Plant Classification Activity

Created by: IRRC	Time Required: 45-60 minutes
Subject: Science	Grade Level: 5th +

Overview	Students will learn about the 4 plant categories of range plants, and be able to classify plant pictures as shrubs, grasses, forbs, or grass-like.
Goal(s) & Objective(s)	Students will be able to describe characteristics of forbs, grasses, shrubs and grass-like plants and be able to categorize pictures of plants into one of the categories.
Prerequisites: Materials:	"Rangelands and Their Plants" 1. Copies of plants 2. Plant ID answer sheets blank & key 3. "How to Classify Plants" guide 4. Plant ID hints (this is for optional use)

Teaching Activities: *Instructional Approaches/Strategies*	**Introduction:**
	 1. Read "Rangelands and Their Plants" guide for general knowledge.
	 2. Read through with students "How to Classify Plants" guide. This covers the 4 categories: forbs, grass, shrubs, and grass-like.
	
	 Procedures
	 1. Have students go through the 16 plants (including Bonus) and categorize them.
	
	 Alterations:
	      1. If students need the hints, tape them on the back. (useful to younger students)
	      2. To challenge older students have them try to categorize the plants without using the "How to Classify Plants" guide.
	
	 Closure
	
	 1. Correct Classification sheet with student.

Assessment:	Have students categorize the following plants and write an explanation of why: Assessment #1- Forb (spotted knapweed)- Has a showy flower Assessment #2- Grass-like (Baltic Rush) Doesn't have joints Assessment #3- Shrub (Serviceberry) Has broad leaves with berries Assessment #4- Grass- (Smooth Bromegrass) Has jointed stems and narrow leaves

Master List of Hints & Answers

Plant ID Hints

1) Has berries, and can also grow into a small tree.
2) Has long narrow leaves
3) Broad leaves
4) Non-woody
5) Does **NOT** have colored flowers
6) Woody plant with broad leaves
7) Broad leaves with **small seeds**
8) Stems do **not** have joints
9) Showy flower
10) Grain like seeds
11) Jointed stems
12) Showy flower
13) Flowers are seed-like clusters
14) Woody plant with small stems
15) Solid, non-woody stem

Bonus- Stem is triangular

Plant Identification KEY with plant names

Labels
Grass –G
Forb-F
Grass-like-L
Shrub-S

1.____S_____ Juniper

2._____G____ Great Basin Wildrye

3._____F____ Arrowleaf Balsam Root

4._____F____ Russian Thistle   OR   Tumbleweed

5._____G____ Idaho Fescue

6.____S_____ Shadscale Saltbrush

7.____S_____ Redosier Dogwood

8.____L_____ Baltic Rush

9.____F____ Tailcup Lupine

10.____G____ Indian Rice grass

11.____G____ Cheat grass   OR   Downy Brome

12.____F____ Mules Ear

13.____L____ Nebraska Sedge

14._____S____ Snowberry

15._____F____ Low Larkspur

Bonus___L__ Elk Sedge

Plant Hints-

(Optional) cut out hints & tape on back of plant pictures.

1. Has berries, and can also grow into a small tree.

2. Has long narrow leaves

3. Has broad leaves

4. Non-woody

5. Does **NOT** have colored flowers

6. Has a woody stem with broad leaves

7. Has broad leaves with **small seeds**

8. Stems do **not** have joints

9. Has showy flowers

10.   Has grain like seeds

11.   Has jointed stems

12.   Has showy flowers

13.   Flowers are seed-like clusters

14.   Woody plant with small stems

15.   Solid, non-woody stem

Bonus- Stem is triangular

Plant Identification

Label the plants into one of the following
Categories:

Grass –G
Forb-F
Grass-like-L
Shrub-S

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

11._____

12._____

13._____

14._____

15._____

Bonus_____

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