

TH Activity Plan – Bookmarks with Dried Flowers

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Materials

Live samples of plants to be used for session

Pressed & dried flowers

Laminated sheets cut to bookmark size, card stock bookmarks in several colors, decorative paper items, yarn-tassles, ribbon

Markers, pens, scissors, holepunch

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Participants will make bookmarks using dried & pressed flowers.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS:

Cognitive/Intellectual: Learn a new skill/hobby

Physical: Manipulate small items using fingers or tweezers; strengthen fine motor & sensorimotor skills

Psychological/Emotional: Expand understanding of altruism through participation in a service project; develop social emotional regulation, such as coping & managing frustration

Sensory: Handle live, dry & pressed flowers, noting sensory differences

Social: Think & act kindly on behalf of others, making bookmarks to be given away; assist with others, particularly for tasks requiring an extra set of hands; participate in a group activity

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

1. **Pre-Session Preparation:** Pressed & dried flowers may have been done in previous sessions by participants or other groups. Have some live plants on hand identifying plant source. Make bookmark samples.
2. Facilitator begins session by having live & dried plants on the table. Introducing the session's activity making bookmarks using dried & pressed flowers, it is suggested that participants make 2 bookmarks. One will be for themselves, & one to gift to a person or service agency.
3. Facilitator describes process for making bookmarks: practice laying out materials on cardstock; add written works or paper decorative items with flowers; open laminated sheet or lay it in a position to fold over bookmark; press lamination over bookmark avoiding air pockets; trim edges if necessary. Add yarn or ribbon tassle.
4. Discussion of altruism, service projects, & kindness to others can be incorporated into this session. Making a bookmark for themselves, & another one for someone else is a sound model to introduce selflessness & kindness, one that can be replicated in the future.

APPLICATIONS FOR POPULATIONS:

Making bookmarks using dried or pressed flowers can involve multi-sessions if programs allow for this. Collecting flowers, drying them, then pressing specimens so that they are ready for making bookmarks (or notecards) can involve three separate sessions, and may or may not involve the same participants. If the same participants are not involved, raising the issue of service to others, with the example of sharing/providing the materials for the bookmarks service project can continue one of the themes in the session.

Physical goals focusing on fine motor skills will involve tiny movements with hands in this session. (Fingers, feet and toes all use fine motor movements). Each of these involve complex coordination of muscles, joints and nerves (Cleveland Clinic, 2023). Multiple processes of fine motor functioning include dexterity, coordination,

precision, muscle strength along with awareness and planning. Fine motor skills vary by age and stage of development.

Compromised fine motor skills in adults may be due to brain functioning (stroke), or injuries to hands, spinal cord, peripheral muscles or nerves. Medical conditions like Huntington's and Parkinson's diseases, multiple sclerosis, carpal tunnel syndrome, neuropathy and rheumatoid arthritis conditions also impact fine motor functioning. Note that children's fine motor skills are most often related to stages of development, though they may be related to medical conditions or injury.

"Occupational therapists working with people to adapt their abilities to perform daily tasks including tasks requiring fine motor skills use techniques and adaptations with a focus on stabilizing items, extending or enlarging items making them easier to grasp or hold in place, and simplifying steps for task completion (Cleveland Clinic, 2023). These techniques can be adopted for use in TH and this particular activity where hands are used to handle and arrange small pressed flowers for keychains [or bookmarks]. The use of aids like tweezers and Q-tips for gluing can be additional accommodations (Miyake et al., 2025)".

Further accommodations can include working with a partner or volunteer, using tweezers for handling small items, selecting larger flowers, and, where the participant creates the bookmark design, but the lamination is done by machine or a volunteer. Some populations will be frustrated by handling the sticky lamination sheet. Others may be sensitive or defensive to the tactile inputs of this material. Support for co-regulation and social-emotional regulation practice may be appropriate.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS: Facilitators are responsible for knowing poisonous and toxic plants and plant parts. Use of sharps in this activity need monitoring and may need direct hand over hand assistance, or may not be used at all, depending on the individual participants.

NOTES OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: In [THAD Pressing Flowers and Leaves](#), suggestions for flower selection are as follows. "Various flowers are suitable for use in pressed flower activities. Flowers with single layer petals, that are fresh and dry work well. Flowers that lay flat are preferred however, flowers with chunky thick centers can be pressed by removing and pressing petals, used without their centers. Recommended flowers for pressing include [viola](#), cherry blossoms (*Prunus serrulate*), Japanese maple (*Acer platanum*), sweet alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*), cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*), forget-me-nots (*Myosotis sylvatica*), daisies (*Bellis perennis*), anemones, pansies (*Viola x wittrockiana*), [calendula](#) (*Calendula officinalis*) and Wattle foliage (*Acacia pycnantha*). Note that the following plants are poisonous if ingested, but if there is no risk of population putting items in mouths, they may be appropriate to use: baby's breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*), and delphinium (*Delphinium elatum*). Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*) is not poisonous but is very similar in appearance to poisonous hemlock" ([Miyaki et al., 2024](#)).

Refer to other THADs with pressed and dried flowers: [Pressed Flower Keychains](#), [Pressed Flower Tea Light Candle](#). The [Button Wreath Cards, Altruism & Narcissism](#) THAD shares ideas on service projects and altruism.

REFERENCES/ RESOURCES:

- Cleveland Clinic. (2023). [Fine motor skills](#).
- Fairfax County Public Library. (2021). [Pressed flower bookmarks](#). YouTube.
- Krauss, OU., & Black, MD. (2024). Development of narcissism across the lifespan: A meta-analytic review of longitudinal studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 150(6).
- Kraut, R. (2026). [Altruism](#). Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
- Miyake, Y., Kawamura, A., & Fleming, L. (2024). [TH activity plan – Pressed flower keychain](#). *University of Florida Therapeutic Horticulture Activities Database*.

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TH Activity Plan form developed by Lesley Fleming, Susan Morgan and Kathy Brechner (2012), revised in 2025.