

A Week of Fall Fun: A Homeschool Lesson Plan

Materials Needed for the Week:

- **Books:** A selection of fall-themed picture books (e.g., *Fletcher and the Falling Leaves*, *Ten Apples Up On Top!*, *It's Pumpkin Day*, *Mouse!*, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*)
- **Art Supplies:** Construction paper (red, yellow, orange, brown, green), child-safe paint (red, green, yellow, orange), paintbrushes, child-safe glue or glue sticks, googly eyes, cotton balls, brown paper lunch bags, crayons.
- **Nature Items:** Collected leaves, pinecones, a small pumpkin, apples (red, green, and yellow varieties).
- **Kitchen & Pantry Items:** Knife and cutting board (for adult use), bowl, spoons, flour, salt, cinnamon, oats or corn kernels (for sensory bin), celery, sunflower seed butter (or alternative), raisins, pumpkin seeds.
- **Household Items:** A large bin for sensory play, buckets or baskets, blankets and pillows, a flashlight, paper plates.

Day 1: Colorful Leaves (2 Hours)

Focus: Exploring the colors of fall and developing fine motor skills.

1. Welcome & Story Time (20 minutes)

- Read a book about leaves, such as *Fletcher and the Falling Leaves*.
- Sing a simple song like, "The Leaves on the Trees" (to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus"):
"The leaves on the trees turn orange and red... all through the town."
- Talk about the colors you see in the book and outside your window.

2. Gross Motor: Leaf Hunt & Jump (30 minutes)

- Go outside with a bucket or bag.
- Run, walk, and search for different colored leaves. Encourage your child to name the colors as they pick them up: "I found a red one!"
- If you have enough leaves, make a small, fluffy pile and practice jumping into it safely.

3. Art Activity: Leaf Rubbings (30 minutes)

- Place a few collected leaves (vein-side up) on a flat surface.
- Cover them with a plain piece of paper.
- Peel the paper off fall-colored crayons (red, orange, yellow, brown).
- Show your child how to rub the side of the crayon over the paper to make the leaf's texture appear.

4. Themed Snack (15 minutes)

- Enjoy apple slices and a glass of water.
- Talk about how apples also come in fall colors like red and yellow.

5. Sensory Play: Fall Play-Doh (25 minutes)

- Provide red, yellow, and orange play-doh.
- Let your child press the collected leaves into the play-doh to make impressions.
- Use hands to roll, squish, and pinch the dough, building hand strength.

Day 2: Awesome Apples (2 Hours)

Focus: Learning about apples through counting, art, and taste.

1. Welcome & Story Time (20 minutes)

- Read *Ten Apples Up On Top!* by Dr. Seuss.
- Count the real apples you have. Line them up and count them together. Sort them by color.

2. Gross Motor: Apple Roll Races (25 minutes)

- In a hallway or open space, sit on the floor and show your child how to roll an apple.
- See who can roll their apple the farthest. Try rolling it to a target, like a basket on its side. This helps develop coordination.

3. Art Activity: Apple Stamping (30 minutes)

- **Adult prep:** Cut an apple in half from top to bottom.
- Pour red, yellow, and green paint onto paper plates.
- Show your child how to dip the apple half into the paint and press it onto paper to make apple prints. You can even see the star shape in the middle!

4. Themed Snack (20 minutes)

- **Adult prep:** Cut the different colored apples into slices.
- Have an "Apple Taste Test." Try a slice of each color. Ask: Which one is sweeter? Which one is more tart? Which is your favorite?

5. Sensory & Science: Does it Float? (25 minutes)

- Fill a large bowl or bin with water.
- Gather the apples and a few other fall objects (leaves, small twigs, a pinecone).
- Make predictions: "Do you think the apple will sink to the bottom or float on top?"
- Drop the items in one by one to see what happens. Apples float!

Day 3: Plump Pumpkins (2 Hours)

Focus: Investigating pumpkins using all five senses.

1. Welcome & Story Time (20 minutes)

- Read a book about pumpkins, like *It's Pumpkin Day, Mouse!*
- Explore the outside of your small pumpkin. Ask questions: Is it heavy or light? Is the skin smooth or bumpy? What color is it? Tap on it and describe the sound.

2. Gross Motor: Pumpkin Patch Obstacle Course (30 minutes)

- Set up a simple obstacle course using pillows to jump over and chairs to crawl under.
- The goal is to carry or roll the small pumpkin from the "start" of the pumpkin patch to the "finish" line without dropping it.

3. Sensory Exploration: Pumpkin Guts! (30 minutes)

- Place the pumpkin on a covered surface or inside a large bin.
- **Adult prep:** Carefully cut the top off the pumpkin.
- Let your child reach inside and explore the contents. Use words like "slimy," "stringy," and "wet."
- Work together to scoop the seeds and pulp into a bowl. This is a fantastic sensory experience.

4. Themed Snack (15 minutes)

- Enjoy pre-roasted pumpkin seeds (rinsed, dried, and baked by an adult beforehand).

- Talk about how the seeds came from inside the pumpkin you just explored.

5. Art Activity: Decorate Your Pumpkin (25 minutes)

- Use child-safe paint to decorate the outside of the pumpkin.
 - While the paint is wet, add googly eyes or other craft supplies. Let it dry and become a festive decoration.
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Day 4: Forest Friends (2 Hours)

Focus: Learning about animals that are busy in the fall.

1. Welcome & Story Time (20 minutes)

- Read a story about fall animals, such as squirrels, owls, or bears.
- Talk about what animals do to get ready for winter (e.g., squirrels gather nuts, bears get sleepy).

2. Gross Motor: Squirrel Scamper (30 minutes)

- Hide "acorns" (pinecones, crumpled paper balls, or blocks) around the room.
- Give your child a basket and have them scamper around like a squirrel to find and collect all the acorns. Count them as you put them in the basket.

3. Art Activity: Paper Bag Owl (30 minutes)

- Give your child a brown paper lunch bag.
- Help them glue on large paper circles for eyes, a small triangle for a beak, and cotton balls for fluffy feathers on the belly.
- This can become a fun puppet! Practice making "Hoo, hoo!" sounds.

4. Themed Snack (15 minutes)

- Make "Ants on a Log."
- Provide celery sticks ("logs"), spread sunflower seed butter in the groove, and let your child place raisins ("ants") on top.

5. Sensory Play: Bird Seed Bin (25 minutes)

- Fill a small bin with bird seed.
 - Add small scoops, cups, and toy forest animals.
 - Let your child enjoy scooping, pouring, and burying the animals in the seed. This is great for fine motor skills and imaginative play.
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Day 5: Fall Celebration (2 Hours)

Focus: Reviewing the week's themes through creative play and culminating activities.

1. Welcome & Review (20 minutes)

- Look at all the art you created this week.
- Talk about your favorite activities: "Remember when we stamped with apples? Was that fun?"
- Let your child choose their favorite fall book from the week to read again.

2. Gross Motor: Fall Festival (30 minutes)

- Set up stations combining the week's gross motor activities.
 - Have an area for rolling apples, a spot for rolling the pumpkin, and a small pile of leaves to jump in.
 - Play some fun music and move between the activities freely.
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3. Creative Activity: Grand Fall Sensory Bin (30 minutes)

- Fill a large bin with a base of uncooked oats or corn kernels.
- Add all the nature items from the week: leaves, pinecones, the small pumpkin, and a few apples.
- Provide scoops and cups and allow for unstructured, imaginative play, combining all the textures and objects from the week.

4. Themed Snack (15 minutes)

- Have a "Fall Feast" with a small plate of all the snacks from the week: apple slices, roasted pumpkin seeds, and "ants on a log."

5. Quiet Time & Wrap-up: Cozy Reading Fort (25 minutes)

- Build a fort with blankets, chairs, and pillows.
- Snuggle up inside with a flashlight and a few fall books.
- End the week with quiet, cozy connection, celebrating all the fun you had exploring the season of fall.