

Leaves

Nothing inspires the feeling of fall quite like colorful and crunching falling leaves.

Essential Vocabulary

deciduous – trees that lose leaves annually

petiole – the scientific term for stem; the part that connects a leaf to a tree

toothed – a leaf with even sized and spaced projections around the margin (edge)

midrib – the central vein of a leaf

Lesson Starters

Foliage Flow Charts

Take a quick walking trip around the school or neighborhood to collect different types of leaves. Then have students break the leaves into two groups – pine or broad leaves. Break each category into further groups, such as clusters or individuals, toothed or smooth, or the type of base. Glue and label leaves in a flow chart format or use a simple app, like Poplet, to create a visual organization.

Welcome Fall Main Ideas

Use nonfiction texts, such as [Fall Leaves Change Colors](#) or [Why Do Leaves Change Colors?](#) to learn about the basics of why leaves change colors. A [lesson plan](#) to guide learning suggests [printing cards](#) and having students sort them into main ideas and supporting details that work together.

Stem and Leaf Plots

Research the types of trees in your area, collect leaves and count them, or find how many leaves are common on different plants. Use your numbers to create stem and leaf plots. A [StudyJams math activity](#) introduces how to use the graphs and then students apply their leaf-related research numbers to creating their own.

Poet-Tree

Read [Falling Leaf Poems](#) and brainstorm vivid figurative language and vocabulary as a whole group. Provide a [poetry form](#) for students to create their own fall leaf poems. Compose final poems on [leaf-shaped stationery](#) and display on a tree.



Leaf Rubbing Diagram

After collecting leaves, or getting a selection of fake leaves, have students make rubbings. Lay a newsprint page over a leaf and use an unwrapped crayon to rub until the parts of the leaf are seen in the rubbing. Using a pencil or pen, label the parts of a leaf. Older students can add labels describing the process of photosynthesis or how the leaf is classified.

Leaf Man

Use Lois Ehlert's book [Leaf Man](#) as a jumping-off point for using natural leaves, acorns, and fall materials to create leaf characters. Once each student has a "man" or scene made, encourage creative writing about the adventures their leaf character goes on. Pair a non-fiction selection and expository leaf writing to round out the [learning](#).

Resource Connection

[Autumn Leaves Curriculum Connections](#)

Explore leaves through exercising estimation skills, expanding leaf-themed vocabulary, and moving like a falling leaf.

[Fall Foliage Web Resources](#)

Take a tour of what the Web has to offer on autumn, including a comparison of fall in different biomes, how to preserve leaves, and why leaves change colors.

[Everything You Need: Fall](#)

Autumn-themed lessons, activities, and resources for all things fall.

[Tree Talk and Leaf Study Printable](#)

Autumn leaf activities and ideas from Printables.

[Leaf Decay Contraption](#)

Make a leaf decay contraption with Mrs. Frizzle to see how leaves break down in the soil.

[Fall Crafts](#)

A collection of fall leaf crafts, apple ideas, and name art projects.