

# Lena Meijer Children's Garden

# FIELD TRIP ACTIVITY CARDS

## Welcome to the Lena Meijer Children's Garden!

- The Children's Garden has 10 different areas—use these cards to help explore each area.
- We suggest you allow enough time to visit each. Another trip may be needed to fully explore all of the areas!
- Each card has 3 challenge levels. Choose the one appropriate for your group.
  - ◆ = Easy
  - ◆◆ = Medium
  - ◆◆◆ = Difficult
- Each group should begin in a different area. Select an Activity Card and go to that area. When you are through, turn to the next card and go to that area.

# LENA MEIJER CHILDREN'S GARDEN MAP



# KID-SENSE GARDEN

In this garden, children will explore plants using their senses.

## FIND THE NOSE (SENSE OF SMELL)

Did you know that the leaves of some plants smell?

- ◆ Gently rub a leaf and smell your fingers. Describe the smell—what does it smell like?
- ◆ Point to your own nose. What do we do with our noses (smell, breathe)?
- ◆◆ Besides the leaves, what other part of a plant smells (flowers)? Find a flower that smells nice.
- ◆◆◆ Find your favorite “smelly” plant. What is the name of the plant (find the label)? Does this smell remind you of anything? Does it bring back a special memory?
- ◆◆◆ Can you find a plant whose fragrant leaves are used in cooking? These plants are called “herbs”.

## FIND THE EYE (SENSE OF SIGHT)

Did you know that plants come in all different colors?

- ◆ What colors do you see in the flowers; in the leaves?
- ◆◆ Look for a plant with a pattern on the leaf. Describe a pattern and see if the other children can find your plant.
- ◆◆◆ Describe ways in which plants look different. How are they similar?

# KID-SENSE GARDEN

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## FIND THE EAR (SENSE OF HEARING)

Did you know that some plants make sounds?

- ◆ Point to your ears. How many ears do you have?
- ◆◆ Name an instrument that is made from a plant (*Hint: trees are plants. guitar, violin, piano, etc.*).
- ◆◆ Close your eyes and listen carefully. Have each child name something they hear (chimes, voices, water, etc.).
- ◆◆◆ Look at the plant labels and find a plant whose name describes a sound, a type of music, etc.

## FIND THE HAND (SENSE OF TOUCH)

Did you know that plants have many different textures? Touch the plants in this area gently with your finger.

- ◆ Have every child touch a different plant. Describe how it feels (bumpy, rough, soft, smooth, etc.).
- ◆◆ Every child should have a partner. Ask one child to close her eyes and ask her partner to lead her to a plant. With her eyes still closed, touch a plant. Then have the partner lead her away from it. Now, open her eyes and try to guess the plant she just touched.
- ◆◆◆ Plants have different textures to help them survive. Why do you think a plant might be fuzzy (*Hint: think about a fuzzy coat*)? Waxy (*Hint: think about lip balm*)?

# KID-SENSE GARDEN

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## FIND THE TONGUE (SENSE OF TASTE)

Did you know that some plants are good to eat?

Did you know that some plants are poisonous and can make you very sick?

Always check with an adult before eating any plant.

- ◆ Stick out your tongue and move it up and down, back and forth.
- ◆◆ Name your favorite food. Is it sweet, sour, salty or bitter?
- ◆◆◆ We eat many different parts of a plant. Can you name a root that we eat (carrot, radish), a leaf (lettuce), and a flower (broccoli)?



# GREAT LAKES GARDEN

There are many areas to explore in the Great Lakes Garden. Start out at the raised water tables, pretend you're sailing in the sailboat, take the path to the top of the overlook where you will find a giant sundial.

## GREAT LAKES WATER TABLE

- ◆ Who can count to 5? Let's try it. The Great Lakes are actually 5 really BIG lakes put together.
- ◆ Look for the magnet wall. Can you find the fish that live in the lakes?
- ◆◆ What is a group of fish called (a school)?
- ◆◆ The different shades of blue show the different depths—the light blue is shallow water and the dark blue is deeper water. Find the darkest shade of blue. Where is it? Do you think the deepest water is colder or warmer?
- ◆◆◆ Can you name all 5 Great Lakes (*Hint: the first letter of each lake, when put together, spells "HOMES"*)?

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## FIND EACH OF THE GREAT LAKES

- ◆◆◆ Find your favorite fact (these are painted on the wall surrounding the lakes). Read the fact out loud.

## SAILBOAT

- ◆ Find the sailboat and sit in it. Pretend you are sailing. Where are you going?
- ◆◆ What causes a sailboat to move (the wind)?
- ◆◆ How do you steer a sailboat (find the rudder)?
- ◆◆◆ Name other ways boats move (paddles, motors, etc.).

# WOODED WETLANDS

Find the boardwalk near the wetlands overlook. You are now standing in our wooded wetland! Wetlands are special places where the ground is very wet and squishy. That is why you are standing on the boardwalk!

- ◆ Wetlands are home to many animals. What animals might live in wetlands (beavers, birds, turtles, dragonflies, butterflies, muskrats, frogs, etc.)?
- ◆ Close your eyes and listen carefully (30 seconds). What do you hear? Did you hear any animal sounds?
- ◆◆ Did you know that some wetlands, like this, can dry up in the summer? Which plants live in our wooded wetland (trees, shrubs, grasses, etc.)?
- ◆◆◆ In addition to providing homes for animals, wetlands are valuable for other reasons. Can you think of one?  
*Hint: wetlands soak up extra water just like a sponge. Why is this important (prevents flooding)?*

# STORYTELLING GARDEN

Long before there were newspapers, radio, or television, people told stories to entertain and teach. Let's create a story as a group by using a story starter!

Read this story starter out loud and pause at the blanks. (the narrator can act out the beginning to capture the children's interest.) Call on a child to help; ask younger children to add a word; older children to finish the sentence, add more descriptive words, action words, etc.

One day, as I was walking along, I came across an old hut. It was an interesting hut and it reminded me of \_\_\_\_\_.

Just as I was about to pass by, I heard \_\_\_\_\_ coming from inside it, and decided to investigate. You can imagine

my surprise when I saw \_\_\_\_\_, and smelled \_\_\_\_\_! It made me feel \_\_\_\_\_. I knew I needed to stay

to help, so I \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. I was rewarded with a great big \_\_\_\_\_—something I will treasure always!

(continue the story as long as children are interested).

# ROCK QUARRY

This area has a raised sand table for making sand sculptures, a cave with Michigan rocks and minerals, fossils buried underneath the sand, and a bunch of really neat rocks.

- ◆ Go to the sand table. Scoop sand up in one container and carefully pour it into another container.
- ◆ Get a handful of sand and look at it really carefully. Did you know that sand is actually tiny rocks? Does it feel hard, like rocks?
- ◆◆ Did you know that we make things out of rocks? Find the gray rock that sparkles. This is iron ore and it is used to make bridges, cars, and even bicycles!
- ◆◆◆ Find the “fossil rock” which is made up of shells. Look closely—can you find fossils that look like clams? These are called “brachiopods” (pronounced bra ke o päds) and they lived here a long time ago when Michigan was covered by a shallow saltwater ocean!

# LOG CABIN

**The first settlers that came to Michigan built their homes out of logs.**

- ◆ Where do logs come from (trees)?
- ◆◆ Why do you think this home has only one room (easier to heat)? How do you think they heated this home? (fireplace) Where did they cook (in the fireplace)?
- ◆◆ How old were the trees when they were cut down? Go to the porch and look at the cut end of the log. Can you find the rings? Each ring shows one year's growth. Count all of the rings to learn how old the tree was!
- ◆◆◆ This log cabin was built out of white pine trees. Go to the lawn and find a white pine tree. Do you know what a pine tree's leaves are called (needles)? Carefully touch the needles—how do they feel?
- ◆◆◆ White pine trees were used because the logs lasted a long time and grew abundantly in Michigan. What could people use to build homes where there aren't trees?

# TREEHOUSE VILLAGE

There are 5 different tree houses in Treehouse Village. Let's explore the Treehouse of Birds. Come back to explore the rest!

- ◆ Find the giant nest. How many eggs are in the nest?
- ◆ What color are the eggs?
- ◆◆ What do you think will hatch from the eggs?
- ◆◆ What other kinds of animals lay eggs (turtles, frogs, insects)?
- ◆◆ Look through the viewers. Find the bird that makes a loud "screee." Can you make this sound?
- ◆◆◆ Look through the viewers. Can you find the bright red bird? This is a male cardinal; the female cardinal is a dull green-brown. Why would the male and female be different colors? (The female cardinal is well hidden when she sits on the nest.) Do you know what they call animals whose colors and patterns make them well hidden (camouflage)?

# LABYRINTH

Can you find the labyrinth (the large circle made out of bricks)?

- ◆ Follow the brick path to the center of the circle.  
Now follow the path all of the way back.
- ◆◆ Walk like a (specify a kind of animal, such as a bunny, bird, frog, etc.) as you walk to the center of the labyrinth.  
Become a different animal as you walk back out.
- ◆◆ Find the pictures in the center. Can you name the four seasons?
- ◆◆◆ A labyrinth is designed to help you find the answer to a question or solve a problem. Think of a question or problem (such as "Should I try out for a sport?" "What is friendship?"). While you have various thoughts about these questions, walk slowly and follow the path to the center of the labyrinth. Has this helped you solve your problem or answer your question?

# SCULPTURE WALK

Find the *Family of Wolves* sculpture.

- ◆ How many wolves are in this family?
- ◆ What colors can you find?
- ◆◆ This sculpture is made from found objects (things you may find around your home).  
What different things can you find (parts of a bicycle, shovel, golf balls, handles to a kettle, etc.)?
- ◆◆◆ Which wolf do you think is the mom; the dad? Which one are you? Why?
- ◆◆◆ There are many other really special sculptures located along this walkway. Find the viewports and look through each. Try to answer the questions .

# BUTTERFLY MAZE

This maze is in the shape of a butterfly!

- ◆ Pretend you are a butterfly and “flutter” through the maze.
- ◆◆ Find the drums. Play a simple rhythm and then challenge a friend to play the same rhythm.
- ◆◆◆ Each panel in the maze has a different picture on it. Pick one, two or three and make up a short story that includes them. Tell this story to a friend.