

## EXPLORING PLANTS



3-6



4 to 6



## WHAT PLANT IS IT?



20-30 minutes



Discovering the variety and diversity of plants.

Identifying how plants have different characteristics, as human beings have.

Naming the plants in parallel with identification in order to recognize them during our nature walks and enlarge children's vocabulary.



A set of cards with the most common plants in your area, with a picture of the plant.

You can check if an App already exists, that directly asks the questions to the children, and help them discover the plant they are looking for, e.g.: "KEYtoNATURE", available on both Apple Store and Google Play, developed by the University of Trieste, in Italy, and also at [http://dbiodbs.units.it/carso/chiavi\\_pub21?sc=669](http://dbiodbs.units.it/carso/chiavi_pub21?sc=669) (in Italian language).



According to the age and the characteristics of the group of children, the facilitator can propose them to appoint “the plant of the day” or “the Queen” or “the King of plants” and find together what is the name of the plant they have selected.

The facilitator puts the set of cards with the pictures of the plants on the table, and asks the children to choose between two options, according to the characteristics they like more, e.g.:

First key:



Needle-like leaves

or



Not needle-like leaves

Second key



Opposite leaves

or



Not opposite leaves

Third key



Composite leaves

or



Non-composite leaves



Plant with climbing

or



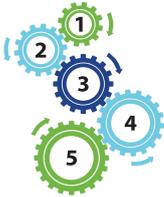
twisting stems or Trees and shrubs

... and so on.

After selecting each option, the children and the facilitator remove the cards of the plants not responding to the chosen characteristic, so that the number of remaining species progressively reduces, until only one card remains.

During the part of elimination or after it, facilitator can ask additional questions to deepen the understanding of plants, especially if they are 6 years old.

For example: Why do plants have roots? Do plants eat or drink? What would happen if we don't water the plant? Do they breathe? Why do people need plants?



If the plants have similar needs and they drink, breathe and grow just like humans, then what is the different between plants and people?

If you were a plant, what plant would you like to be? Why? (because of the looks, the area the plant lives in, some special characteristics, like thorns for protection etc.)



Finally, in case a garden is easily accessible, the facilitator asks if the children can try to find the plant they have selected.

Otherwise the facilitator can pilot the selection of the plant according to the one he/she has previously identified, to let the children select the plant that he/she has brought in the classroom.

Tips and tricks: If the workshop select a King or Queen of the plants, the group can plant that plant in the garden, take care of it and watch it growing during the school year.

In this way it becomes their Queen and children learn about its needs in a real life situation.

