

Diagnostics Hands-On Activity
ROLE PLAYING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Break into small groups of 2 to 4 (or slightly larger if needed).
2. Select one person, could be two if a larger group, to be the “client” who asks the question. Give ONLY this person the paper with the question and plant information on it. **(No one else should see this information).**
3. The “client” asks the EMGs (others in their group) the question at the top of the page, but **DO NOT** provide any of the other information. The other information can **ONLY be shared if the EMGs ask the RIGHT question** to be told the information.
4. After the client asks the questions, EMGs should first come up with what would be good questions to ask in this situation. (Feel free to refer to Virginia’s “Diagnosing Plant Problems” handout). And then ask the questions.
5. Again, the “client/s” should only share the plant care/history information if the EMGs ask the right questions to be given the information.

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Plant Diagnostic Role Playing Question

CLIENT INFORMATION – ROLE PLAYING for MAPLE QUESTION:

As the client, you have called or stopped by the Extension office to ask a question. **For now, only tell them what time of year it is and ask the question.**

Time of year is late summer.

Question: “My maple tree seems to be dying. What do you think is wrong?”

STOP for now and let the EMGs ask you some questions.

WAIT TO SHARE any of the following information until the EMGs ask you the right question related to the information. (Use your judgement).

Below are the symptoms, history, care, etc. of this plant. **AGAIN, PLEASE DO NOT** share this information unless the right question is asked.

If a question is asked for which the information is not listed below –say you don’t know.

Symptoms:

- Branches are beginning to die, especially near the top. The crown is becoming thin too.
- Leaves don’t seem as dark green as they used to.
- No insects can be seen and there are no spots on the leaves. Maybe a little browning on some leaf edges.
- The trunk looks fine, no cracks or peeling bark.

History of Maple:

- It is a red maple, about 18 years old.
- Bought from a garden center and was about 6’ tall when planted. It is now about 25 to 30’ tall. Homeowner planted it.
- It has always been healthy and had pretty red fall color

General Tree Care:

- It is not mulched, but it is fertilized with fertilizer spikes once a year in spring.
- It is watered by lawn irrigation. During the 2012 drought, it was given a few deep irrigations.
- It has been pruned lightly a few times.

Anything done to or near plant:

- About 3 years ago, a raised bed (2’ tall and 6’ wide) was built around the base of the tree, with bricks, and then filled with soil so flowers could be planted under the tree. We’ve always liked the looks of that in other people’s yards so we built one around our tree too.

Plant Diagnostic Role Playing Question

CLIENT – ROLE PLAYING INFORMATION for ARBORVITAE QUESTION

As the client, you have called or stopped by the Extension office to ask a question. **For now, only tell them what time of year it is and ask the question. DO NOT show them the picture yet.**

Time of year is late summer.

Ask the question: “I heard about bagworms killing evergreens. Someone said they are brown and look like part of the tree. I think my evergreen has hundreds of them. There are brown things all over the entire tree. What do I need to spray to kill these bagworms? ”

STOP for now and let the EMGs ask you some questions.

WAIT TO SHARE any of the following information until the EMGs ask you the right question related to the information. (Use your judgement).

ONLY show them the picture if they ask you to bring in a sample or to e-mail you a picture. If they do not think to ask for that, after a bit you could offer to provide picture.

Below are the symptoms, history, care, etc. of this plant. **AGAIN, PLEASE DO NOT** share this information unless the right question is asked.

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Symptoms:

- Small brown things on the very tip of almost every branch/needle. About 1/8 to 1/4” long.
- Otherwise, the Arborvitae seems very healthy.

History:

- It is about 10 years old. Upright form.
- Bought from a garden center and was about 2.5’ tall when planted. It is now about 10’ tall. Homeowner planted it.
- It has always been healthy other than a little browning in spring from winter drying. But this looks different than that.

General Care:

- Mulched with wood chip mulch. Only fertilization is from lawn fertilizer. Watered by lawn irrigation, but the sprinkler heads do not hit the tree. In dry falls, extra water is provided by laying a hose near the base.
- It has never been pruned, except to clip out winter burned foliage.

Anything done to or near plant:

- Nothing has been done to or near the plant since planted.



Plant Diagnostic Role Playing Question

CLIENT – ROLE PLAYING INFORMATION for HAWTHORNE QUESTION

As the client, you have called or stopped by the Extension office to ask a question. **For now, only tell them what time of year it is and ask the question. DO NOT show them the picture yet.**

Tell them the time of year is July.

Ask the question: “The leaves of my Hawthorn tree are covered with orange spots. Some of the leaves are turning yellow and dropping off. Is my tree dying? Can I spray something to save it? ”

STOP for now and let the EMGs ask you some questions.

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Below are the symptoms, history, care, etc. of this plant. **AGAIN, PLEASE DO NOT** share this information unless the right question is asked.

If a question is asked for which the information is not listed below –say you don’t know.

Symptoms:

- Bright orange spots on the top of the leaves. Some yellowing and leaf dropping. The underside of the spots seem to have something growing out of them, like small hairs.
- Otherwise, the hawthorn has been healthy and seems to be growing well each year.

History:

- Hawthorne tree about 8 years old. Growing in full sun location. Protected from wind by a shelterbelt that does have cedar trees in it.
- It was bought from a garden center and planted 8 years ago. It is now about 12’ tall. Homeowner planted it.
- Have not ever noticed these spots on the tree before, but have not looked real close.

General Care:

- Grass grows right up to the trunk. Only fertilization is from lawn fertilizer.
- It is watered by lawn irrigation.
- The only pruning has been to remove some lower branches.

Anything done to or near plant: Nothing has been done to or near the plant since it was planted.



Plant Diagnostic Role Playing Question

CLIENT – ROLE PLAYING INFORMATION for SPIREA QUESTION

As the client, you have called or stopped by the Extension office to ask a question. **For now, only tell them what time of year it is and ask the question. DO NOT show them the picture yet.**

Tell them the time of year is early September.

Ask the question: “The leaves of our bridal wreath Spirea are turning brown. We applied a fungicide, but it does not seem to be helping. What else can we do to save this hedge? It provides some privacy and we don’t want to lose it”.

STOP for now and let the EMGs ask you some questions.

WAIT TO SHARE any of the following information until the EMGs ask you the right question related to the information. (Use your judgement).

ONLY show them the picture if they ask you to bring in a sample or to e-mail you a picture. If they do not think to ask for that, after a bit you could offer to provide picture.

Below are the symptoms, history, care, etc. of this plant. **AGAIN, PLEASE DO NOT** share this information unless the right question is asked.

If a question is asked for which the information is not listed below –say you don’t know.

Symptoms:

- Browning of leaves, mainly towards the tips of the branches. Leaves seem to be folded up. Only some of the branches have turned brown, not all of them.
- The rest of the shrub looks fine except for these brown leaves.

History:

- Bridalwreath spirea hedge about 15 years old. Growing in part sun location. Some shade from nearby trees, but receives sun for most of the day.
- Have not ever noticed this browning before.

General Care:

- Grass grows right up to the hedge. Only fertilization is from lawn fertilizer.
- It is watered by lawn irrigation.
- The hedge is pruned a couple of times a year to maintain size and shape.

Anything done to or near plant: Nothing has been done to or near the plant since it was planted.



Plant Diagnostic Role Playing Question

CLIENT – ROLE PLAYING INFORMATION for TOMATO QUESTION

As the client, you have called or stopped by the Extension office to ask a question. **For now, only tell them what time of year it is and ask the question. DO NOT show them the picture yet.**

Tell them the time of year is August.

Ask the question: “My tomatoes have hard white spots in them. Most of the spots are beneath the skin. Why are they doing this? Are they safe to eat?”

STOP for now and let the EMGs ask you some questions.

WAIT TO SHARE any of the following information until the EMGs ask you the right question related to the information. (Use your judgement).

ONLY show them the picture if they ask you to bring in a sample or to e-mail you a picture. If they do not think to ask for that, after a bit you could offer to provide picture.

Below are the symptoms, history, care, etc. of this plant. **AGAIN, PLEASE DO NOT** share this information unless the right question is asked.

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Symptoms:

- Hard white spots under the skin of the tomato. Some yellow speckling on outside of tomato skin.
- The leaves seem fine. Plant pretty healthy.

History:

- Celebrity variety. Planted from a transplant in May. Use crop rotation.

General Care:

- Mulched with grass clippings.
- Fertilized at planting time and twice since.

Anything done to or near plant: No

