

Latin Name Garden Labels

FOURTH GRADE

Most students know the common names of plants in the garden, but few may know that each plant also has a Latin name. In this activity, students will research the Latin name for plants in the garden and make a label showing both the Latin and common names.

SUBJECT

ART/SCIENCE

TIME

30 MIN
+
15 MIN Follow-up

MATERIALS

3 x 5 blank index cards,
1 per student plus
extras

Permanent markers, 1
per student

Colored pencils or
markers, several to
share

Access to iPads, 1 per
student or pair up

Access to a laminator

Jumbo craft sticks, 1
per completed plant
label

Tacky glue



DIRECTIONS

- Introduce the activity by explaining to students that most plants have both common names and scientific names. Ask students for their ideas on why plants have two names.
- Explain that all the way back in the 1700s, scientists started to get confused because so many plants (and animals) had different names, which makes sense considering that people who spoke different languages had different names for the same plants and animals. A universal naming system was developed by a Swedish biologist named Carl Linnaeus in 1758. It uses the Latin language and provides two names for a species – a family name and a personal name.
- Give an example by comparing scientific family names to students' own family names. Point out that each member of a family has a last name (surname) that identifies the family and a first name (specific or personal name) that identifies that individual member of the family.
- Explain to students that their job today is to go around the garden and make labels for the plants they see. Hand each student an index card, a permanent marker, and make sure they have their iPads with them.
- After they select a plant, instruct students to look up the Latin name on their iPad. This can be easily done with a quick Google search (i.e., What is the Latin name for _____).
- On their index cards, instruct students to write the Latin name of their plant in large letters at the top and then write the common name slightly smaller in parenthesis below it. Then draw a picture of their plant to fill up the rest of the space on their card.
- Have the cards laminated, and then complete the activity with students gluing a jumbo craft stick to their index card and placing it next to their plant in the garden.

SOURCE

Adapted from:

- Education World | [Pair the Plants: An Introduction to Scientific Names](#)
- *Gardening Lab for Kids* by Renato Fossen Brown

