

Lesson Plan: My Fall Leaf Adventure

Overall Learning Focus

This 5-day unit explores the magic of Fall through hands-on activities centered on leaves and trees, fostering observation skills, color and shape recognition, and a love for nature in a young learner.

Materials Needed for the Week

- A bag or bucket for collecting leaves
 - A variety of real Fall leaves (collected on walks)
 - Paper (white drawing paper, brown and green construction paper)
 - Crayons or washable paint in Fall colors (red, yellow, orange, brown)
 - Child-safe glue or a glue stick
 - Contact paper (optional, for preserving leaves)
 - A sensory bin or large container
 - Play-Doh in brown, green, and Fall colors
 - A magnifying glass (optional)
 - Fall-themed picture books (e.g., "We're Going on a Leaf Hunt" by Steve Metzger, "Fletcher and the Falling Leaves" by Julia Rawlinson)
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Day 1: The Colors of Fall

Learning Objectives

- The learner will be able to point to and name at least two Fall colors (red, yellow, orange, brown) when shown a leaf of that color.
- The learner will participate in a nature walk to collect colorful leaves.

Success Criteria

"I can find a red leaf and a yellow leaf. I can tell a grown-up what color they are."

Lesson Activities (Approx. 60 minutes)

1. Introduction: Welcome to Fall! (10 minutes)

- **Hook:** Start with a fun, active song like "Autumn Leaves Are Falling Down" (to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down"). Act out the motions of leaves twirling and falling.
- **Talk:** "Look outside! The leaves on the trees are changing. They are not all green anymore. Today, we are going to be Color Detectives! Our job is to find all the beautiful Fall colors."

2. Body: Leaf Hunt & Color Sort (35 minutes)

- **I Do (Modeling):** Show the child a red leaf and a yellow leaf you found earlier. "I am a Color Detective. I see a RED leaf. It's so bright! And look, here is a YELLOW leaf, just like the sun. I am putting them in my bucket."
 - **We Do (Guided Practice):** Go outside for a "Leaf Hunt." Say, "Let's look for colors together! Can you help me find a red leaf? Wow! We found one! Let's put it in our bucket."
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Repeat for yellow, orange, and brown.

- **You Do (Independent Practice):** Encourage the child to find leaves on their own. "Your turn to be the detective! Can you find a yellow leaf all by yourself? Show me! What a great job!" Let them fill their bucket.
- **Indoor Sorting:** Come inside and dump the leaves out. "Let's make piles! All the red leaves go here. All the yellow leaves go here." Guide them as they sort the leaves by color.

3. Conclusion: Story & Recap (15 minutes)

- **Wind Down:** Read a simple, color-focused Fall book. Point to the colors in the illustrations that match the leaves you collected.
- **Recap:** Hold up a red leaf. "What color is this?" (Encourage them to say "red"). Do the same for yellow. "You were an amazing Color Detective today! You found red leaves and yellow leaves!"

Assessment

Formative: Observe the child during the leaf hunt. Can they point to the correct color when asked? Do they attempt to name the colors?

Differentiation

- **Scaffolding:** Focus on just two colors (e.g., red and yellow). Give prompts like, "Is this one red?"
- **Extension:** Introduce more advanced colors like "gold" or "burgundy." Count the leaves in each color pile.

Day 2: Fun Leaf Shapes

Learning Objectives

- The learner will be able to describe a leaf using one shape word (e.g., "pointy," "round").
- The learner will create a leaf rubbing to reveal its shape and texture.

Success Criteria

"I can make a picture of a leaf. I can feel if a leaf is pointy or round."

Lesson Activities (Approx. 60 minutes)

1. Introduction: Not All Leaves Are the Same! (10 minutes)

- **Hook:** Start with your "Autumn Leaves" song. Then, hold up two very different leaves, like a pointy maple and a rounded oak. "Look! These leaves are different. They have different shapes!"
- **Talk:** "Today, we are going to be Shape Explorers! We will use our fingers to feel the leaves and our eyes to see their cool shapes."

2. Body: Feel, Rub, & Create (35 minutes)

- **I Do (Modeling):** Take a pointy maple leaf. "I'm going to feel this leaf. Ooh, it has pointy parts. Ouch, ouch, pointy!" Now take a rounder leaf. "This one is soft and round on the edges." Then, show how to make a leaf rubbing. "I put the leaf under the paper. Now I rub the crayon on its side... WOW! A leaf picture appeared! It's magic!"
- **We Do (Guided Practice):** "Let's feel this leaf together. Is it pointy or round?" Guide the child's hand. "Now, let's make a rubbing together. You hold the paper, and I'll help you rub

the crayon."

- **You Do (Independent Practice):** "Your turn to be the explorer! Pick a leaf. Feel its shape. Now, make a magic picture of your leaf all by yourself." Let them create several leaf rubbings.

3. **Conclusion: Shape Show-and-Tell (15 minutes)**

- **Wind Down:** Let the child choose their favorite rubbing.
- **Recap:** "Show me your favorite leaf picture. Tell me about the leaf you used. Was it pointy or round? You are a fantastic Shape Explorer! You found pointy leaves and made beautiful art."

Assessment

Formative: Can the child attempt to describe a leaf's shape after feeling it? Do they understand the process of making a leaf rubbing after demonstration?

Differentiation

- **Scaffolding:** Pre-select two very distinct shapes to work with. Use hand-over-hand help for crayon rubbing.
- **Extension:** Introduce the names of the trees the leaves came from (e.g., "This is a pointy Maple leaf"). Try to match the rubbing to the real leaf.

Day 3: All About Trees

Learning Objectives

- The learner will be able to point to the trunk and branches on a real tree or a picture of a tree.
- The learner will create a simple model of a tree using craft materials.

Success Criteria

"I can point to the big trunk and the little branches. I can make my own tree."

Lesson Activities (Approx. 60 minutes)

1. **Introduction: Where Do Leaves Come From? (10 minutes)**

- **Hook:** Show a single leaf. "Where did this leaf live before it fell down?" After they guess, show a picture of a big tree full of leaves. "It lived on a big tree!"
- **Talk:** "Today, we are going to learn about the parts of a tree! Trees are big and strong, and they give us our beautiful leaves."

2. **Body: Be a Tree & Make a Tree (35 minutes)**

- **I Do (Modeling):** "I am going to be a tree! My legs are the strong TRUNK." (Stand straight and tall). "My arms are the BRANCHES, reaching for the sun." (Stretch arms out). "My fingers are the little leaves!" (Wiggle fingers).
- **We Do (Guided Practice):** "Let's be trees together! Stand up tall. Show me your strong trunk! Now, show me your long branches! Wiggle your leaf-fingers!" Have fun swaying like a tree in the wind.
- **You Do (Independent Practice):** Time to make a tree craft. Give the child brown construction paper for the trunk/branches and green/fall-colored paper for leaves. "Now you can make your very own tree. First, glue down the big trunk. Then, add the branches." They

can tear paper for leaves or use some of the real leaves they collected.

3. **Conclusion: Tree Tour & Recap (15 minutes)**

- **Wind Down:** Look out the window or at pictures in a book. "Let's find the parts of the tree."
- **Recap:** "Point to the trunk on that tree outside. Good job! Where are the branches? You know all about trees now! You even made one yourself!" Display their artwork proudly.

Assessment

Formative: During the "Be a Tree" game and the craft, does the child correctly identify the trunk and branches?

Differentiation

- **Scaffolding:** Pre-cut the trunk and branch shapes for the craft. Focus only on the trunk.
- **Extension:** Talk about the roots under the ground. "The roots are like the tree's feet, holding it in the dirt." Use brown Play-Doh to make a tree model with roots.

Day 4: Leaf Art & Sensory Fun

Learning Objectives

- The learner will use leaves to create a unique piece of art.
- The learner will engage in sensory play using leaves, describing how they feel or sound.

Success Criteria

"I can make a leaf person. I can make loud crunchy sounds with the leaves."

Lesson Activities (Approx. 60 minutes)

1. **Introduction: Let's Play with Leaves! (5 minutes)**

- **Hook:** Bring out the big bucket of leaves collected on Day 1. "We've sorted these leaves and made rubbings... what else can we do with them? Let's play!"
- **Talk:** "Today, we will be Leaf Artists and Musicians! We will make silly leaf people and listen to the crunchy leaf music."

2. **Body: Create & Crunch (40 minutes)**

- **I Do (Modeling):** "First, I will be a Leaf Artist." Take a large leaf and glue it to paper. "This is my leaf person's body." Add smaller leaves for arms and legs, and draw a face with a crayon. "Look! It's my silly leaf friend!"
- **We Do (Guided Practice):** "Let's make a leaf animal together. Should we make a lion with a big, crunchy mane?" Help the child select and glue leaves to make a creation.
- **You Do (Independent Practice - Art):** "Now it's your turn to make anything you want! What will you create with your leaves?" Let their imagination lead.
- **You Do (Independent Practice - Sensory):** Pour the remaining (dry) leaves into a sensory bin or a clear space on the floor. "Time for leaf music! What sound do the leaves make when you squeeze them? CRUNCH! Can you make them crunch loud? Can you make them crunch soft?" Let them explore scooping, pouring, and crunching the leaves.

3. **Conclusion: Clean-Up & Recap (15 minutes)**

- **Wind Down:** Read a story while the child continues quiet sensory play.
- **Recap:** "You were such a wonderful artist and musician today! You made a cool leaf person

and made so much crunchy music. Playing with leaves is so much fun!" Clean up the leaves together.

Assessment

Formative: Observe engagement. Is the child exploring the materials creatively and verbally expressing what they are doing or hearing?

Differentiation

- **Scaffolding:** Provide pre-drawn outlines (e.g., a circle for a face) where the child can add leaf "hair."
- **Extension:** Try leaf stamping with paint. Use the optional contact paper to preserve their favorite leaves into a suncatcher.

Day 5: Why Leaves Fall & Celebration

Learning Objectives

- The learner will be able to share one thing they learned about leaves or trees this week.
- The learner will listen to a simple story explaining why leaves fall.

Success Criteria

"I can tell my grown-up one thing I liked about our leaf week. I know the leaves get sleepy in the Fall."

Lesson Activities (Approx. 60 minutes)

1. **Introduction: Where Did the Leaves Go? (10 minutes)**
 - **Hook:** Start with the "Autumn Leaves" song one last time. Ask, "Why are all the leaves falling down? Where are they going?"
 - **Talk:** "That is a very good question! Today we are going to read a story to find out why leaves fall down in the Fall. Then, we will have a party to celebrate all the amazing things we learned this week!"
2. **Body: Story Time & "My Favorite Thing" (35 minutes)**
 - **I Do/We Do (Story Time):** Read a book like "Fletcher and the Falling Leaves." Use a simple explanation. "The tree gets very sleepy in the cold weather. It tells the leaves it's time to sleep, too. So the leaves let go and dance down to the ground to rest for the winter. Wee!"
 - **You Do (Show and Tell):** Lay out all the crafts from the week (the color sort, the rubbings, the tree craft, the leaf person). "Look at all the wonderful work you did! You are a Leaf Expert! Can you show me your favorite thing we did this week?"
 - **Talk About It:** Ask simple questions about their favorite project. "Why do you like that one? Oh, because it has your favorite color, red!" or "That rubbing was fun to make, wasn't it?" This is the summative assessment.
3. **Conclusion: Leaf Expert Dance Party! (15 minutes)**
 - **Wind Down/Celebration:** Put on some fun music. Toss the remaining sensory-bin leaves in the air like confetti and dance around like falling leaves.
 - **Recap:** "This week, you learned about Fall COLORS, leaf SHAPES, the parts of a TREE, and you made amazing ART. You are a Leaf Expert! Great job!"

Summative Assessment

The "Show and Tell" activity serves as a summative assessment. Can the child point to a project and share a simple idea about it (e.g., "I like red," "Crunchy," "Big tree")? This demonstrates engagement and retention of a key concept from the week.

Differentiation

- **Scaffolding:** Guide the Show and Tell more directly. "Remember when we found the red leaves? Was that fun?"
- **Extension:** Ask more complex questions. "What do you think will happen to the trees next, in winter?" Introduce the idea of seasons changing.