

Lesson B2–7

Designing Centerpieces and Holiday Arrangements

Unit B. Floriculture

Problem Area 2. Floral Design

Lesson 7. Designing Centerpieces and Holiday Arrangements

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 types of centerpieces.
2. Learn how to take a centerpiece order.
3. Describe floral arrangements for holidays.

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):

Candle holder
Conical centerpieces
Cornucopia
Novelty designs
Paddle wire
Plush animal
Raffia
Votive candles

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.

Discuss with the class which arrangements are found on tables at formal events such as proms or weddings. Identify the characteristics of this design (i.e. height, color, style etc.), leading into a discussion of centerpieces.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1: Identify types of centerpieces.

Anticipated Problem: What are some types of centerpieces?

- I. Centerpieces have been the center attraction on tables since the 18th century. Since centerpieces are viewed from all sides, they should be attractive and colorful. Traditional centerpieces are low so that conversation at the table is uninterrupted. However, contemporary arrangements, such as topiaries, add a splash of color and design above eye level. A centerpiece on a buffet table at a banquet might be one-sided and coordinated with centerpieces on the dining tables themselves.
 - A. Types of centerpieces include:
 1. Bud vases are small arrangements suitable for placing on long rectangular tables at intervals. They typically contain one flower or three flowers, and are inexpensive to create.
 2. Small vase arrangements are designed in vases in proportions of 1 to 1 so that they do not obstruct vision. They are more colorful and emphasize flowers more than bud vases. They may be asymmetrical or symmetrical in design, depending on the theme and formality of the occasion.
 3. Round centerpieces are suited for round and square tables. They may be designed with one type of flower or a mixture of several varieties and colors. The container that works best is low and rounded. A round centerpiece looks basically the same when viewed from any point in a room. The contour of this arrangement may be round or triangular.
 4. Oval centerpieces are similar to rounded centerpieces but are more suitable for oval or rectangular tables. Common containers for this style are rectangular, oval, or circular with a low rim. The outline and the contour of this design may be triangular or rounded.
 5. **Conical centerpieces** are cone-shaped or three dimensional isosceles triangles. These designs date back to a period in history known as the Byzantine period. A centerpiece that looks like a Christmas tree would be conical.
 - B. Accessories can be added to centerpieces to create a certain atmosphere or interest. These items should be in harmony with the design, and properly placed to be effective. Candles are often used and can be stabilized using a **candle holder**. This plastic device is round at the top to secure the candle and pronged on the other end to fit in foam. Candle holders come in various sizes, for different sizes of candles. If using more than one, candles should be spaced at least one inch apart. Ribbon, fruit, cones, and other items might also be used as accessories in a centerpiece.

Allow students to explore various centerpiece styles. Find pictures of centerpieces in magazines; have the students create a scrapbook of centerpieces, labeling each style. TM: B2-7A will provide a guide for de-

signing a round centerpiece. LS: B2–7A and LS: B2–7B will give students practical experience in designing two types of centerpieces.

Objective 2: Learn how to take a centerpiece order.

Anticipated Problem: What information is needed when taking a centerpiece order?

- II. Gathering necessary information is extremely important in order to make decisions about the design of a centerpiece for a particular event.
 - A. The following is a suggested checklist.
 1. When is the event, date, time, and how much time is needed to set up?
 2. Where is the location and what is the size of the room?
 3. What is the style of the room?
 4. What are the room colors, and what are the colors associated with the event or event sponsor?
 5. What is the preferred style of the event (formal, informal, casual, contemporary, elegant)?
 6. How many tables will need centerpieces and what are the shapes and sizes of the tables?
 7. How many additional floral designs will be needed?
 8. What is the budget for flowers?
 - B. A florist should visit the site and become familiar with the surroundings prior to creating the floral work. Sometimes banquet halls and hotels have mirrors and candles that may be used, but they need to be reserved for the event in advance .

Addressing this topic is preferred in an advanced level course. After covering the information with the students, simulate an ordering situation and see if they collect all the necessary information. If time permits and you have the facilities in your area, your class might visit a banquet hall or hotel and then have the students develop designs for the room they visited. Use TM: B2–7B to reinforce the information needed when taking centerpiece orders.

Objective 3: Describe floral arrangements for holidays.

Anticipated Problem: What are some primary holidays where floral arrangements are in demand and what is appropriate for each?

- III. Flowers play a large part in many holiday celebrations.
 - A. A variety of designs might be offered by a florist and a sampling follows:
 1. Valentine’s Day—A dozen roses arranged in a vase with baby’s breath or red and white carnations and mums in an arrangement with a plush animal or chocolates as an accessory. A **plush animal** is a stuffed figure, animal, or item added to an arrangement.

2. St. Patrick's Day—Green-tinted carnations are big sellers for this holiday. It might also be beneficial to have several pots of oxalis (shamrocks) available for this Irish holiday.
3. Easter—Spiritual or whimsical arrangements are appropriate for this holiday. Both pastel colors and bright vibrant colors are appropriate at this time of year. **Novelty designs**, which resemble kittens, bunnies, or ice cream, for example, are popular for this holiday.
4. Mother's Day—Spring flower arrangements and corsages are traditional gifts for Mother's Day. Novelty containers emphasizing the season are popular.
5. Halloween—Arrangements in fall colors, hollowed out pumpkins, or cornucopia are ideal for Halloween. Recently, Halloween has become the fastest growing holiday for floral design.
6. Thanksgiving—Centerpieces are the major arrangements for this holiday. No table is complete for the Thanksgiving meal without a holiday centerpiece. Analogous colors of red, orange, and yellow highlight this autumn occasion. Often a **cornucopia**, a cone or horn shaped container containing flowers, fruits, and vegetables, is used as a Thanksgiving centerpiece. **Raffia**, a fibrous material made from palm trees, offers a natural ribbon appearance to fall arrangements.
7. Christmas—This is a busy season for holiday design work in both artificial and real flower arrangements. This season starts in early November when florists have open houses displaying not only arrangements, but also all kinds of holiday decorating items. Wreaths can be purchased from a wholesaler and decorated by a florist, or they can be created by a florist. Christmas centerpieces are often accented with **votive candles**, short stocky candles placed in holders around an arrangement.

Wreath construction is not difficult, but it takes time and patience. Horticulture students may use a wire coat hanger or a **paddle wire**, a piece of wood with wire wrapped around it, to create this holiday piece. The hanger is bent into a round shape. Do not untie the hanger but bend it into the desired shape. Use the hook already formed as the mechanism for hanging the wreath. The hanger should be wrapped in paddle wire at ½ inch intervals; which will create friction between the pine branches and the hanger and hold the wreath together.

One good idea to use in teaching this objective is to assign a holiday to a student and have the student develop a list of arrangements he or she would consider making for that holiday. If time and budgets allow, have them create one of their ideas. Teachers might conduct sales for arrangement needs during the various holiday seasons. Display TM: B2–7C and TM: B2–7D to help reinforce the different types of arrangements used for various holidays.

Review/Summary. Centerpieces have been a mainstay in the floral industry since the 18th century. Today, any time one entertains guests, a centerpiece seems to be a must for completing the table. Students should understand the variety of centerpieces that can be created. When taking orders for centerpieces, it is important to gather all the necessary information that was dis-

cussed in this lesson. Without this information, it becomes difficult to provide the desired product to the consumer. Although holidays are not the only times people purchase floral designs, they are often considered the driving force.

Application. There are a variety of applications that could be used for this lesson. Centerpieces are excellent starts to creating floral design work for beginners. Look for other design ideas by watching the products offered by the wire services. These are often advertised in the newspaper. Use these as basis for further design work for the holidays. Use the opportunity provided by school functions to provide floral centerpieces, for example, proms, retirement parties, teacher luncheons, etc. Small vase arrangements will usually work. Using pompon mums and carnations will help in keeping costs low. The practical application contained in LS: B2-7A and LS: B2-7B will help students practice making different styles of arrangements.

Evaluation. There are several ways to evaluate the students on the material covered in this lesson. The teacher can test the students to see if they met the objectives. A small written quiz is included. LS: B2-7A and B2-7B will also provide for student evaluation.

Answers to Sample Test:

Part One: Matching

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

Part Two: Completion

1. shape
2. round
3. Accessories
4. time
5. red
6. Easter
7. Corsages
8. one
9. wreath
10. one, one

Part Three: Short Answer

1. When is the event; date, time, and how much time is available to set up?
2. Where is the location and what is the size of the room?
3. What is the style of the room?
4. What are the room colors and what are the colors associated with the event sponsor or event?

5. What is the preferred style of the event (formal, informal, casual, contemporary, elegant)?
6. How many tables will need centerpieces and what are the shapes and sizes of the tables?
7. How many additional floral designs will be needed?
8. What is the budget for flowers?

Test

Lesson B2–7: Designing Centerpieces and Holiday Arrangements

Part One: Matching

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

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| a. candle holder | d. novelty | g. raffia |
| b. conical centerpieces | e. paddle wire | h. votive candles |
| c. cornucopia | f. plush animals | |

- _____ 1. Centerpieces which are cone shaped or three-dimensional isosceles triangles.
- _____ 2. Wrapped around a piece of wood and used in wreath making.
- _____ 3. Stuffed figures used as centerpiece accessories.
- _____ 4. A device which is round at the top to secure a candle and pronged on the other end to fit in the foam.
- _____ 5. Short, stocky, and placed in holders around the arrangement.
- _____ 6. Design which resemble kittens, bunnies, or ice cream.
- _____ 7. A cone or horn shaped container containing flowers, fruits and vegetables.
- _____ 8. A fibrous material made from a palm tree that offers a natural ribbon appearance.

Part Two: Completion

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

1. The _____ and style of the centerpiece will depend on the dining area.
2. A round centerpiece is suited for a _____ table.
3. _____ can add flair and an expressive touch to a holiday design.
4. When taking a centerpiece order it is important to note the _____ and place of the event.
5. Pink, white and _____ are common colors used for Valentine's Day.
6. Novelty designs are commonly found at _____ and in the springtime.

7. _____ are common purchases for Mother's Day.
8. Candles should be kept _____ inch apart in a centerpiece.
9. A wire coat hanger can be used as a frame for constructing a _____.
10. Small vase arrangements are done in _____ to _____ proportion.

Part Three: Short Answer

Instructions. Provide information to answer the following questions.

What are eight pieces of information that need to be provided when a florist takes a centerpiece order?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

DESIGNING A ROUND CENTERPIECE

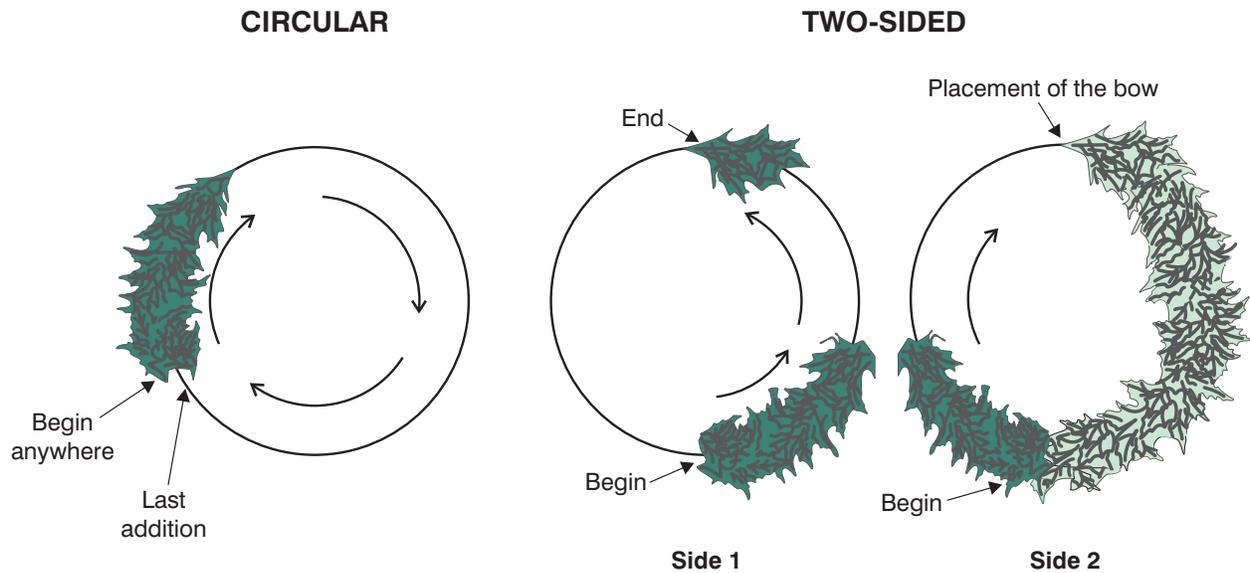
Steps

1. **Select a low container with a large diameter opening.**
2. **Position a moistened piece of floral foam in the center of the container and secure.**
 - **Trim the foam edges for easier stem placement.**
 - **Secure to container with tape.**
3. **Add greens in a circular pattern.**
4. **Primary flower placements will establish the height and the width.**
5. **Secondary placements will fill in space between the primary placements.**
6. **Add additional flowers to fill in the empty gaps.**
7. **Add filler flowers if desired.**
8. **Insert accent material if desired.**

CENTERPIECE ORDERING— CHECKLIST

- 1. When is the event; date, time, and how much time to set up?**
- 2. Where is the location and what is the size of the room?**
- 3. What is the style of the room?**
- 4. What are the room colors and the event colors?**
- 5. What is the preferred style of the event (formal, informal, casual, etc.)?**
- 6. How many tables will need centerpieces and what are the shapes and sizes of the tables?**
- 7. How many additional floral designs will be needed?**
- 8. What is the budget for flowers?**

TWO METHODS OF WREATH DESIGN



(Courtesy, Interstate Publishers, Inc.)

TM: B2–7D

HOLIDAYS	DATE
Valentine’s Day	February 14
St. Patrick’s Day	March 17
Easter	Variable Dates
Secretaries’ Day	4th Wednesday of April
Mother’s Day	2nd Sunday of May
Memorial Day	Last Monday of May
Father’s Day	3rd Sunday of June
Independence Day	July 4
Grandparents’ Day	1st Sunday of September
Bosses’ Day	October 16
Sweetest Day	3rd Saturday of October
Mother-in-Law’s Day	4th Sunday of October
Halloween	October 31
Thanksgiving	4th Thursday in November
Christmas	December 25
New Year’s Eve	December 31

Lab Sheet

Designing a Round Centerpiece

Supplies

- Small container
- 1/3 brick of floral foam
- Waterproof tape
- Leatherleaf
- 5 Carnations
- 4 to 6 stems of pompon mums
- 3 stems of mini carnations
- Baby's breath as needed

Instructions

Using the steps outlined in TM: B2-7A, design a round centerpiece with the supplies listed above. Note: the recommended resource text also lists excellent step-by-step procedures for designing round centerpieces.

Evaluation—Student Score Sheet for Centerpiece

Category	Possible	Achieved
Foam Secured	5	
Greening Up	10	
Primary Placement	5	
Secondary Placement	5	
Balance	5	
Design Principles	10	
Proportion	5	
Overall Effect	5	
Total Points	50	

Lab Sheet

Designing an Oval Centerpiece for Christmas

Supplies

- 1 designer bowl
- ½ brick of floral oasis foam
- Waterproof tape
- Leatherleaf
- Evergreens
- 4 carnations
- 4 stems of pompon mums
- 3 stems of mini carnations
- 1—12" glass chimney
- Accessories—Santa picks, holly berries, snowflake picks, etc.
- 1—9" taper candle
- Oasis candle holder
- 1 red bow

Instructions

1. Select a designer bowl.
2. Position a ½ brick of moistened floral foam in the center of the bowl and secure.
 - Trim the foam edges for easier stem placement.
 - Secure to container with waterproof tape.
3. Position the candle and candle holder in the center of the piece of foam.
4. Place the chimney around the candle, pushing slightly into the foam to secure its position.
5. Conduct the greening up process creating an oval pattern (leatherleaf, evergreens). To begin, place four pieces horizontally in at the base, with two longer and two shorter to establish your widths. Place the greens so the tips angle down slightly. The size of the finished arrangement will dictate the length of the first placement. Continue to fill in with evergreens and leatherleaf.
6. Primary placements will establish the width of your arrangement (carnations). Position the four flowers horizontally to the table with two having a greater horizontal length than the other two. (Clock positions: 12 and 6—longer, and 3 and 9—shorter). The height of the arrangement should be 3 to 4 inches above the floral foam.

7. Secondary placements will fill in space between the primary placements (pomp mums). The general shape of the arrangement should start to appear. Watch the proper height, be careful not to place the flowers in too close to the foam. A red bow may be placed in the arrangement replacing the position of a flower.
8. Add additional flowers to fill in empty gaps (mums and mini carnations). This will complete the contour and width of the design. Smaller flowers may be placed in toward the center to create depth.
9. Cover any visible foam with additional greens; this will hide what is known as mechanics.
10. Insert accent material if desired (Santa picks, or snowflake picks).

Evaluation—Student Score Sheet for Centerpiece

Category	Possible	Achieved
Foam and Candle Securing	5	
Greening Up	10	
Primary Placement	5	
Secondary Placement	5	
Balance	5	
Design Principles	10	
Proportion	5	
Overall Effect	5	
Total Points	50	