

LEAVES

Fall Leaf Hangings

Set out a variety of colorful fall leaves. Give each child a 6- to 10-inch square of clear self-stick paper with the backing removed. Let the children arrange the leaves on the sticky sides of their squares. When each child is finished, place a second clear self-stick paper square (with the backing removed) over the first square and seal the edges well. Punch a hole at the top of each square and add a loop of yarn. Arrange the leaf hangings in a window. When the sun shines through, they will sparkle with color!

Leaf Creatures

Give the children construction paper, glue, felt-tip markers and an assortment of colorful fall leaves. Have each child select two or three leaves and glue them on his or her paper. Let the children use felt-tip markers to add arms, legs, hands, feet, hair, eyes and other features to make leaf creatures.

Leaf Frames

For each child, you will need two clear plastic lids that are the same size (coffee can lids, margarine tub lids, etc.). Cut the outer rim off of one lid so that it will fit snugly inside the other lid. Collect a variety of autumn leaves. Let the children each choose one or two leaves and glue them inside their rimmed lids. Then have them put their rimless lids on top of their leaves and snap them in place. Attach ribbons to the tops of the finished leaf frames and hang them in a window.

Leaf Decorations

On large pieces of paper, let the children finger paint with bright fall colors or paint with watercolors. When the paint has dried, cut leaf shapes out of the papers. Use the brightly colored leaves to decorate your room.

Leaf Creature Stories

After the children have completed their leaf creatures activity (above), ask them to tell you stories about their creatures. Write each story at the bottom of the storyteller's paper. With the permission of the author, read each story out loud to the whole group.

Leaf-Word Matching

Collect five samples of different kinds of leaves. Mount each leaf on a piece of lightweight cardboard, print its name on the cardboard and cover the entire piece with clear self-stick paper. Make five corresponding word cards by printing the name of each leaf on a separate card and covering it with clear self-stick paper. Have the children match the word cards with the corresponding leaf-and-word cards.

Leaf Pairs

Collect six pairs of different kinds of fall leaves. Press the leaves between heavy books for several days. Mount each leaf on an index card and cover the cards with clear self-stick paper. Then let the children take turns matching the pairs of leaves.

Extension: If you have a large supply of leaves, let the children make their own leaf pairs.

Sorting Leaves

Choose three or four leaves with common shapes and tape each one to a different box. Set out a number of matching shaped leaves. Then let the children take turns choosing a leaf and placing it in the appropriate box.

Leaf Matching

Collect five good-sized leaves. Trace each of their outlines on a separate piece of paper. Challenge the children to match each leaf to its outline. (This activity must be used the same day as it is prepared; as the leaves dry, they will curl up and no longer fit their original outlines.)

How Many Leaves?

Place several fall leaves in a see-through container such as a glass jar or a clear plastic bag. Ask the children to guess how many leaves are inside. Then take out the leaves and count them together. Were the children's guesses too high or too low? Place a different number of leaves in the container and have the children guess and count again.

Autumn Leaf Express

Use colorful autumn leaves to teach and reinforce color skills. Take the children outside to an area with lots of autumn leaves on the ground. Tell the children that you are the conductor of the Autumn Leaf Express. In order to ride on your train, they must each find a leaf that is the color you announce. When you say "All aboard the Yellow Leaf Express", have the children find yellow leaves, hook on behind you and "choo-choo" around the area. Stop the train, announce a new color, have the children collect new leaves and begin the fun again.

Fall Leaves

Let the children act out the appropriate movements as you recite the following poem.

Down, down,
Yellow and brown,
Fall the leaves
All over the ground.
Rake them up
In a pile so high,
They almost reach
Up to the sky.

Leaf Graphing

Prepare a simple graph by drawing a grid on a large piece of paper. Glue a different colored leaf in each of the left-hand squares on the grid. Set out a variety of matching colored leaves and have the children sort them by color. Then count all the leaves of one color together with the children. Find the matching colored leaf on the graph and mark off one square for each leaf of that color. Continue until all the leaves have been counted.

Variation: Make a graph to count leaf shapes instead of colors.

Autumn Leaves All Around Me

Sung to: "Mary Had a Little Lamb"

Autumn leaves all around me,
All around me, all around me.
Autumn leaves all around me,
What colors do you see?

Red and yellow, gold and brown,
Gold and brown, gold and brown.
Red and yellow, gold and brown,
Falling gracefully.

The Leaves Are Falling Down

Sung to: "The Farmer in the Dell"

The leaves are falling down,
The leaves are falling down.
School is here and
Fall is near,
The leaves are falling down.

The leaves are falling down,
The leaves are falling down.
Some are red and
Some are brown,
The leaves are falling down.

The leaves are falling down,
The leaves are falling down.
They tickle your nose and
Touch your toes,
The leaves are falling down.

Leaves, Leaves

Sung to: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Leaves, leaves falling down,
(*Wiggle fingers downward.*)
Falling on the ground.
Red and yellow,
Orange and brown,
Leaves are falling down.