

# PLUGGED IN FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY, AND ART

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## This Month's Theme: Presents from Plants

As the holiday season approaches, we look for presents for our families and friends. We can make inexpensive yet extra special homemade gifts as well as wrapping paper, greeting cards, and gift tags using plants. Here are some fun and easy ideas for you!

Find a big table, put on an apron or old shirt, and collect the supplies for each project:

### Indian Corn Necklace and Bracelets

Start with a few ears of Indian corn. Pick the hard seeds out of the dried cobs. Soak the seeds in warm water for at least twelve hours. Use a thick, heavy-duty needle to pierce each softened kernel and string it onto heavy thread or dental floss. Tie a knot to form a circle. From *Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots* by Sharon Lovejoy.

### Herbal Bath Bags

With scissors, cut an 8-inch piece of fabric. Fill the center of the fabric with a handful of lavender flowers and stems and lemon balm leaves, lift the edges to form a bundle, and tie closed with a piece of ribbon. To use, drop into a tub of hot water and enjoy. From *Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots* by Sharon Lovejoy.

### Leaf Print Greeting Cards & Gift Tags

- Supplies:**
- Leaves of different shapes
  - Printing ink of several colors (Speedball brand water soluble paint is best)
  - Colored construction paper, folded for making cards and gift tags
  - Big plastic chopping boards or cookie sheets
  - A roller or "brayer" (see photo)
  - A few old newspapers



**To Make Cards:**  
Squeeze an inch or two of printing ink onto a board or cookie sheet. Roll the ink out with a roller. Make sure that the roller is completely covered with ink. Place a leaf on a piece of newspaper and roll ink over the exposed side of the leaf. Carefully lift up the leaf and place it paint-side down on a blank construction paper card. Place a clean piece of newspaper over the leaf and press and smooth over this with your finger. Be careful not to move the leaf around. Pick up the newspaper and the leaf to reveal your first leaf print. Make a design on the card with leaves of different shapes. If you want to use different colors, you will need several boards and you may even want to have more than one roller, although you can wash one roller between colors. It is fun to experiment with different color combinations. For example, blue, red, and silver ink all look great on black paper.

### Potato Stamp Wrapping Paper



- Supplies:**
- A few potatoes
  - Some corks
  - Tempera paint of a few different colors
  - A roll of brown paper or brown paper grocery bags cut open and flattened
  - A saucer for each color paint
  - A small chopping board
  - An adult helper with a small sharp knife

**To Make Wrapping Paper:**  
Cut a potato in half and, with a sharp knife, cut a design about ¼ inch deep into the flat cut surface. You can make the shape of a star, a tree, a flower, a moon, a bird, a fish, or any other simple shape. Remove the part of the potato (to ¼ inch deep) that is outside the shape. You have now made your first potato stamp. Make another shape using the other half of the potato. Roll out a length of brown paper or lay out a flattened brown paper bag with the un-printed side facing upward. Dip the potato stamp into a saucer of tempera paint. Press the stamp onto the brown paper and make a design with a series of shapes. Dip the other stamp into another color and make more prints. If you like, you can also use corks to make circles. When you have finished printing, leave the paper in a sunny place to dry.

To have more fun with plant-related crafts, bring your family to the Botanic Garden for the Annual Holiday Nature Craft Workshop on Saturday, December 13. For details, see www.SantaBarbaraBotanicGarden.org or call 682-4726 ext. 102.

Edible plants help your body grow strong and healthy. It is hard to see all the presents plants provide us with, like vitamins, minerals, and nutrients we need to fuel our body, but plants are full of surprises. The more plants you eat, the more presents you receive like strong bones and teeth and healthy eyes and skin.  
Eat plants!

### Word Find Presents from Plants

I P Y R R E B W A R T S  
B N P F R T U M K P L  
E E O A A N N U A E I E  
E I N R D E I L I T L O  
T O O M I S E L A B O R  
I M U I S E N G A M C M  
U T U A H R R T N C C A  
R C T I E P E L I A O N  
F O I B C G B E C T R L  
P E I B E L P P A E B O  
L E N V I T A M I N C C  
A E G A B B A C N T E A

- Find These Words:**
- |          |           |            |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| APPLE    | FRUIT     | POTASSIUM  |
| BEEF     | IRON      | PRESENT    |
| BROCCOLI | KALE      | RADISH     |
| CABBAGE  | LOCAL     | STRAWBERRY |
| CALCIUM  | MAGNESIUM | VEGETABLE  |
| FARM     | NIACIN    | VITAMIN C  |
| FIBER    | ORANGE    |            |


This holiday season give the gift of fruits and veggies. These are presents from plants that are sure to please the whole family. Below is a chart that shows you a few things plants give your body. Give plants, Eat plants!

Fruit	Vegetable	What the plant gives you	How your body uses it
Tomatoes Kiwi Oranges Blackberries	Sweet potato Kale Carrots Spinach	Vitamin A	Eyes and skin
Strawberry Orange Bananas Apples	Artichoke Broccoli Cauliflower Winter Squash	Vitamin C	Helps your body heal & supports your immune system
Figs Oranges Strawberries Guava	Broccoli Greens Spinach Green beans	Calcium	Bones and teeth
Avocado Bananas Guava Kiwi	Brussels sprouts Cabbage Carrot Eggplant	Fiber	Aids in digestion

Buy fresh and local presents from plants at:  
Fairview Gardens roadside stand  
598 N Fairview Ave, Goleta

Page by Sally Isaacson, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, and Tiffany Cooper, Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens.

 Marine Science Institute, UCSB  
805-893-8765 www.msi.ucsb.edu

 Kids Do Ecology  
National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis  
805-892-2500 http://kids.nceas.ucsb.edu/

 Wildling Art Museum  
805-688-1082 www.wildlingmuseum.org

 Ty Warner Sea Center  
805-962-2526 www.sbnature.org

 The Outdoor School at Rancho Alegre  
805-686-5167 www.theoutdoorschool.org

 The Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens  
805-967-7369 www.fairviewgardens.org

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