

# Make an Icy Sun-Catcher

Looking for a fun activity for your budding botanist? Use this activity to teach him mysterious new words while he creates a sun-catcher out of plant pieces. While he's working, a Simon Says style game will give him a chance to absorb these new words naturally. Start with plant words he may already know (stem, leaf, bud, flower), then introduce new vocabulary for some visible parts of the leaf and flower: petiole (leaf stem), blade (flat part of leaf), midrib (central leaf vein), and petal.



## What You Need:

- 1 baking sheet
- 4-8 small plastic food tub lids, 1/4 inch deep
- 4-8 pieces of yarn, cut to 6-inch lengths
- 2 pairs scissors
- 6 small tea rose stems with branching foliage and buds (or daisies or carnations for younger kids)

## What You Do:

1. Help your child arrange upside-down lids a few inches apart on the baking sheet.
2. Have him make a loop of yarn and curl the cut ends into a lid, leaving the loop outside. This loop will be used to hang the sun-catcher after it is assembled. Repeat until each lid has a loop.
3. Now it's time for a game! Each of you choose a stem and scissors and get ready. Say "Simon says cut one leaf!" Model snipping it off close to the stem. Keep "saying" (and snipping!) until he has a nice pile of leaves. Have him arrange them in a lid.
4. Continue the game, cutting the bud, flower and stem. Make it giggle-worthy by varying what "Simon" says. Try: "DON'T cut the stem," "Smell a flower," "Tickle a leaf," or "Say hello to a bud."
5. Now it's time to introduce some new vocabulary! Choose fresh stems and use your most mysterious voice to ask your child if he knows what a petiole looks like. Let him point it out if he knows, and show him how to cut it. Then, continue Simon Says. Introduce the blade, midrib and petal the same way.
6. When you're down to the last stems, it's his turn to be Simon and exercise his new vocabulary. When there's nothing left to snip, have him arrange the plant pieces in the remaining lids.
7. After everything is assembled, ask your child to slowly pour water to fill each lid. Don't worry about small spills.
8. Place the baking sheet flat in the freezer and let freeze overnight.
9. The next day, pull your baking sheet out of the freezer and remove the sun catchers. You may need to run warm water over the lids to make them easier to remove.

Quickly hang the sun catchers outside a window where you can see them, or place them indoors over container plants so that when they melt, they'll be watering the plants at the same time!