

Name: _____

Making Peace with Dandelions

by Liana Mahoney



For years, humans have waged war with the dandelion. Most people consider dandelions pesky weeds, and will go to great lengths to get rid of them. They pluck them from their gardens. They

If you've ever picked a dandelion, you've probably noticed the milky sap that oozes from the stem. Dandelion sap is super sticky, and amazingly, is a natural source of rubber. Around 30,000 different products are made from rubber today, including tires, soda drink bottle tops, tubing, and gloves. Most of these products are made from rubber that comes from the rubber tree. But there are problems with

serious allergy killing out many these trees take place.

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dandelion has its uses. Young dandelions leaves, called "greens," make a delicious and highly nutritious salad. Dandelion plants have a long, thin root called a taproot, which grows deep into the soil. The taproot creates tunnels in the soil, which allow water and air to mix in and keep soil healthy. Dandelion flowers also attract ladybugs. Ladybugs are good to have in gardens because they feast on small insect pests. Despite its useful leaves, roots, and flowers, however, most people still think of the dandelion as a simple weed. It's the sap, though, that just might change their minds.

good source of rubber in the future. Dandelions are easy to plant and they grow quickly. People who are allergic to rubber products made from rubber trees are not likely to be allergic to dandelion rubber. Still,

scientists have some questions they need to answer before we can make dandelions our main source of rubber. Some scientists believe that in less than five years, we will have those answers and will finally end the war with this so-called weed. When we make peace with the dandelion, at long last, we'll be planting it, instead of pulling it!

A red-bordered box containing a cartoon superhero character flying through the air. To the right of the character, the word "PREVIEW" is written in large, bold, red letters with a black outline. Below "PREVIEW", the text "Please log in or register to download the printable version of this worksheet." is written in a smaller, black font.

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1. Does the author have a positive or negative view of dandelions? Explain your answer.

2. Which fruit is mentioned in the article?



3. According to the article, how might dandelion rubber be better than rubber from rubber trees?

4. Tell whether each statement is a fact or an opinion.
Write F or O on the line next to each sentence.

- _____ Some people pluck dandelions from their lawns.
_____ Dandelions make a great addition to any lawn.
_____ Dandelions are tasty.
_____ Ladybugs eats small garden pests.

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Write a story to explain what's happening in the picture. Use facts from the article in your story.



~ PREVIEW ~

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ANSWER KEY

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1. Does the author have a positive or negative view of dandelions? Explain your answer.

The author has a positive view of dandelions because she explains how dandelions can be beneficial to humans throughout the article.



2. Which fact is not mentioned in the article? **c**
- a. Dandelions help keep soil healthy.
 - b. Dandelions can make a delicious snack.
 - c. Dandelions are used to make rubber.

3. Accor
rubbe



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Many people are allergic to rubber made from rubber trees. They might not be allergic to rubber made from dandelion sap.

Also accept: Many rubber trees are dying of fungus. If we make rubber from dandelions we would not need to use these rubber trees.

4. Tell whether each statement is a fact or an opinion.
Write F or O on the line next to each sentence.

- F** Some people pluck dandelions from their lawns.
- O** Dandelions make a great addition to any lawn.
- O** Dandelions are tasty.
- F** Ladybugs eats small garden pests.