

HERRING GUT LEARNING CENTER

SUMMER HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Leaf Activities

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No matter where you are, there are always leaves available! You can use leaves you find outside or those found in the refrigerator or on house plants.



Early Learners (preK-2nd grade)

1. Collect leaves and sort by shape, size, color, etc. Teach your student descriptive words and use the [Growing Up WILD Leaf Observation Sheet](#).
2. Create a [leaf graph](#) on a poster board or other surface.
3. Perform the [life cycle of a tree](#) dance.
4. Read Leaf Man by Lois Ehlert.
5. Create a Leaf Man or leaf critter using leaves and craft materials.
6. Grab a bowl of water, leaves, and pennies. Predict how many pennies each leaf will hold. Test your prediction. Retest with a new leaf. See if the way pennies are added to the leaves matters. What leaves hold the most pennies and why?
7. For additional ideas, check out Project Learning Tree's [Leaf Activities for Young Learners](#).
8. For Fall Leaf Songs and Fingerplay, check out this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnQVTA6hSgs>.

Upper Elementary (3rd-5th)

1. Create a leaf bingo sheet and look for different types of leaves around the neighborhood.
2. Go through the refrigerator and pantry. List what types of leaves we eat.
3. Identify the parts of a leaf. [Here are worksheet examples](#).
4. Collect leaves and examine the different vein patterns. The veins help carry water and food from the leaves to the roots and back. Use paint or chalk markers to trace the vein patterns. How many different vein patterns can you find?
5. Conduct an experiment to learn how water moves through leaves: <https://untamedscience.com/biology/plants/water-transport-experiment/>
6. Watch the video on [Why Do Leaves Change Color](#).
7. Conduct a science experiment to see the different pigments in leaves (this works best with fresh leaves): <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/bring-science-home-leaf-colors/>

8. Press leaves between newspapers and a heavy, flat weight. Once dry, create leaf bookmarks, leaf lanterns, and other leaf crafts.
9. Make leaf rubbings.

Middle School and High School (6th-12th)

1. Did you know the cherry blossoms in D.C. bloomed almost 2 weeks earlier than average? The bloom times for many species are changing with the climate. Become a community scientist. Look for trees and other plants that are beginning to leaf out. Use applications like [Seek](#) or [iNaturalist](#) to identify plants and then record the phenology (timing of leaf out, flowers, etc) in [Project BudBurst](#). You can also use [Nature's Notebook](#).
2. [Create a leaf collection](#) and identify the leaves you collected. Use our [Deciduous tree guide](#) and our [conifer tree guide](#) to help with identification. [Here](#) is an example of a sixth grade leaf project with writing requirements.
3. If you have access to a microscope or another magnifying device, go on a [stomata safari](#). Some phones like [iPhones](#) have magnifying features built in.
4. Look up Chinese Leaf Carving. Attempt to create artwork using this technique.
5. Use leaves to create [Cubism Leaves](#).

