

Lesson B2–5

Designing Corsages and Boutonnieres

Unit B. Floriculture

Problem Area 2. Floral Design

Lesson 5. Designing Corsages and Boutonnieres

New Mexico Content Standard:

Pathway Strand: Plant Systems

Standard: IV: Exercise elements of design to enhance an environment (e.g., floral, forest, landscape, farm).

Benchmark: IV-A: Apply basic design elements and principles to create a design using plants.

Performance Standard: 2. Apply elements of design (e.g., line, form, texture, color). **3.** Incorporate principles of design (e.g., space, scale, proportion, order). **6.** Select plant(s) for design.

Student Learning Objectives. Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

1. Identify and describe supplies needed to create a corsage.
2. Describe corsage design mechanics and techniques.
3. Identify and describe styles of corsages and boutonnieres.
4. Discuss proper placement and pinning of corsages and boutonnieres.

List of Resources. The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Recommended Resources. One of the following resources should be selected to accompany the lesson:

Biondo, Ronald J. and Dianne A. Noland. *Floriculture: From Greenhouse Production to Floral Design*. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Publishers, Inc., 2000.

Other Resources. The following resources will be useful to students and teachers:

Griner, Charles. *Floriculture: Designing & Merchandising*, Second Edition. Albany, New York: Delmar Publishers, 2002.

List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

Writing surface
Overhead projector
Transparencies from attached masters
Copies of student lab sheets

Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

Daisy hook method
Design techniques
Dip dyes
Finishing dips or sprays
Floral spray
Floral tape
Floral tint
Florist wire
Gauge
Hairpin method
Nestled boutonniere
Pierce method
Ribbon
Stem dyes
Tip spraying
Tulle
Wrap around method

Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situations. A possible approach is included here.

Ask the class how many of them give their mothers a corsage for Mother's Day. Tell them that you can help them save money next Mother's Day. They will like that idea. Then explain that with a few supplies and a little bit of time they can make corsages for their mothers. You might use a football homecoming in the fall of the year as an occasion to do this, explaining to the group that making and selling corsages could be a way to raise funds.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective I: Identify and describe supplies needed to create corsages.

Anticipated Problem: What supplies are needed to create a corsage?

- I. Basic corsage supplies include the following:
 - A. **Floral tape** is a tape made from paraffin-coated paper and is used to cover wires and stems. The tape is not sticky until it is stretched and heated, melting the paraffin and then cooling and creating a seal. It comes in narrow and wide sizes. Typically the narrow size is used for corsage construction. It comes in several colors, of which the most commonly used is dark green.
 - B. **Florist wire** is sold in 18-inch lengths and comes in a variety of **gauges**—measurements of the diameter of the wire. The higher the number, the smaller the diameter. Common sizes used in corsage construction are #26 for bows, #24 for medium-weight flowers, and #22 for heavy flowers such as roses.
 - C. **Ribbon** has its own system of measurement. Commonly used sizes are #3, #9 and #40. The #3 is used in corsages, while the #9 is used for potted plants, and #40 is used in large arrangements such as sympathy pieces. There are several other sizes that might be used. The most commonly used ribbon finish is satin; others are cotton, silk, sheer, paper, and burlap.
 - D. Color Changing Supplies
 1. **Floral spray** is an opaque paint that will cover any color of flower.
 2. **Floral tint** is a translucent paint that will allow color from underneath to show through.
 3. Floral glitter gives flowers a metallic finish, creating a glittery touch.
 4. Steps and techniques in using the coloring products are as follows:
 - a. Find a well ventilated area, and protect surfaces from the paints.
 - b. Shake the paint can thoroughly.
 - c. Test the paint flow on the lid of a box or scrap cardboard.
 - d. Hold the nozzle approximately 12 inches from the flower.

- e. Press the nozzle down in quick bursts while moving the can from side to side.
 - f. Let the sprayed material dry thoroughly.
 - g. Second applications may be applied if needed, remembering that a color change, not a piece of art work, is the goal.
 - h. Before storing, turn the can upside down and press the nozzle until only air comes out, to prevent clogging in the nozzle.
- E. Steps for **tip spraying**, a technique used to color only flower petal edges.
- 1. Wire and tape the stem.
 - 2. Place a corsage bag or paper towel around your hand.
 - 3. Gather the bag around the flower head holding it tightly, exposing only the edges of the petals.
 - 4. Spray a light coat of paint.
 - 5. Allow the flower to dry completely.
- F. **Stem dyes** are color solutions which are transported through the xylem and into the petals. Wholesalers will often provide this service before the flowers are shipped.
- G. **Dip dyes** are semi-transparent in color; dyeing is achieved by actually dipping the head of the flower in the color solution.
- H. Other supplies include:
- 1. Glues and adhesives are used to attach small flowers when making corsages or headpieces; this is an advanced technique in the industry. The glue is melted in a small pan, or a low temperature glue gun may be used. The advantage of glue over adhesive is that adhesive takes a longer time to dry.
 - 2. Cotton balls are often used to extend the life of flowers in corsage work by providing moisture to the flower heads.
 - 3. Other items that are typically used include silk leaves, pearl sprays, rhinestones, chenille letters, butterflies, bees, and tulle. **Tulle** is a florist netting that can add color, texture, and support to the corsage.
 - 4. Packaging supplies are materials that will protect the corsage until it is to be used. They include:
 - a. **Finishing dips or sprays** seal the stomata of the flower, preventing any further loss of water.
 - b. A misting bottle is a spray bottle that applies a fine mist into the bag in which the corsage will be placed.
 - c. Corsage bags are made of plastic or cellophane and come in a variety of sizes; they are used to prevent moisture loss and protect a corsage from temperature extremes.
 - d. Corsage pins usually contain a pearl ball on the end. Most florists will provide a pin in the corsage and seal the bag with a second pin, affording two pins for attaching the corsage.

- e. Boxes are often made of cardboard but may be made of clear plastic. Boxes provide added protection from smashing or crushing the corsage.

Obtain most of these materials and show them to the class, allowing the students to become familiar with the tools. They should be expected to explain what they are and what the purpose of each item is. You can use LS: B2–5A to demonstrate the stem dyeing. Demonstrate other techniques, such as packaging and coloring, while going over the equipment.

Objective 2: Describe corsage design mechanics and techniques.

Anticipated Problem: What techniques are used to create a corsage?

- II. **Design techniques** are employed to hold the components of a corsage together securely. Use of these techniques will provide a good foundation for floral design work. Proper wiring, taping, and bow making are essential to creating the desired corsage.
 - A. Wiring techniques are used to remove the bulky part of the flower, the stem. The wire replaces the stem. The stem is removed except for approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch below the flower head. The following are common wiring methods:
 1. The **pierce method** involves placing a wire through the calyx and bending the wire parallel to the stem. Taping is started at the calyx, covering the pierced area, and taping the length of the wire. The pierce method is often used with carnations and roses.
 2. The double pierce method involves placing two wires through the calyx, one at a 90-degree angle from the other and slightly lower, bending both wires parallel to the stem and taping from the calyx.
 3. The **daisy hook method** involves placing a wire up through the stem of the flower head, forming a small hook with the wire about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, and slowly pulling the hook back into the flower head until it disappears. Taping starts at the stem and continues the length of the wire. This method is best for chrysanthemums and daisies.
 4. The **wrap around method** is used on a cluster of small flowers. It involves taking the cluster and placing half of the wire parallel with the stems and wrapping the other half around that wire. The taping begins wherever the wire begins.
 5. The **hairpin method** is used on multi-flowered stems and is achieved by bending the wire in the shape of a hairpin and placing this "hairpin" through the flower cluster where support is needed. The wire is pulled through until the hairpin rests on the stem. Then one part of the wire is gently wrapped around the stem and the other wire just below the lower florets or leaflets. Taping is started at the site where the first wire starts. This method is used for freesia.
 6. Other Wiring Techniques include the stitch method, combination method, non-piercing method, and use of manufactured stems.
 - B. Most consumers feel a corsage is not complete until a bow is applied. Although bows are usually the final step, they are not always necessary. In boutonniere construction, bows

are not added, although a small color treated ribbon might be used to commemorate an occasion. Bow making techniques vary from designer to designer.

Teach the students the various design techniques through demonstrations. Then evaluate their techniques as they create corsages in the classroom. Bow making is not easy; show the students a variety of methods. LS: B2–5B demonstrates the twist method. You may want to contact a local florist in order to arrange a classroom demonstration.

Objective 3: Identify and describe styles of corsages and boutonnieres.

Anticipated Problem: How many different styles of corsages and boutonnieres are there?

III. There are numerous styles of boutonnieres and corsages.

- A. A single flower boutonniere is the most common type of boutonniere in the marketplace. It consists of a medium sized flower, foliage, and filler. The steps involved in making one are as follows:
 - 1. Wire and tape the flower head.
 - 2. Add filler by taping it to the stem.
 - 3. Add foliage by placing it behind the flower and taping it into place.
 - 4. Choose a stem finish.
- B. A multi-flower boutonniere uses a variety of smaller flowers to create a boutonniere that is sized in proportion to the single flower style. The steps are the same with the addition of positioning the various flower heads. The second and third flowers are angled slightly forward.
- C. Placing a small flower such as a rosebud in the center of a carnation to create a special look creates a **nestled boutonniere**. The only additional step in this style is placing a wired flower down through the flower head of the larger flower.
- D. Multiple flower corsages use a variety of flowers to create the floral piece. The most common are two-flower and five-flower corsages. The steps involved in making a five-flower corsage are as follows:
 - 1. Select five flowers that range from small buds to fully open flowers, first remove their stems, then wire and tape the flower heads.
 - 2. Add foliage and filler to each of the five flowers. Keep proportion in mind as you apply these materials.
 - 3. Place the corsage flowers by starting with the smallest flower at the top and increasing the size as you work down. Zigzag from left to right as you work filling in holes with foliage or filler flowers. Tape each flower into place as you continue to work toward adding the fifth flower. The fourth and fifth flowers are added at somewhat of a downward angle.
 - 4. Position the bow in place and tape.
 - 5. Additional foliage maybe added to the back of the corsage.
 - 6. Determine and create the stem finish.

7. Before packaging the corsage, make sure that the back is flat enough to be worn correctly.
- E. Single flower corsage construction uses large flowers such as orchids to create a corsage the size of a multi-flower corsage.
- F. Wrist corsages are created to be light and worn on the wrist versus being worn on clothing. There are a wide variety of ways to attach a wrist corsage. The most common are plastic latch type bands or elastic bands.

Demonstrate how to create a specific type of corsage. Cost will vary with the number of flowers and related materials. First demonstrate making the corsage to the class and then allow each of the students the opportunity to make a corsage. If you really want to get practice in, select a time that you might be able to market corsages and sell them in your school. The more practice the students get, the better the skill that will be developed. Again, use your local florist as a resource. Use TM: B2-5A to help reinforce the content of the objective. LS: B2-5C and LS: B2-5D will help in applying techniques in making different types of corsages.

Objective 4: Discuss proper placement and pinning of corsages and boutonnieres.

Anticipated Problem: How should a corsage or boutonniere be properly worn?

- IV. A corsage is worn on a person's left shoulder. This practice has roots in the Victorian Age when flowers were placed over the heart of a loved one. The placement of a boutonniere is different.
 - A. Corsages should be placed higher on the shoulder and secured with two pins. One pin is placed through the stem and other is placed higher, through the flowers, to keep the corsage from shifting.
 - B. Wrist corsages are worn on the left wrist. They should be made relatively small so that they are comfortable for the person wearing them.
 - C. Boutonnieres are placed on the lapel near the buttonhole. One pin should be sufficient in securing it in place.

Have the students practice pinning their corsages after completing them in class This will allow you to address how the corsage is correctly worn.

Review/Summary. Corsage construction and boutonniere construction are very important skills for a florist to develop. Even those students who do not desire to be florists can benefit from these skills by saving them money in preparing flowers for special occasions. These skills are also valuable to have when applying for a job at a florist shop. Often a florist will request to be shown that an applicant has these skills before hiring them. Florists make corsages and boutonnieres many times throughout the year, but during the Mother's Day holiday and wedding seasons, these steps are repeated several times in a day.

Application. The labs in this area are very valuable in helping students apply what is taught. The steps, when repeated many times, will improve the quality of corsage that is constructed in the classroom and eventually on the job site. The skill of tinting and painting flowers can be employed with other areas in this unit.

Evaluation. The labs are an excellent source of evaluation for this problem area. A written test is also included to test student knowledge. The more the students are evaluated on their skills development, the closer they will pay attention to learning the necessary skills in this problem area.

Answers to Sample Test:

Part One: Matching

1=j, 2=i, 3=h, 4=c, 5=b, 6=d, 7=e, 8=f, 9=a, 10=g,

Part Two: Completion

1. Pierce method
2. Daisy hook method
3. Wrap around method
4. Hairpin method

Part Three: Short Answer

Steps—Five Flower Corsage

1. Select five flowers that range from small buds to full size flowers, first remove their stems, then wire and tape the flower heads.
2. Add foliage and filler flowers to each of the five flowers. Keep proportion in mind as you apply these materials.
3. Place the corsage by starting with the smallest flower at the top and increasing the size as you work down. Zigzag from left to right as you work filling in holes with foliage or filler flowers. Tape each flower into place as you continue to work toward adding the fifth flower. The fourth and fifth flowers are added at somewhat of a downward position.
4. Position the bow into place and tape.
5. Additional foliage may be added to the back of the corsage.
6. Determine the stem finish.
7. Before packaging the corsage, make sure that the back is flat enough to be worn correctly.

Test

Lesson B2–5: Designing Corsages and Boutonnieres

Part One: Matching

Instructions. Match the term with the correct response. Write the letter of the term by the definition.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| a. dip dyeing | f. gauge |
| b. floral sprays | g. ribbon |
| c. floral tape | h. tip spraying |
| d. floral tints | i. tulle |
| e. florist wire | j. nestled boutonniere |

- _____ 1. Placing a small flower such as a rosebud in the center of a carnation to create a special look .
- _____ 2. A florist netting that can add color, texture, and support to the corsage.
- _____ 3. A technique used to color only the petal edges.
- _____ 4. A tape made from paraffin-coated paper which is used to cover wires and stems.
- _____ 5. Opaque paints that will cover any color of flower.
- _____ 6. Translucent paints that will allow color from underneath to show through.
- _____ 7. Used to support flowers in the construction of various floral designs.
- _____ 8. The size of florist wire.
- _____ 9. Semi-transparent in color and achieved by actually dipping the head of a flower in a color solution.
- _____ 10. Various types sized as #3, #9, #40.

Part Two: Completion

Instructions. Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.

1. _____ involves placing a wire through the calyx and bending the wire parallel to the stem.

2. _____ involves placing a wire up through the stem of the flower head, making a small hook about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long, and slowly pulling the hook back into the flower head until it disappears.
3. _____ is used on a cluster of small flowers. It involves taking the cluster and placing half of the wire around the stems and wrapping the other half around that wire.
4. _____ is used on multi-flower stems and is achieved by creating a hairpin out of the wire, and placing this hairpin through the flower cluster where support is needed.

Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions. Provide information to answer the following questions.

Describe the steps involved in the construction of a multi-flower corsage.

STEM FINISHES

A variety of stem finishes add style to boutonnières and corsages

Straight



Curled with Variations



Curled

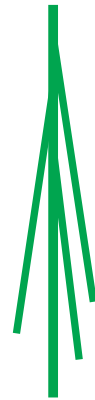


Oval



Pig's Tail

Garden



(Courtesy, Interstate Publishers, Inc.)

Lab Sheet

Flower Dyeing Lab

Supplies

Flowers
Water
Coloring—dyes or food coloring will work
Vase or container

Steps

1. Mix the stem dye according to instructions, using warm water for the best results. If using food coloring, make the solution fairly dark.
2. Use fresh flowers that have been dry for a while. For best results, bring them to room temperature prior to dyeing.
3. Remove the lower foliage and re-cut the stems. Immediately after re-cutting, place stems in a vase or container that is full of the dye solution.
4. Allow fifteen to twenty minutes to pass; the dye will be absorbed into the flower and move up the xylem.
5. Remove the flowers when the petals are colored. The longer they sit, the darker they will become. Shorter stem flowers should be removed once the desired color is achieved. Longer stem flowers can be removed once color is found in the petals.
6. Rinse and re-cut the stems and place the flowers in floral preservative water. These flowers are then ready to be used.

Lab Sheet

Bow Making

Supplies

#3 satin ribbon
#26 gauge wire—9 inches long
Scissors

Steps

1. Decide whether to use the shiny or matte side of the ribbon.
2. Hold the ribbon with the dull side touching the thumb. Loop the ribbon over the thumb, creating a small center loop, and hold it in place with your index finger and thumb.
3. Twist the ribbon to reveal the desired finish.
4. Make a loop of modest proportion 1½' long. Twist the ribbon to reveal the desired side.
5. In the opposite direction of the last loop, create a loop of equal size. Twist to reveal the desired side of the ribbon.
6. Continue making loops until 3 to 4 appear on each side of the center loop, twisting the ribbon every time you come back to the center.
7. Create the streamer by placing a large loop on one side of the center and twisting the ribbon before placing it between your finger and thumb.
8. Place the wire through the center loop and create a u shape toward the back side of the bow. Twist the wire while pulling tightly to gather the ribbon securely into place. The wire should not show.
9. Cut the streamer loops and create the desired end cut of those streamers (e.g. angle, wedge).
10. Stage the bow by pulling the loops in opposite directions of each other, fanning the bow out to create the desired look.

Lab Sheet

Making a Single Flower Corsage

Equipment

- Wire
- Florist tape
- Carnations
- Leatherleaf
- Ribbon for a bow
- Filler flower—Baby’s Breath

Steps

1. Wire and tape the flower head.
2. Add filler by taping it to the stem.
3. Add foliage by placing it behind the flower and taping it into place.
4. Choose a stem finish.

Score Sheet For Creating a Corsage

Item	Points Possible	Points Achieved
Wiring Technique	5	
Taping Technique	5	
Adding Foliage	5	
Adding Filler	5	
Placement	5	
Bow	5	
Packaging	5	
Wearing	5	
Design Techniques	10	
Total	50	

Lab Sheet

Making a Multi-flower Corsage

Equipment

Wire
Florist tape
Mini Carnations and Chrysanthemums
Leatherleaf
Ribbon for a bow
Filler flower—Baby's Breath

Steps—Five Flower Corsage

1. Select five flowers that range from small buds to full size flowers, remove their stems, then wire and tape the flower heads.
2. Add foliage and filler flowers to each of the five flowers. Keep proportion in mind as you apply these materials.
3. Place the corsage by starting with the smallest flower at the top and increasing the size as you work down. Zigzag from left to right as you work, filling in the holes with foliage or filler flowers. Tape each flower into place as you continue to work toward adding the fifth flower. The fourth and fifth flowers are added at somewhat of a downward angle.
4. Position the bow into place and tape.
5. Additional foliage may be added to the back of the corsage.
6. Determine the stem finish.
7. Before packaging the corsage, make sure that the back is flat enough to be worn correctly.

Score Sheet For Creating a Corsage

Item	Points Possible	Points Achieved
Wiring Technique	5	
Taping Technique	5	
Adding Foliage	5	
Adding Filler	5	
Placement	5	
Bow	5	
Packaging	5	
Wearing	5	
Design Techniques	10	
Total	50	