



Changing Seasons and Changing Leaves

Goals

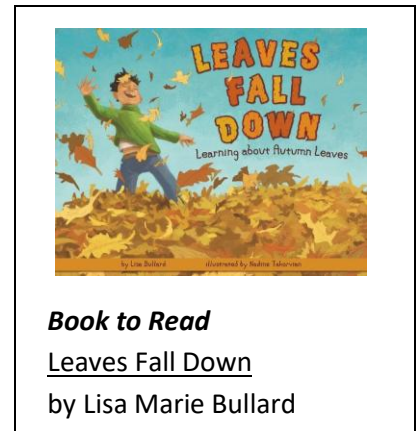
Teach students about changing seasons and the season of autumn. Students will create a leaf spinner and record daily temperatures.

Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at www.growing-minds.org.

Materials

- Paper plates
- Photos of leaves
- Fall phrases
- Warm colored paper
- Leaves (students will collect)
- Scissors
- Glue



Book to Read

Leaves Fall Down

by Lisa Marie Bullard

Preparation

For the leaf spinner, cut out the photographs of leaves and the fall phrases before the lesson. In addition, draw a spiral on the paper plates as a mark for where the students should cut their spinner. You might want to cut the paper plates for younger students.

Vocabulary

Autumn: the season of the year between summer and winter, also called fall

Harvest: the gathering of ripened fruits or vegetables

Evergreen: a plant that has green leaves or needles all year round

Activities

Read a Book

Read Leaves Fall Down by Lisa Bullard or another book about autumn. Why do leaves change color in fall/autumn? This book addresses this question in a manner that is fun and simplified for younger kids, ages 5-8. The illustrations are a highlight, depicting the rich autumnal colors in all their vibrant hues. A boy and his mom go outdoors for a walk and are depicted exploring nature, with the curious young boy asking his mom questions about why leaves lose their original color in fall. Terms such as chlorophyll and compost are used but defined in a simple manner and there is also a glossary at the back. Write down new words and their definitions on the board to review later. Highlight words or phrases that describe the fall season.



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Create a Leaf Spinner

Take a trip outside and ask student to each gather three or four leaves. Return to the classroom and brainstorm words that describe autumn. Older students can write the descriptive words on a piece of paper and cut them out using scissors. Give each student a paper plate, set of leaf pictures, warm colored paper shapes, autumn descriptive words, and glue. Ask students to cut along the line drawn on their paper plate. Students should then glue all of their pieces to the top side of the paper plate. Once the glue has dried, the leaf spinner will be ready to hang!



Use Your Senses in the Garden

Go outside to the garden during the morning and ask students to write down what they notice with each of their five senses. Do they see dew on the ground? Is the sun bright or is it cloudy? Touch a leaf or grass. How does it feel? Repeat this exercise in the afternoon and encourage the students to make comparisons between the different times of day. Record the students' observations during the garden visit and once in the classroom, write their observations in a VENN diagram. Use the student's observations as a way to talk with them about the changes that happen in the fall, including cooler temperatures. Ask the students to make one journal page about their observations in the morning and another about their observations in the afternoon. Ask them to use the new fall words and phrases they have learned from the book and activity.

Recording Temperature

Visit the garden during the morning and afternoon and record the temperature at each time. Has it gotten warmer or colder through the day? Ask the students to determine how many degrees the temperature has risen from the morning to the afternoon. Can they make predictions about tomorrow's temperature? What temperature will it be in the morning and the afternoon?