

# Dogwood Lesson Plan

**Curriculum:** English/Writing, Social Studies, Science

**Grade:** Kindergarten

**Virginia Standards of Learning:** E/W.K.2, E/W.K.3, HSS.K.8, SCI.K.4, SCI.K.6

**Objectives:** Students will:

- *recognize the dogwood as the state tree and flower of Virginia*
- *identify the parts of a plant and the life cycle of a plant*
- *utilize fine motor skills through cutting and writing*

**Time Required:** 30 minutes

**Materials and Resources:** graphics cards, worksheet, construction paper, scissors, tape or glue stick, crayons or markers

**Procedure:**

1. Hold up the graphics card of the flowering dogwood. Ask what kind of plant is in the picture. Ask what the white things on the plant could be.
2. Explain that the state tree and state flower of Virginia is the dogwood because it is both a flower and a tree. Ask the class what is the definition of the word "symbol."
  - *A word, phrase, or image that represents something else. Examples might include traffic signs and lights.*
3. Talk to the class about why the dogwood became the state tree and the state flower.
  - *In 1918, a resolution was adopted making the dogwood the state flower of Virginia. It was chosen to foster a feeling of pride in the state of Virginia and stimulate an interest in the history and traditions of the Commonwealth.*
4. Explain that the dogwood is one of the oldest symbols of Virginia and one that people use most often.
5. Hold up one of the other flower or tree graphics cards. Spend some time asking students what are the differences between the dogwood and the flower or tree in the graphic you are holding up. Switch graphics so that students can practice colors, sizes, shapes, etc.
6. Explain to the class that all the pictures you held up are similar because they are all plants. Ask students what makes plants different from animals.
7. Explain that everything is made up of different parts and that all plants have similar parts. Looking at the American dogwood graphics card, ask students what different parts they see.
  - *stem, petals, leaves, etc.*
8. Remind students that plants need several things in order to grow. Review the basic methods for growing a plant.
  - *seed → soil → sunlight → water → time → plant grows*
9. Give each student a worksheet and a piece of construction paper. Explain that they will need to cut out each piece of the dogwood flower and reassemble it correctly on the construction paper and attach it with either glue or tape.
10. Have students color it and label the main parts once it is attached.



•*stem, leaves, petals*

11. Have students color the “How a Plant Grows” pictures on the worksheet. Students should cut out the boxes and attach them in the correct order to the construction paper below the assembled, colored, and labeled dogwood.

**Assessment:**

1. Students can correctly identify the flowering dogwood when presented with pictures of different types of trees and flowers.
2. Students can explain the life cycle of a plant.

**Extension:**

1. If there is a dogwood on your school grounds, take the students to see it. Have them compare it to other trees nearby.
2. If there is a dogwood on your school grounds, begin a year-long project by photographing the dogwood. As the seasons change, revisit the tree, take more pictures, and display them.





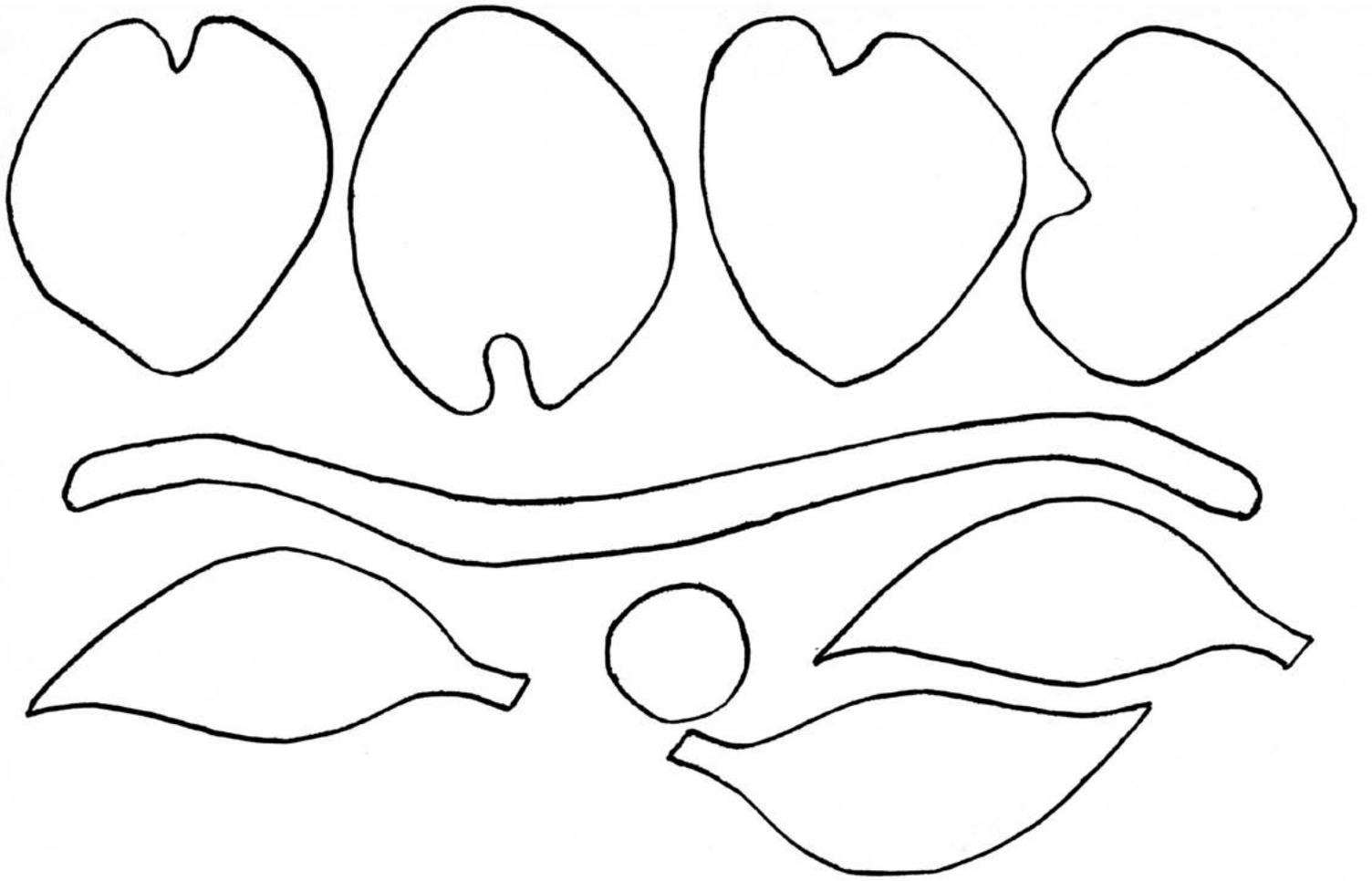
## **Tree and Flower: Flowering Dogwood**

The flowering dogwood was adopted as the official tree and flower of the Commonwealth by an Act of the 1918 Session of the Virginia General Assembly. The legislation was signed by Governor Westmoreland Davis. It was chosen because it was thought to foster a feeling of pride in the Commonwealth and stimulate an interest in the history and traditions of the Commonwealth.

Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) is one of America's most popular ornamental trees. Known to most people simply as dogwood, it has other common names, including boxwood and cornel. The species name *florida* is Latin for flowering, but the showy petal-like bracts are not in fact flowers. The bright red fruit of this fast-growing short-lived tree are poisonous to humans but provide a great variety of wildlife with food. The wood is smooth, hard and close-textured and now used for specialty products.

Flowering dogwood has many crowded, small, yellowish perfect flowers, borne in terminal clusters in the spring before the leaves appear, and surrounded by four snow-white, petal-like bracts. The bracts form "flowers" 5 to 10 cm (2 to 4 in) across and provide a spectacular display in the springtime. Occasionally, trees with salmon-colored or light-pink bracts are found in nature. Pink and red flowering dogwoods and other cultivars with special ornamental characteristics are commonly propagated from clones by commercial nurseries.

The range of flowering dogwood extends from extreme southwestern Maine west to New York, extreme southern Ontario, central Michigan, central Illinois, and central Missouri; south to extreme southeast Kansas, eastern Oklahoma, east Texas; and east to north Florida. A variety also grows in the mountains of Nuevo León and Veracruz, Mexico.



How a Plant Grows:

