

# Lesson Plan: My Colorful World of Fall Leaves

## Materials Needed

- A collection of fallen leaves (various colors, shapes, and sizes)
- Child-safe scissors and glue stick
- Construction paper (red, yellow, brown, orange, and white/blue)
- Crayons (with paper removed for leaf rubbings)
- A basket or bag for collecting leaves
- Picture books about Fall (e.g., "We're Going on a Leaf Hunt" by Steve Metzger, "Fletcher and the Falling Leaves" by Julia Rawlinson)
- A large, shallow box or bin (for a "feely box" and sensory play)
- Googly eyes, markers
- Small toy animals (e.g., squirrel, chipmunk, hedgehog)
- Twigs and small sticks

## Day 1: Discovering Fall Leaves (1 Hour)

### Learning Objectives

- Learner will be able to identify a leaf.
- Learner will be able to name at least one Fall color (e.g., red, yellow, brown).
- Learner will practice fine motor skills by picking up leaves.

### Introduction (10 mins)

- **Hook:** Start by reading a simple, engaging picture book about Fall leaves. As you read, point enthusiastically to the leaves on each page.
- **Talking Points:** "Look at all the pretty leaves! What's happening? The leaves are falling down! The wind is blowing them. Whoosh! Let's go find some leaves of our own!"

### Body (40 mins)

- **I Do (5 mins):** Show the collection bag. "This is my leaf-finding bag. I'm going to find a special leaf for my bag. Wow! I found a red one. It's so pretty. In it goes!"
- **We Do (20 mins): Nature Walk.** Go outside together. "Let's go on a leaf hunt! Can you help me find some leaves? Look down on the ground. Look up at the trees! What colors do you see?" Help the child spot and pick up different leaves, talking about them as you go.
- **You Do (15 mins): Leaf Play.** Come inside and pour the leaves into a bin or onto a clear floor space. Let the child explore them freely. "Feel the leaves! Are they soft? Are they crunchy? \*Crinkle, crinkle\*."

### Conclusion (10 mins)

- **Recap:** "We found so many leaves today! We found red leaves and yellow leaves and brown leaves. It was so much fun!"
- **Song:** Sing a simple song like "Autumn Leaves are Falling Down" (to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down"). Act it out by fluttering hands downward.
- **Formative Assessment:** Observe the child's engagement during the walk and play. Can they point to a leaf when asked?

## Day 2: The Colors of Fall (1 Hour)

### Learning Objectives

- Learner will be able to sort leaves into two or three color groups (e.g., red pile, yellow pile).
- Learner will be able to create a piece of art using a leaf and crayon.
- Learner will practice color recognition.

### Introduction (10 mins)

- **Hook:** Lay out three pieces of construction paper: red, yellow, and brown. Place one matching leaf on each. "Look! The red leaf is on the red paper. They match!"
- **Talking Points:** "Our leaves have so many colors! Today we are going to be color detectives and find all the matching colors."

### Body (40 mins)

- **I Do (5 mins):** Hold up a yellow leaf. "I have a yellow leaf. Where does it go? Not on the red paper. Not on the brown paper. Here it is! On the yellow paper. It matches!"
- **We Do (15 mins): Color Sorting.** "Let's do it together! Pick a leaf. What color is it? You got a brown one! Can you help me put it on the brown paper? Great job!" Continue sorting the pile of leaves together.
- **You Do (20 mins): Leaf Rubbing Art.**
  1. Place a piece of white paper on the table.
  2. Ask the child to choose one special leaf and place it under the paper.
  3. Model how to hold a crayon (paper off) on its side and rub it over the spot where the leaf is hiding. "Look! It's magic! The leaf is appearing on our paper!"
  4. Let the child try with different leaves and colors.

### Conclusion (10 mins)

- **Show & Tell:** Display the child's leaf rubbing art. "Wow! You made a beautiful picture. Tell me about it. I see a red leaf and a yellow leaf!"
- **Recap:** "Today we learned that Fall leaves can be red, yellow, and brown. We are great color sorters!"
- **Formative Assessment:** Observe the child's ability to match leaves to colored paper. Success is participating and matching even with help.

## Day 3: Leaf Shapes & Feelings (1 Hour)

### Learning Objectives

- Learner will be able to describe a leaf using one texture or shape word (e.g., "pointy," "bumpy," "crunchy").
- Learner will be able to create a leaf collage.
- Learner will develop sensory awareness through touch.

### Introduction (10 mins)

- **Hook:** Prepare a "feely box" by cutting a hole in the side of a cardboard box. Place a few different leaves inside (e.g., a bumpy oak leaf, a smooth magnolia leaf, a crunchy dry maple leaf). "I have a secret in my box! Can you be brave and reach in to feel it? What does it feel like?"

**Body (40 mins)**

- **I Do (5 mins):** Pull out one leaf. "This is an oak leaf. Feel the edges. Ooh, they are bumpy and wavy." Pull out another. "This maple leaf feels pointy. Point, point, point!"
- **We Do (15 mins): Sensory Exploration.** Explore the leaves together, focusing on language. Rip a dry one: "CRUNCH! It makes a loud sound!" Trace the lines on a leaf with your fingers: "These are like little roads on the leaf." Break a stem: "\*\*snap\*\*!"
- **You Do (20 mins): Leaf Collage.** Give the child a piece of construction paper and a glue stick. Let them choose leaves to glue onto the paper to create a collage. Encourage them to use different shapes and textures. Some leaves may need to be broken into smaller pieces.

**Conclusion (10 mins)**

- **Art Walk:** Hold up the finished collage. "Let's talk about your art! Point to your favorite leaf. Oh, the big crunchy one! I like that one too."
- **Recap:** "Leaves are not just colorful, they have shapes and feelings, too! Some are pointy, some are smooth, and some are super crunchy!"
- **Formative Assessment:** Does the child use any descriptive words (even simple ones like "big" or "crunch")? Success is exploring the leaves with their hands and engaging in the art activity.

**Day 4: Why Do Leaves Fall Down? (1 Hour)****Learning Objectives**

- Learner will be able to demonstrate leaves falling through body movement.
- Learner will understand the simple concept that trees "let go" of their leaves in Fall.
- Learner will practice gross motor skills.

**Introduction (10 mins)**

- **Hook:** Tell a very simple story using a leaf as a puppet. "Hi! I'm a little leaf. I live up high in my tree home. But now it's getting chilly, and my tree is getting very sleepy. It's time for me to fly! Weeee!" Let the leaf drift to the ground.
- **Talking Points:** "In the Fall, the trees get sleepy. They need to rest for winter. So they say 'goodbye' to their leaves, and the leaves fall down, down, down to the ground."

**Body (40 mins)**

- **I Do (5 mins):** "I am a big, tall tree. My arms are my branches." Stand tall and stretch your arms out. "The wind blows! \*Whoooooosh\*." Sway back and forth. "My leaves are falling off!" Wiggle your fingers and let them "flutter" down.
- **We Do (15 mins): Be a Tree Dance.** Put on some calm music. "Let's all be trees together! Stand up tall! Now, let your leaves (hands) dance in the wind. A big wind is coming! Get ready... WHOOSH! Let all your leaves fall down!" Fall gently to the floor. Repeat several times.
- **You Do (20 mins): Leaf Tossing Fun!** If possible, go outside to a pile of leaves (or create a small one). Let the child joyfully throw, kick, and jump in the leaves. This is pure, kinesthetic learning that connects the idea of "falling" with fun. If inside, you can put leaves in a small bin and let them toss them in the air.

**Conclusion (10 mins)**

- **Recap & Calm Down:** "Wow, that was so much fun! What happens to the leaves in the Fall? They

fall down! Just like we did."

- **Song:** Sing "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. The leaves on the trees come twirling down... all through the town."
- **Formative Assessment:** Observe the child's participation in the movement activity. Do they mimic the action of leaves falling?

## Day 5: Who Needs the Leaves? (1 Hour)

### Learning Objectives

- Learner will understand the simple concept that animals use leaves.
- Learner will be able to create an "animal" using a leaf.
- Learner will demonstrate understanding by participating in a "show and tell."

### Introduction (10 mins)

- **Hook:** Show a picture of a squirrel or chipmunk in a pile of leaves. Hide a toy squirrel under a few leaves on the table. "I see something hiding in the leaves! Peek-a-boo! It's a squirrel! What is he doing?"
- **Talking Points:** "When leaves fall down, they make a cozy blanket on the ground. Little animals, like squirrels and chipmunks, love to play in them! They also use leaves to build warm beds to sleep in all winter."

### Body (35 mins)

- **I Do (5 mins):** Take a toy animal and some leaves/twigs. "My little squirrel is cold. I will make him a warm bed. I will put some soft leaves here, and some twigs to make a wall. Now he is cozy and warm."
- **We Do (15 mins): Build an Animal Home.** "Let's make a home for your animal friend. Where should we put the leaves? Let's pile them up to make them a warm bed. Good job!" This can be done outside with real materials or inside on a tray.
- **You Do (15 mins): Leaf Critters.**
  1. Provide a piece of paper, glue, leaves, and googly eyes.
  2. "Let's pretend our leaves are little animals! This big brown leaf could be a bear. I'll glue it down and give it some eyes."
  3. Let the child choose leaves and glue them down. Help them add googly eyes or draw legs with a marker to create their own "leaf critters."

### Conclusion (15 mins)

- **Summative Assessment (Show & Tell):** "It's time for our Leaf Show! Tell me all about the amazing things we did this week." Ask the child to show their leaf critter. "Who did you make? What sound does it make?" Ask them to point to their favorite leaf rubbing or their leaf collage from earlier in the week.
- **Recap:** "This week we learned all about Fall! We found leaves, sorted their colors, felt their shapes, pretended to fall down like them, and learned how animals use them for cozy beds. You are a leaf expert!"

## Differentiation & Adaptability

- **For Younger Learners or More Support:** Focus on one concept per day (e.g., only the color red). Use hand-over-hand guidance for art projects. Simplify sorting to just two colors. Focus on the sensory experience over the academic concepts.
- **For Older Learners or More Challenge:** Introduce more complex vocabulary (e.g., "oak," "maple," "stem," "veins"). Practice counting leaves. Create patterns with the leaf colors (red, yellow, red, yellow). Write the first letter of the child's name with twigs. Discuss the "why" in more detail (e.g., "The trees need to save their energy for winter, so they stop feeding the leaves").
- **For Classroom/Group Setting:** The nature walk can be done as a whole group. Sorting can be a center activity. Art projects can be done at tables. The "Be a Tree" dance is an excellent gross motor activity for a group. The show and tell at the end allows each child to share their work.