

A Young Witch's Guide to Herbology!

~a magical adventure for future magic makers and ecologists~

Overview:

A Young Witch's Guide to Herbology is a workbook and journaling RPG adventure designed for early elementary school students. It is designed for a single player, but having several players completing their own workbooks alongside each other is also highly encouraged.

Throughout the *Guide*, players will be able to create and explore a custom witch character and their relationship to nature. Players will engage more with the world around them while learning or practicing some of their plant biology knowledge.

This game is designed to be picked up and put down at the player's leisure. Thus, it can be played over a very long time. The estimated play time will vary. However, if done in one session, the anticipated playtime is about 45 minutes.

Materials:

- Required
 - A pencil, pen, or marker
 - Scissors
 - Tape
 - A bowl
- Optional, but fun
 - Markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Setting and Safety:

A Young Witch's Guide to Herbology was designed with the intent of use during the spring or summer months in an area with access to a variety of naturally growing plants. If possible, it is highly encouraged for players to complete the workbook in, or very near, a park, backyard, or other nature area. This is to facilitate the exploration of the player and their ability to observe and acquire plants for use in the *Guide's* activities.

As a result, adult supervision is *highly* recommended. Players should never trespass or harm themselves or others to complete the *Guide*. Adults should talk to the players beforehand about what areas they can or cannot go to (or have them play in an enclosed area like a playground), what dangers may inhabit this environment (roads, spiky plants, etc.), and how to pick plants without doing great damage to the larger plant, or those surrounding it. These instructions will be unique to every player and every play setting.

Set up:

Print out the *Young Witch's Guide to Herbology* pdf on standard 8.5"x11" paper double-sided. Color is recommended. Once printed, stack the pages and staple them along the left-hand side, so it opens like a book.

Gather the required materials, have a conversation about safety and ethical specimen collection, and you are good to go.

Game Play:

On the initial pages, you (or the players you are facilitating for) will be prompted to create your witch character. You will play as this character for the rest of the game, that is until you finish the workbook.

Some activities will engage this character more than others. Some pages will give you a journal prompt and may ask you to go retrieve plant specimens. These pages you should fill out in character. How you choose to fill them out is up to you. There are no right or wrong answers and you can respond to the prompts however you see fit: in writing, in a drawing, etc.

Other activities are less character-driven and are instead for you to practice your knowledge of biology. These activities are varied and each has a different rule set. You can find these rules at the top of the page. These activities have correct answers that can be found in the answer key at the back of the book on pages 24-27. You will know that an activity has a corresponding answer key if you see this symbol of the Brainy Bee (pictured right). Once you complete the workbook, you can turn to the answer key and check your answers.



You can complete the *Guide* over as much time or as many play sessions as you want. You also do not need to complete every single activity if you do not want to, though it is recommended. The game will naturally end when you reach the final page of the workbook and receive your Herbology Certificate.

Alternate Formats:

If you intend to play or facilitate the playing of the *Guide* in a setting without access to a safe outdoor environment or naturally growing plants, there are other options. If at all possible, bring plants to the players as supplies. This may include living potted plants or freshly cut plants. If that is not possible, bring pictures of plants so that players may still make observations. If you take either of these routes, here is what to bring:

- Required
 - Sticks

- Flowers
- A total of at least five different plants
- Optional
 - A variety of plants, such as pine cones, grasses, mosses, berries, etc.

Another option is giving players access to a website or book with a variety of plants they can peruse at their leisure. For this format, we recommend an encyclopedia-format website or book. This play format can be especially rewarding if the resource(s) you provide contains information about the species the players might find in their environment naturally. An example of this is using <https://grownative.org/native-plant-database/> for players in the lower Midwest.