

FALL LEAVES



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

OBJECTIVES

LEARN HOW TO OBSERVE DETAILS FOUND ON FALL LEAVES, INCLUDING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPECIES.

MATERIALS

BLANK SHEETS OF "THIN" PAPER
COLLECTED FALL LEAVES (FROM DIFFERENT TREES)*
CRAYONS
MAGNIFYING GLASS

*NOTE: THIS WORKS BEST WITH LEAVES THAT ARE STILL FLEXIBLE AND NOT DRY AND CRUNCHY.

FACTS

- PARTS OF A LEAF: PETIOLE (STEM), BLADE, AND VEINS.
- LEAVES TAKE IN THE SUNLIGHT TO MAKE FOOD FOR THE PLANT.
- TREES SHED THEIR LEAVES IN THE FALL TO CONSERVE ENERGY.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?
2. WHAT IS THE SAME?
3. WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

CONCEPTS

- PLANTS USE LEAVES TO MAKE THEIR FOOD.
- DIFFERENT TYPES OF PLANTS HAVE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEAVES.
- IN THE FALL, SOME PLANTS STOP MAKING FOOD.

INTEREST APPROACH-ENGAGEMENT

ASK A QUESTION(S):

1. WHAT SHAPES DO YOU SEE?
2. WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES THE TREES LOSE THEIR LEAVES?
3. WHAT IS THE SAME ON ALL OF THE LEAVES?
4. DO YOU NOTICE ANY DIFFERENCES?



ACTIVITY 1:

EXPLORE ANY AREA WHERE YOU WILL FIND A VARIETY OF LEAVES. BACKYARDS, WOODLAND PARKS, OR ALONG NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS ARE ALL POSSIBILITIES. ALLOW CHILDREN TO TAKE AS MUCH TIME AS THEY WANT TO FIND "THEIR LEAVES." THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO ALLOW THEM TO JUST EXPLORE AND ENJOY BEING OUTSIDE. SELECT A NUMBER OF LEAVES FROM DIFFERENT TYPES OF TREES TO TAKE BACK HOME WITH YOU.

ACTIVITY 2:

- BACK AT HOME, SANDWICH A LEAF, VEIN SIDE UP, BETWEEN TWO PIECES OF PAPER, OR FOLD ONE IN HALF WITH THE LEAF BETWEEN THE "PAGES".
- PEEL BACK THE PAPER ON A CRAYON AND USE THE SIDE OF THE CRAYON TO RUB OVER THE LEAF.
- REPEAT THE PROCESS WITH THE OTHER LEAVES.

ACTIVITY 3:

USING A MAGNIFYING GLASS, IDENTIFY THINGS THAT ARE THE SAME AND THINGS THAT ARE DIFFERENT BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEAVES. WRITE DOWN OBSERVATIONS ON YOUR PAPER WITH THE RUBBING. FOR SMALLER CHILDREN, JUST ASK THEM TO TELL YOU THE DIFFERENCES, ETC.

FOR OLDER KIDS:

- USE GUIDE BOOKS TO TRY AND IDENTIFY THE LEAVES.
- TAKE RUBBINGS OF THE BARK OF THE TREE AND MAKE YOUR OBSERVATIONS.
- RESEARCH WHY LEAVES CHANGE COLOR, OR THE DIFFERENT TYPES (OR CLASSIFICATIONS) OF LEAVES.

THIS GOOD GROWING BLOG POST IS A GREAT PLACE TO START.

[HTTPS://EXTENSION.ILLINOIS.EDU/BLOGS/GOOD-GROWING/2019-10-08-WHY-DO-TREE-LEAVES-CHANGE-COLOR-AUTUMN](https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/good-growing/2019-10-08-why-do-tree-leaves-change-color-autumn)

OTHER WAYS TO MAKE OBSERVATIONS:

- MEASURE THE LEAVES USING A RULER OR TAPE MEASURE TO SEE HOW BIG THEY ARE.
- FEEL THE LEAVES AND WRITE DOWN HOW THEY FEEL.
- TRACE THE LEAVES.
- TRY AND DESCRIBE HOW THEY SMELL.