



# Stain Art

**Overview/Description:** Students collect different colored parts of plants in the garden and stain paper with them.

**Big Idea:** Art is important because it lets us be creative and successful.

**Season:** Summer, Fall

**Lesson Time:** 30 minutes

**Grade Level:** Any

**Type of Activity:** Art/Craft

**Materials Needed:** Table, baskets for collecting, thick paper (watercolor paper is best); fresh leaves, flowers, and berries.

**Preparation:** Do a garden walkabout ahead of time to explore and test which things in the garden give which colors, which varieties give the best results.

**What to do:**

- In the Opening Circle, explain the project and that the goal is to find many different colors.
- **Take a walkabout** with the students with their bucket or basket to **collect the staining materials** (different leaves & berries, whole small flowers, beet wedges, sunflower and rose petals, dirt, grass...the more color range the better).
- **Encourage the students to create a picture**, not just scribbles, and have them decide what they want to create. Flowers, a sunshine, Steve the Rabbit, a person, a bee, a spider?
- **Spread the materials** around the table; **distribute paper** to each student.
- Students simply **smear, blot, press**, etc. the flowers, berries, leaves onto the paper.
- Don't forget to write names on them!

**Teaching Points:** What can dyes like these be used for? Do you think they are made with chemicals like a lot of dyes in our food and clothes? How did our clothes get to be the colors they are?

**Notes:**

- You need to press/smear very hard to get the rich colors to come out. Tearing leaves sometimes helps.
- Have the kids hold a small bunch of flower petals in between their thumb and pointer finger to get a good squishy grip.

