

## 'Tussie-mussies'

Posies, also called 'tussie-mussies' or nosegays, were bundles of extremely fragrant flowers carried on the body, often pinned to bodices. Their pleasing smell was thought to protect against diseases by eliminating bad smells. They were also simply carried as a beautiful decoration.

Both flowers and herbs were used in tussie-mussies. Popular choices included sweet william, roses, rosemary, basil, thyme, rue, hyssop, marjoram, meadow sweet, southernwood and sage.

They were also used as gifts, with each type of flower having special meaning. Some poems link lavender to 'lovers true', gillyflowers to 'gentleness', and marigolds to 'marriage'.

The word 'tussie-mussie' first appeared in a manuscript as 'tuzzie muzzie' in 1033 and then again as 'tusemose' in 1440.



### Activity

Make your own tussie-mussie. Gather some herbs and flowers in a small posy and tie the stalks together with a piece of ribbon or braiding.