

LESSON PLAN

CREATED FOR TEACHERS BY EDEN'S EDUCATION TEAM

Positive Potions for Valentine's Day

Overview: Making potions or smelly cocktails is a classic outdoor learning activity. We've given it a seasonal twist for Valentine's Day, although you could tweak this for any season, and included some linked literacy activities.

Who: Differentiated by outcome, the potions activity works for any primary age. The literacy tasks here are suitable for years 4-6.

How long: 75 minutes

Objectives and Curriculum links:

This lesson will enable students to:

- Consider other's feelings by deciding what gift or wish would be appropriate for someone close to them.
- Use their senses in unusual ways; close observation and lots of smelling!
- Use language creatively to describe their potion and create magical instructions.

We've designed the lesson to help teachers cover parts of the KS2 English curriculum.

Resources

- Outdoor space with some pick-able plant material available – you don't need loads - maybe the edge of your playing field, or a nearby public park. If your outdoor space is a totally concrete jungle you may have to do a park raid beforehand and bring in a couple of carrier bags worth of stuff.
- 6 sets of smelly items – enough for one per child, in a bag or box – see 'smelly friends' for details
- Whistle
- Mixing cup for each child
- Bottle of 'magic water' i.e. a nice glass bottle containing water made magic by the addition of food colouring

Nice to haves [but you can improvise]

- 6 egg boxes
- Cocktail swizzle sticks – find them online from 99p for 25 + P&P
- Card luggage labels – find them online for £2-£3 for a 100
- Six recycled glass bottles (ideally clear glass)

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Pre-starter (0 - 5 minutes)

Ask the children to think about someone they love; a family member or a friend. If they could grant them a wish for Valentine's Day, what would it be? The song 'I promise you' by Show of Hands might be worth a listen to get pupils thinking about wishes that are a bit more abstract than chocolates and flowers. [Show of Hands I Promise You - YouTube](#)

Getting Started (5 - 25 minutes)

Set the challenge. Pupils are to create a positive potion with magical powers to grant a Valentine's wish to a loved one. Take them outdoors and set boundaries.

These two warm-up activities are designed to help children get their eye [and nose] in before you start the main task. See the model Risk Assessment for what you need to mention at this point.

Smelly Friends

You need about 6 sets of items, enough for one item per child. These could be leaves [from your garden or supermarket] or kitchen items [from your fridge or the supermarket]. E.g. bayleaf, rosemary, lavender, eucalyptus, mint, root ginger, garlic clove, piece of cinnamon stick. Give out one smelly item each to the children. You'll need a bag or box to conceal them in, and make a big deal about the children having to hide their item in their hands so no-one else can see it. The children then have to find their smelly friends by milling about and trying to identify who has the same scent as them – no peeping allowed. You should end up with six groups which you can ask the children to stay in for the next activity.

Scavenger Hunt

There are a million varieties of this brilliant game – they all help children really to see and notice what's around them. This is a quick and simple version. Issue each group with an egg box [this is nice but not essential] plus a list of 6 things to find e.g. something; round, beautiful, tickly, that has been eaten, useful to a bird, smooth. It's easy to think of your own, or use our pdf. You'll need to discuss sensible foraging and looking after the plants and animals in the area. After a few minutes of searching, use your whistle to call the scavengers back in. Lay out the finds in the middle of a circle, grouping together the different categories. Ask children to feedback their favourite, most unusual or most troublesome find.

Potion Making (25 - 40 minutes)

Give each child a plastic cup and swizzle stick [bought or foraged]. Their task is to collect small pieces of other plant and natural material and mush them up in the cup to release the odour – they need to bear in mind the person they are making it for and the magical properties they want the potion to have. [Make sure you've set clear boundaries for where the children can roam and always have a no tasting and no poo rule!]



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When everyone's potion ingredients are gathered, pour a tiny amount of 'magic water' into each cup to release the smell. Get the children back into their Scavenger Hunt groups and ask the children to decant their potion and a few bits of prettiness into their group's cauldron/bowl to make it super powerful. Ask the children to come up with a name for their group's potion linked to its properties and mingle, sharing their potion smells and possible names.

The Label (40 - 60 minutes)

This part can take place indoors or out. Ask the children to draft, edit and then make a finished label for their group's potion [using the luggage labels or making something similar]. A search on *potion labels* in google images will give plenty of ideas – although they're all a bit grizzly and Halloween. The label needs to include; the potion's name, the potion's powers – e.g. 'guaranteed to bring you sunshine on a rainy day' and instructions for use – 'sprinkle 3 drops onto your pillow when the moon is full'. This is an opportunity for the children to get creative with their language. The labels can be decorated with bits of plant or flower material.

And finally (60-75 minutes)

Ask the children in their groups to re-cap on what powers their potion has, who it is for, and how it should be used. Tell children that they will be sharing the information on their magic potions to the rest of the class, and that in each group everyone needs to be involved in some way with the sharing of information.

Then display all the potions in the glass bottles to look lovely somewhere.