Flower Press Activity

In this activity, you will make a flower press, also known as an herbarium specimen. Pressed flowers can be used in arts and crafts projects – to make bookmarks, or cards, or whatever you might imagine. Herbarium specimens are also very important tools to a scientist. When scientists do research, they collect and preserve specimens of plants they study, like making a plant library.

Materials Needed:
Corrugated cardboard (or cereal boxes work well!)
Newspaper
Flowers and leaves
Scissors
Glue
Paper or journal to glue specimen to
Heavy books

Directions:

1. Use scissors to carefully cut a plant piece with flowers and leaves. Try to find leaves and flowers without spots or holes.
2. Place down a piece of cardboard on your desk, then 2-3 layers of newspaper, and then a piece of clean white paper on top.
3. Lay your plant on top of the white paper. Try to spread out the flower parts so that they can be easily seen and aren’t touching each other.
4. Put a piece of white paper on top of the plant, then three more sheets of newspaper, and then cover with another piece of cardboard.
5. You may continue to add layers of cardboard, newspaper, and plants into a pile.
6. Place several heavy books on top and place in a cool, dry spot for at least 10-14 days.
7. After about 2 weeks, check your plants to see if they appear dry and crisp. If so, gently remove the dry plants from your press. If not, leave them for another week.
8. You may glue them onto a sturdy piece of paper or into your journal.
9. You may want to include the following information:
   - Name of plant
   - Date collected
   - Location collected
   - Interesting characteristics of the plant (does it have odor, sap, etc.)
   - Collector’s name
10. You may also have fun using your pressed flower specimen for other art projects.