



LEAVES: Substitute K-2 Puppet Show

Characters: Dandelion, Foxtail Grass, Common Mullein, Pine Needles, Maple Leaf

Props: large magnifying lens with grass leaf pictured on one side and dandelion leaf pictured on the other

Dandelion

Hey you, would you mind moving over a bit, please? I can't get any sunlight.

Foxtail Grass

I'd like to but I can't. I'm rooted to this spot! Maybe you could grow a bit higher?

Dandelion

I don't know, let me give it a try...ugh, ugh. This is going to take some time.

Foxtail Grass

Hey, that breeze is blowing me over a bit. Is that any better?

Dandelion

Much better! My leaves really need sunlight.

Foxtail Grass

Mine too! They need it to make food so I can live and grow and make flowers and seeds.

Dandelion

That's just why my leaves need sunlight too! Our leaves are like food factories for the plant.

Foxtail Grass

Yeah! And for all the insects that eat us too.

Dandelion

Yeah – that kinda BUGS me!
Your leaves are so skinny, how do they ever get enough sunlight to make your food?

Foxtail Grass

Oh, getting enough sunlight's not the problem for us grasses, but getting dried out by the sun – now that can be a problem. Skinny leaves don't lose as much water as wide leaves do.

Dandelion

My leaves are wider, but it's damp down here near the ground so drying out isn't a problem.

Foxtail Grass

My leaves have smooth edges but your leaves are kind of scary-looking – like jagged teeth!

Dandelion

Those just help the water drip off so I won't rot.

Foxtail Grass

My leaves need water to make food – they get it through their veins. I can see you have veins too.

Dandelion

I wonder if they're the same. Here, I'll get my magnifying lens and take a look. (*holds up lens with grass leaf*) Wow! Your veins run right next to each other like train tracks.

Foxtail Grass

Yeah. They're called parallel veins, but they could be called "train veins!" Let me see yours. (*Hold up lens with dandelion leaf*) Yours are different, like branches on a tree, or a feather!

Dandelion

Yeah – that's why my veins are called pinnate – it means, "feather-like." Hey, I have an idea. Let's see what other kinds of leaves we can find. Only I'm too low. I can't see anything.

Foxtail Grass

Here's that breeze blowing me over again. Can you see now? (*grass exits, mullein enters*)

Dandelion

Oh yes, now I can see. Why, hello, I haven't met you before. You're a tall flower, but you don't have any leaves!

Mullein

Sure I do, down at the bottom like you.

Dandelion

I see now. But your leaves are fuzzy! - covered with hairs or fur. Is that to keep warm?

Mullein

No, no, not warm. But they keep me from getting burned by the sun – and from being eaten. Insects and other animals *commonly* do not like fuzzy leaves.

Dandelion

Then that's an *uncommonly* good defense!

Mullein

Well naturally. I'm the Common Mullein after all! So long! (*exits, grass reappears*)

Dandelion

I'll have to mull that one over. Let's see now, I see lots of grass leaves and some flowers and some [*pine enter*]ouch! Hey, you're prickly!

Pine Needles

Sorry - we didn't mean to needle you. We just can't help it. We're Pine Needles!

Dandelion

Well, I'm just looking for leaves today.

Pine Needles

We are leaves - the leaves of the pine tree.

Dandelion

Really? But you're so skinny and hard.

Pine Needles

We have a hard waxy coat to keep from drying out. But, we do the same thing your leaves do – use sunlight, air and water to make food for the tree. Only we do it all winter long.

Dandelion

Don't you just turn blue in winter? It's so cold!

Pine Needles

No, silly! If we did we'd be called "everblues" instead of evergreens! [*exits*].

Dandelion

That's one pine example. Oh oh. Here's a large leaf coming in for a landing! [*maple leaf appears*]. Hullo! Where did you fall from?

Maple

I just blew off that tree over there. We maple leaves are designed to fall off when it begins to freeze. Otherwise we'd just dry out and so would the tree.

Dandelion

You're shaped kind of like a hand with a palm and five fingers.

Maple

Yes, it's very handy.

Dandelion

Your veins go into each finger, but they all start from one point, here, in the palm.

Maple

That's why they're called "palmate."

Dandelion

We've seen all kinds of leaves today, but you have the nicest color.

Maple

Aw gee – thanks. We turn colors in the fall when we stop making food and our chlorophyll – that's the green stuff – goes away. Ah, here comes the wind again. I'm off for a ride. Bye! [*exits, Foxtail enters*]

Foxtail

You know what Dandelion? We've met a lot of leaves today–fuzzy, needle-like, shaped like a hand...

Dandelion

I'll say, and I'll bet there are a lot more to see...

Foxtail Grass

And every kind has a special design. We leaves sure make this a beautiful and interesting place.

Dandelion

We sure do. Just LEAF it to us!

THE END