

POTTED ST. PATRICK'S DAY SHAMROCKS



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OBJECTIVE(S):

Educational Components

Discussion will be held regarding the traditional meaning of St. Patrick's Day and shamrocks. Each participant will be provided information about the planning requirements for shamrocks as well as the varieties of shamrocks available.

Activity

Participants will then select a shamrock and plant it in a pot that they can then decorate if so desired.

Take Away

Participants will take a planter of shamrocks with them to their room.

MATERIALS:

(Plan for 8-10 patients. Eight is supposed to be the maximum, but sometimes we get 10.)

- _____ Pens
- _____ Markers
- _____ Dishpans for dirt (available in BRI supply cabinet)
- _____ Watering cans (2 available in BRI supply cabinet) or individual watering bottles for patients to use.
- _____ Name tags for patients (check BRI supply cabinet)
- _____ Example of completed project you're doing
- _____ An extra set of the patient project materials listed below in order for you to demonstrate the project
- _____ TWO completed presentation forms (1 to BRI and 1 mailed to Ext. office)
- _____ Your clean receipts for materials purchased (give to BRI therapists)

SPECIFIC ITEMS NEEDED for this project

- Shamrock plants, various varieties if possible
- Pots—green colored preferably
- Potting mix
- Seed starting medium or bone meal
- Water
- Optional, Decorations; green ribbons, green stickers, leprechaun
- Optional, Irish music CD (*“The Unicorn”* suggested) and something to play it on

POWERPOINT OR PREZI OF PRESENTATION AVAILABLE? No

HANDOUTS: 3????

BEFORE CLASS

Locate Irish music and something to play it on, if using.

If unable to obtain green colored pots, may consider painting terra cottas pots green or providing green ribbons/stickers to the participants so that they may decorate their pots.

DURING CLASS

Consider:

Play Irish music-especially *The Unicorn*, and discuss if any have Irish background. Can discuss St. Patrick’s Day parades, ways to celebrate (wear green colored items, eat corned beef and cabbage, anyone recall what was done to the rivers in Milwaukee and Chicago on St. Patrick’s Day?, etc.)

1. First tap the sides of the pot to loosen the soil.
2. Hold the plant in place down by the base near the soil and tip on its side.
3. The plant should come out but if it hesitated, push your finger into the drainage hole to coax the plant out.
4. Check the look of the soil once the plant is out. If it has any crusty dirt or whitish spots remove them.
5. Gently loosen the soil so that the plants roots breath better; but take care not to damage any plant roots.
6. Place broken pieces of clay pot over the drainage hole to hold dirt in but let water drain through.
7. Next put in about two to three inches of rich soil in the pot.

8. Set the Shamrock root ball onto the dirt, and carefully fill soil around the plant.
9. Pat the soil around the base of the plant to hold it up right.
10. Fill in the pot with more dirt until the pot is about 7/8th full. As a final step, place very small pebbles on the top of the soil.
11. As a final step, place very small pebbles on the top of the soil. This helps to keep the soil loose so that the water will soak into the plant easier.
12. Water the plants from the bottom of the pot. This stops soil mold from forming and the soil from getting hard. Also, the soil stays in better condition if you water from below; but it is okay to occasionally water from the top.

Tip: If your soil gets hard on the top of your plants during the year, gently loosen with a fork. Small pebbles should alleviate this problem.

MAINTENANCE:

Water weekly or when the soil appears dry. Any plant will need to be repotted after a bit. It gives the plant new nutrition, fresh soil and a clean or new home depending if you totally repot the plant. Repotting once a year gives people a chance to check the roots and see if they are healthy or root bound.

INFORMATION

The potted shamrock plant (*Oxalis regnellii*) is a small specimen, often reaching no more than 6 inches. Leaves are in a range of shades and delicate flowers bloom off and on during fall, winter and spring. Leaves are clover shaped and some think the plant brings good luck. These leaves fold up at night and open when light returns. Also known as the lucky shamrock plant, growing *Oxalis* houseplant is simple and adds a touch of spring to the indoors during winter months.

The **Shamrock plant** has a beautiful look with its delicate leaves, stems and soft flowers. It's a unique plant as it grows from a bulb and has a long life span. But one thing many people do not realize is, as a bulb, it has to die down. Thus they think the plant is dying, but what it needs is a resting period. Let the plant rest by cutting back on the amount of water and sitting in a shady place for a few weeks.

Saint Patrick's Day is not complete without a Shamrock plant. The plant has a spring feel and signifies good luck. It's a welcome addition to any home. But after it has flowered it will need a rest. How soon will depend on how hard it was forced to have flowers by Saint Patrick's Day and on how it was treated before you bought the plant. If it was in poor lighting, cool areas or lacked water it may be stressed and need a break sooner. The **Shamrock plant** will need to rest a

INFORMATION (*Continued*)

couple of times during the year. The leaves will yellow and look sad. Just remove the ones that are dying and cut back on water. Move the plant to a low light area and ignore. When you see signs of new growth on the bulb bring the plant back into light and water. In no time at all the plant will spring to life.

SOURCES:

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