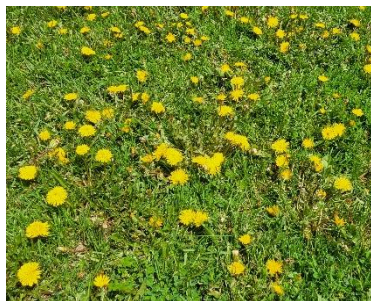


DANDELION ACTIVITY SUITE

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE DETERMINED DANDELION?



Field of dandelions



Dandelion plant



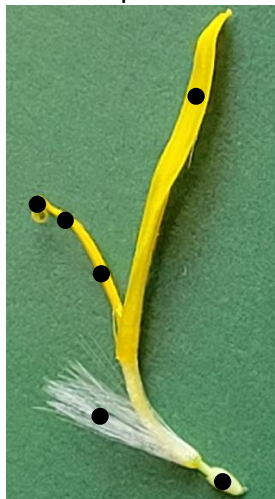
Dandelion flower head



Dandelions at seed

A. First, try your hand at labelling the parts of a dandelion floret!

Dandelions have very small flowers called florets that are collected together into a composite flower head. Each floret has both male and female parts – the stamen that produces pollen, and the stigma that receives pollen in order to fertilize the ovary and produce a single seed.



Pappus

Anther
tube

Ovary

Stigma

Style

Corolla

B. Dandelion Quiz

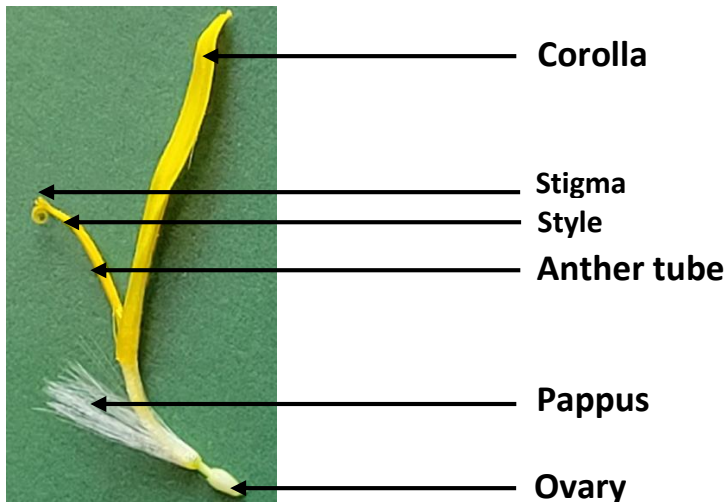
1. “Dandelion” in French is _____ which means _____? Hint: look at the shape of the leaves!
2. What important role do dandelions play in nature?
3. Why are dandelions considered to be weeds?
4. Why are dandelions able to live in very difficult places such as cracks in sidewalks, in gravel etc.?
5. What part of the dandelion plant can be used for salad? What part of the can be used to make wine? What other uses for the dandelion do you know about?
6. How many “mini” petals are fused together to make up the corolla?
7. What does the pappus become later on?
8. Dandelion flowers mature quickly, changing to a fluffy ball of seed heads. Why do many people break off or mow dandelion flowers before this happens?



DANDELION ACTIVITY SUITE

ANSWER KEY

A. Dandelion Floret - Labelled



B. Dandelion Quiz - Answers

1. Dandelion (genus: *Taraxacum*) in French is “dent de lion” which means “tooth of a lion”.
2. Dandelions are one of the first plants to flower in the spring providing an early source of pollen and nectar for bees and other pollinating insects. In addition, their wide-spreading roots loosen hard-packed soil, aerate the earth and help reduce erosion while their deep taproot pulls nutrients such as calcium from deep in the soil making them available to nearby plants.
3. Dandelions are considered to be weeds because they can grow in great numbers in places where we don’t want them – where we wish instead to grow our lawns, or our crops, flowers and vegetables.
4. Dandelions can grow in poor soil because of their very long tap root (which is like a long carrot) that can take in nutrients and water at deeper levels in the ground.
5. Salad: young/fresh leaves. Wine: flower heads with green petals removed. Some other uses: caffeine-free coffee alternative (from ground, roasted roots), tea and traditional medicines.
6. The corolla is made up of 5 “fused” mini petals.
7. Pappi later become the “parachute” carriers that help to distribute the fertilized eggs/ovaries (the seeds), up to a couple of hundred from each dandelion flower!
8. People try to remove dandelion heads before they mature because once the “parachutes” disperse, each containing one seed, they are blown by the wind (up to 1 km!) in the hopes of becoming next year’s dandelions!