers, and wild currant berries. Bob had some vanilla incense burning from the _____ tree. While they were cooking, Janice noticed something.**

Janice: You keep scratching your hand. Are you OK?

Bob: Yeah, It just itches like craz- Oh, no! It feels like _____ (no card). There's the rash starting. I'll go wash it, and I have some ointment for skin irritations made from _____.

Narrator: **While he was in the bathroom taking care of the poison ivy Bob also put some wax on his braces because they'd been hurting. He used wax made from _____ tree berries. They ate all the pancakes with maple syrup and finished the few yucca flowers they had collected when Bob went to get dessert. He was happy that he could walk into the kitchen and wasn't really paying attention to what he was doing as he walked back into the dining room, munching on berries.**

Bob: These are the most bitter currants I've ever tasted!

Narrator: **Janice looked up from her plate, where she'd been making a smiley face with her pancakes. The dessert bowl was filled with a handful of whitish berries.**

Janice: Bob! Currant berries aren't white! That's mistletoe!"

Bob: Ugh! I wondered why I felt funny. Mistletoe makes me sick!

Janice: You could take a laxative to clean that stuff out of your system! I've got some of that laxative plant with the fuzzy seeds: I'll boil some of those _____ twigs for you.

Narrator: **Well, Bob didn't enjoy the bathroom any more than anyone else, but he remembered how rotten he felt the last time he ate mistletoe, so he took the laxative. Soon he headed for the bathroom. Within half an hour he felt better, but then it wouldn't stop! He couldn't get out of the bathroom for more than a few minutes. Janice was a very experienced herbalist, so he knew she'd gotten the amount right.... Then he remembered he'd taken Oregon Grape that morning, which is *also* a laxative! Between bathroom trips he told Janice and she prepared him some anti-diarrheal _____ bark tea. Half an hour after he took the oak things started to slow down. Thank Goodness!**

All that stress and excitement made Bob's asthma act up so he took some _____. It helped. Janice went home around dinnertime.

Bob promised himself a quiet, uneventful day tomorrow. He planned to sleep in, and then wash and treat his hair in the morning while soaking in the tub. He was dirty, so he would soap up and shampoo with _____ and use a rinse to make his hair nice and shiny. [_____ does that.] Then he'd treat it with a hair growth herb so it was nice and thick _____ tea is good for that.