

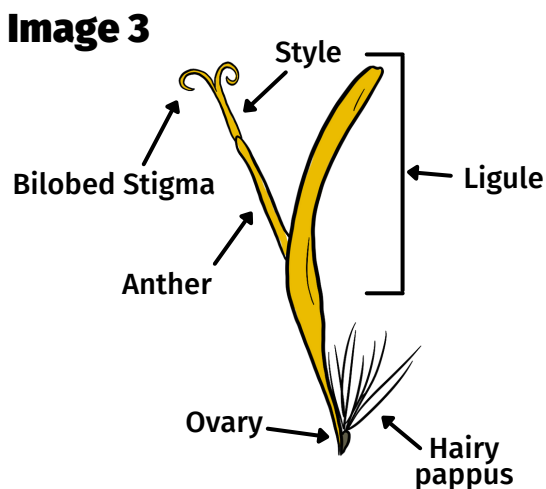
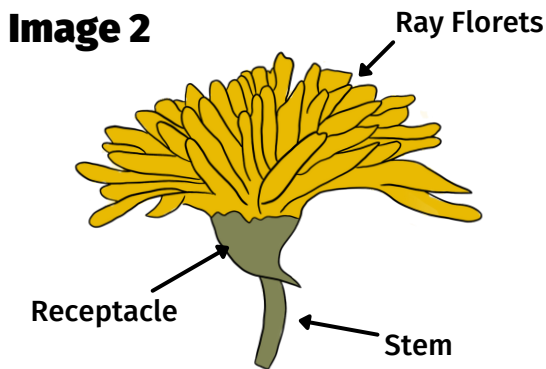
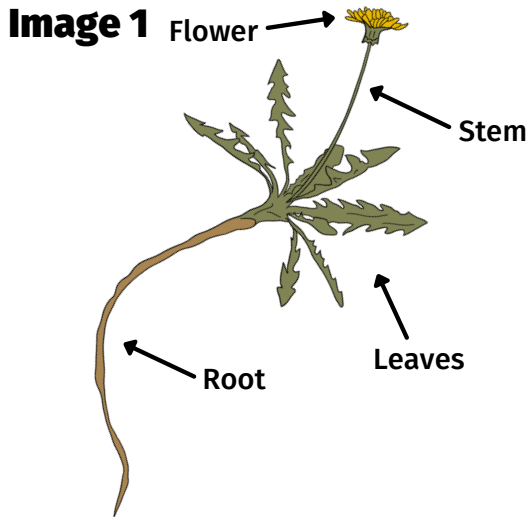
Dandelion Dissection

Time:
20 minutes

Adult supervision
recommended

Materials:
- Dandelion
- Knife

Did you know dandelions aren't just one flower?
Did you know plants have specialized organs?
Plants are made up of many parts that all serve different functions. Follow this activity to discover the different parts of a dandelion!



- 1 Find a dandelion outside. Gently pull the entire dandelion out, along with the root.
- 2 Carefully wash the dirt off of the roots and place the whole dandelion on a plate, paper towel or cutting board. Look at Image 1 and identify:
 - Flower
 - Leaves
 - Stem
 - Root
- 3 With an adult, use a knife to cut the large head of yellow flowers off of the rest of the dandelion. Then, cut it in half so you can see inside. Use Image 2 to identify the parts of the head of flowers:
 - Ray Florets**- many flowers that all sit on the receptacle
 - Receptacle**- a thickened part of the stem that holds all the organs that grow the flower
- 4 Once you have identified all the parts of your head of flowers, gently take one of the small flowers off of the head. Use Image 3 to identify the parts of the individual flower, called a floret:
 - Anther**- male part of the flower that holds pollen
 - Bilobed Stigma**- female part of the flower that catches pollen to reproduce and make more plants
 - Hairy pappus**- hairy part of the flower that will grow larger when the dandelions turn into white puffy balls. Helps the flower travel in the wind and spread its seeds far
 - Ligule**- part of the flower that looks like a petal
 - Ovary**- female part of the flower that will use the pollen caught by the stigma to make seeds that will make more plants
 - Style**- another female part of the flower that lifts the stigma up
- 5 Once you have identified all the parts of a dandelion, clean up all the parts and throw them away or compost them!
- 6 Now, go outside and look for other flowers. Are they like a dandelion and made up of many tiny flowers or are they like a rose with only one flower? Look closely and observe or dissect flowers to check.

