



TEACHER'S GUIDE

LESSONS FROM FLOWERS

PREPARE TO READ

1. Get Students' Attention

This can be done in the student's native language or English.

- Show a flower to students.
- Tell students they will learn about flowers in Ukraine and how they are special.
- Ask: Does your country have special flowers? How can different flowers be useful?

2. Connect to students' experiences

- Ask: What experiences do you have with flowers? When you smell certain flowers, what memories come to your mind?

3. Guess: What will happen?

- Ask, "What kind of lessons do you think the writer is talking about? What lessons can we learn from a flower?"
- Have students write down their answers.
- Say: "Now let's listen to the story and see what we can learn from flowers."

Variation:

- Tell students there is a nature reserve in a place called Kholodnyi Yar (Cold Ravine)

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- Ask: What is special about a nature reserve? How do think it can help flowers?

4. Practice new words

- Find words in the story that may be new to your students.
- Prepare them on a handout or write them on the whiteboard.
 - Suggested key words: snowdrop, rose, marigold, garden, petal, blossom, flowerbed, weed (noun/verb), thorn, seed
 - Adjectives: fragile, beautiful, withered, rare, splendid, persistent, hardy

5. K-W-L Chart (Know - Want to Know - Learned)

- Students divide a sheet of paper into three columns. Label them K – W – L.
- In the “K” column they write what they already know about flowers.
- In the “W” column they write what they want to know.
- Leave the “L” column blank. They will fill this in later.

READ & LISTEN

1. Identify and mark

- Print out the story.
- Have students underline all of the words connected with flowers. Or they can write the flower words they see on a screen.

2. Identify and react

- Collect or draw pictures of flowers. Or bring in actual flowers.
- As you read the text, students raise their flower when they hear the name of a flower.
- Students can simply raise their hands, if you can’t collect flowers.

RESPOND

1. Review vocabulary

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- Identify key words or new words from the story. Write them on the board.
- Learn the pronunciation of the word by using audio of the story or an online dictionary.
- Practice saying the word aloud. Students can do this as a whole group or individually.
- Give students time to learn or review the meaning of the word.
- Check that all the students understand the words by asking questions. For example, for thorns, you can ask: Do lilies have thorns?

2. Check understanding with specific questions

- In the story, when did the snowdrops start to blossom? (during a snowstorm)
- Why are the snowdrops under the protection? (They are rare.)
- What did the children always do in a village school? (tend the flowers, take care of flowerbeds)
- Why was it not easy to work with roses? (They have thorns. And thorns can hurt.)
- What association does the author have with the word “garden”? Why? (Marigold. She and family grew marigolds and the family spent time around them in their garden.)
- Why are marigolds so special for people in Ukraine? (Marigolds grow all over Ukraine. They are also culturally important and are found in many Ukrainian songs.)
- How does the writer feel about marigolds? (They remind her of her home and family.)

2. Talk more about the story

- Ask: What did you like about the story? What was a new idea for you? What parts do you want to read again?
- Clarify vocabulary from the story. Students can use the words in a sentence. Or you can put students in pairs and have them use the vocabulary in a dialogue.
- Ask students to revisit their KWL chart and write what they learned.

3. Story Map: What lessons did the flowers teach?

Set up

- Prepare a large piece of paper, chalkboard or whiteboard and draw a circle in the middle.
- Write the name of the story in the circle.
- Draw one line outward from the circle and attach another circle to it.

How to

- Show the story map. Say: “We are going to map this story to understand the main ideas.”
- Point to the empty circle and ask: “What is the first flower?” Write the flower name.
- Ask: “Why is it in this story? What did it teach the writer?” Put in one or more circles.
- Add another circle. Ask: “What is the next flower?” Repeat the previous step.
- Continue until the basic details of the story have been listed on the story map.

Variations:

- In small groups, use other graphic organizers such as the Hamburger graphic for students to complete in small groups.
- For individual work, have students complete the “What am I thinking?” graphic organizer on page 8. They can share their ideas with the whole class. You can hang their work in the classroom.

4. Vocabulary word map

- Give your students the Vocabulary Word Map activity sheet on page 9.
- explain, “Choose one word that you want to remember from the new words we learned in this story. Use a dictionary or your own understanding to write the meaning of the word and similar words, or synonyms. Then use the word in a sentence and draw a picture that helps you understand the meaning.
- After completing it, they can share their work with the class. You can hang the final worksheet in the class.

Variation:

- If you can’t print or if your class is online, you can share the writing prompts with your students.

5. New words card game

Set up

- Write the words from the story on small cards and put them in plastic sleeves.
- Divide students into groups.

How to

- Every student in turns takes one card from the sleeve.
- The student must make a correct sentence with the new word.
- If the group is satisfied with the sentence, then the student can keep the card. If not, another student must take the same card and make a new sentence.
- If the sentence is correct he/she keeps the card.
- The student with the most cards at the end of the activity is the winner.

Variation on the game:

- Divide your students into two groups.
- One volunteer from each group sits on a chair with their backs to the board.
- The teacher writes a word on the board so that the volunteer can't see the word.
- Their group must give explanations of the word (but not saying it directly) to their volunteer so that he/she guesses the word first.
- The first one who guesses the word gets a point for the team.
- Then the other member of the team sits on the chair.

EXPAND

1. Word ball toss game

- Get a soft ball. Ask students to form a circle.
- Say, “Name a word you have learned today or the word from the story.”
- Students name a word and throw a ball. The student that catches the ball says a word related to the topic.
- If he/she repeats a word or doesn't say it, they are out of the game and must sit down.
- The winner is the last student standing.

2. Research the topic deeper

Set up

- Let students explore the topic with their phones or computers.

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- Sample of links:

<https://nam.kyiv.ua/en/symbols-and-markings.html>

<https://travel.stackexchange.com/questions/56573/tagetes-flower-in-ukraine>

<https://dimash.fandom.com/wiki/Marigold>

How to

- Say: “We’re going to learn more about marigolds. I’m giving you some links you can use phones to find more information.”
- Explain: “Your job is to read the material and choose at least two more new things you can share with your classmates. Then you will present that to the class. You will tell us why it helps you understand more about the topic.”
- Divide students into small groups and give each the materials you have chosen for them.
- After an appropriate amount of time, ask the groups to present their new information to the class and explain how it has added to their understanding of the topic.

3. Other expand activities

- Choose an activity for students to expand on the topic:
- Flowers in Your Country
 - Create a poster for flowers that are symbols in your country.
 - Use a graphic organizer to compare the flowers in Ukraine with your country.
- Other Flowers as Symbols
 - Talk about sunflowers as a symbol.
 - Have students write a poem, song, or short essay about sunflowers.

RESOURCES

Sunflowers as a Ukraine Symbol

<https://me.usembassy.gov/5-symbols-of-ukrainian-independence/>

<https://www.timeforkids.com/g34/symbol-of-peace-sunflowers-ukraine/?rl=en-810>



Lessons From Flowers

by Nadiia Kyba

They come in white, red, orange, brown, and yellow. They are the flowers in the gardens of Ukraine. And they are the lessons that I learned from childhood.

As a child, I remember plenty of snowdrops in my grandmother's garden. The fragile petals managed to blossom despite a heavy snowstorm. I wanted to bring the white flowers into the house. But I was not permitted to step on them or to pick them. My parents said, "We must all cherish the snowdrops. There is no use in withered flowers."

Little did I know back then that snowdrops were very rare, and they almost disappeared. I did not know it was more important to have them in the garden. Luckily, there were people who knew better. They created a reserve in Kholodnyi Yar to protect and care for those beautiful white flowers. They taught me to care for and protect even the smallest things.

I lived in a village where children always helped to take care of its flowerbeds. At school, our class weeded beds of roses nearby. It was great fun to be outdoors in the fresh air. Moreover, the roses looked splendid. They smelled sweet in the sun, and girls used to pin them in their hair. Even now, when I close my eyes, I can still smell the beautiful roses. The first time I worked in a bed of roses, I pricked my hand with small but sharp thorns. I did not know that such beauty could hurt you. I understood then that it took much pain to gain something so beautiful.

That was one of the most important lessons in my life. If I want something, I must be ready to work hard for it. The roses taught me to be persistent and hardy. And the roses showed me "no pain, no gain."

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "garden"?

I see marigolds. I see orange, brown, and yellow marigolds. There are so many marigolds in the gardens of Ukrainians, that it is hard not to notice them. People sing songs about marigolds. They are everywhere, under the apple trees, in the strawberries, near the fences, in the flowerbeds, and even on the roads.

I used to plant marigolds with my mother. We gathered the seeds in autumn. Then we shared and exchanged the seeds with our friends or neighbors. I have warm memories of my family sitting on the bench in front of the marigold beds. My father told stories. And we chatted and joked. Marigolds remind me of home and the best moments of our lives. They taught me to share and communicate, to be a daughter and a friend.



What Am I Thinking?

After reading the story, think of your responses for each section. Then write your answers.

OPINION

I think that ...

because ...

REACTION

Reading this makes me feel ...

because ...

CONNECTION

This reminds me of ...

because ...

VISUALIZATION

In my head, I can picture ...

because ...

Vocabulary Word Map

Write a vocabulary word in the center circle.
Then complete the exercises in the squares.

Define the word.

Write the word in a sentence.

Write synonyms for the word.

Draw a picture for the word.

