

Activity: Planting Goal: Cognitive Populations: All

TH Activity Plan – Plant Puns on Pots

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ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION: Participants will decorate plant containers using fun herb puns.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS:

Cognitive/Intellectual: Review herb puns, finding a few that have meaning to you or your family

Physical: Practice handwriting or printing on uneven surface

Psychological/Emotional: Explore personal connections & experiences to select a pun for a planter to take home

Sensory: Determine best materials for task based on surface of containers using sense of touch

Social: Use humor & puns with others to create a light atmosphere

Materials

Variety of containers (terra cotta, plastic, ceramic, hypertufa)

Blackboard paint, brushes, grease markers or ones suitable for plastic or ceramic surfaces

Variety of plants, soil, trowels, water can

Handout of herb puns

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS:

1. **Pre-Session Preparation:** Gather variety of pots, containers & plants. Create a list of puns & have handouts available. Make a sample of container decorated with a pun.
2. Facilitator begins session by saying “*plant puns on pots*” five times fast... and laughing out loud, then having participants do the same, followed by sharing a few herb or plant puns. If a t-shirt or apron is available with a pun, wear it! Begin a spit-balling session with group trying to create a list of herb/plant puns. These can be prompted by photos, phrases or books. Encourage jokes, laughter & interactions among group. Groans acceptable.
3. Provide a pre-made handout of puns if required.
4. Participants plan their container, selecting it, a pun & plant(s).
5. Handwrite pun on container (this step can be done after planting). Practice legible handwriting. Use appropriate paint or marker for the surface of the container.
6. Plant the container & water. Try to be careful not to smudge pun. Share the finished plantings/containers with the group.
7. Conclude with more puns, doing charades of the puns, discussing why plant humor appeals to many people & why humor can change the mood from somber to light-hearted.

APPLICATIONS FOR POPULATIONS: Changing up a typical container planting activity, add an element of fun by writing a plant pun on the container. Most populations, other than young children and perhaps people living with mid to late stages of dementia should find the puns intellectually engaging. Role reversal can be integrated into sessions if some participants do not understand the play on words and others do – they can try to explain the silly meanings.

Physical TH goals: Practice handwriting and pincer grip with markers and paintbrushes. Writing on surfaces that are not flat can be challenging but good practice for patience and coping with difficult physical tasks. Fine motor skills required for planting the container will support this domain's focus.

Psychological/Emotional TH goals: Using intellectual engagement, life experiences, or family connections to gardens can play a role in participants thinking about and selecting a pun that has meaning to them like "Let the shitake go". Puns and the completed container planting can reinforce social connections to grandma's garden, a parent's dislike of cilantro, or a loved one's special relationship "Mint to be together".

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS: Gloves may be helpful to avoid skin sensitivity to paints or grease markers. Soil and plants should not be ingested (watch for populations that may be tempted to put items in mouths).

NOTES OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Some participants may have difficulty choosing a pun for a number of reasons. Facilitator can assist or partnering people within the group may be a good way to support social interactions where peer assistance can occur.

REFERENCES/ RESOURCES:

Monrovia, M. (2021). 100+ Plant Puns That Will Leaf You Wanting More.

<https://thoughtcatalog.com/monrovia/2018/06/plant-puns/>

Punpedia (n.d.). Plant Puns.

<https://punpedia.org/tag/herb/>

Edits were made for THAD purposes in 2023.

TH Activity Plan form developed by Lesley Fleming, Susan Morgan and Kathy Brechner (2012), revised in 2023.

Herb Puns

Blame it on my roots Have a good thyme
Aloe there Oregano be my girl?

Chive got you babe *It's thyme to party*

I'm kind of a big dill Once upon a thyme
You're a dill-ightful human being

Chive talking Take thyme
No need to tell me... I oregano

I wet my plants Be peas-ful Romaine calm
Cumin and stay a while Mint to be together

How thyme flies Eat, drink & be rosemary

About thyme! *Wishing you excite-mint*
Let that shitake go Chive always loved you

I will survive Please be seeded
Friendship goes onion & on Cilantropist

Nothin' beets family time
Ain't nobody got thyme for that
Herb your enthusiasm Dill with it
Things get better with sage

*I love plants so much I soil
myself*