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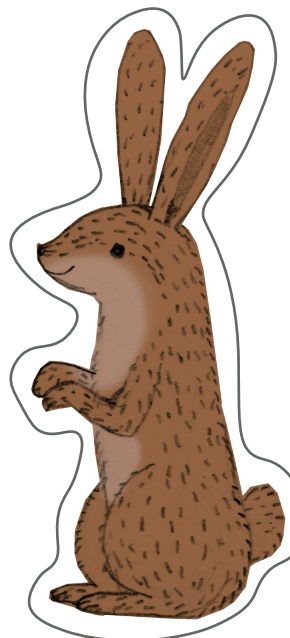
My Box Of STEAM  
Science "GROWING MOSS"



**DRAW AND CUT  
YOUR MOSS MAIDEN!**

# The characters of the story

**1** Cut out the figures.



**2** Attach a wood  
dowel to the back  
of each puppet.



**3** Fold the  
dotted line.



**Finished!**





# A GREEN EMBROIDERY

A silent, soft green carpet stretched all around, enveloping the forest in an embrace.

Some light-skinned maidens dressed in green were intent on embroidering that immense mantle.

With skill and sweeping gestures, they passed the thread into the earth and left a soft, tender curl that joined the others, increasing the green expanse around the forest. Immediately, some animal would settle on it, and the soft, yielding moss seemed to welcome it, taking its shape.

Tiny insects climbed and explored the thousand little leaves, losing themselves in that enchanting labyrinth.

The maidens continued their ongoing work from time immemorial, never lifting their heads, concentrating on that loving gesture.

Anyone who thought this was just a carpet would have been mistaken, for however it looked, it was actually moss, a living and eternal creature.

For a long time, the townspeople had been plundering the forest, cutting down trees, trampling plants and ripping out the moss. Trees were cut into logs and pieces that ended up in chimneys, and the moss was left to dry, or at least that was what they thought.

The moss remained in a sort of suspended life, waiting for a bit of water and the patient work of the green-clad maidens, who sewed up those wounds and tears. The men, without caring or giving themselves too much trouble, continued their raid, heedless of the patience and generosity of the forest. But the disfigurements and outrages became such that the maidens one day decided to give them a real punishment. Instead of sewing, they began to unravel and, pulling the long green thread, they frayed and unravelled the entire carpet.



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The ground could no longer hold back the water pouring into the town at the first rainfall, sweeping it away like a vast, raging river. Not only that, the air became unbreathable, and despite the heavy rain, the ground seemed dead and barren, like that of a desert. The desperate men finally realised their stupidity and, despite it being late, set out in search of the maidens. They searched everywhere until they found them in a cave completely covered in soft, fragrant moss. "We ask your forgiveness, we ask forgiveness of the forest and the moss, and we beg you to bring it back, we will not destroy it any more, we have learnt our lesson". Said the repentant men. The maidens then began to work and resumed embroidering on the trees, the stones, the ground with greens of a thousand colours, and the wonderful soft carpet of moss.

**BRYOLOGY:** from Greek *bryon*, a moss, a liverwort) is the branch of botany concerned with the scientific study of bryophytes (mosses, liverworts, and hornworts).

### **Johann Hedwig** (1730 –1799)

was a German botanist notable for his studies of mosses for which he is sometimes called the father of bryology. Hedwig was born in Braşov, Transylvania as the son of a shoemaker, he grew up in poverty. It was in his childhood he became fascinated with mosses.



### **Margaret Sibella Brown**

(1866 –1961) was a Canadian bryologist specializing in mosses and liverworts native to Nova Scotia. Although lacking formal scientific training, she has been recognized for her contributions to bryology and as an authority on the mosses and liverworts of Nova Scotia.



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