

4. Once the leaves are in place, peel the backing from the second piece of contact paper and place it, sticky side down, over the leaves. Show the children how to iron out any air bubbles using their hands, a ruler, or a book.
5. Ask the children to draw a line around the outer shape of the leaves, leaving about $\frac{1}{4}$ " of contact paper all the way around the leaves. Then they can cut away the excess paper, following the lines they have drawn.
6. Use a hole punch to punch a hole into each child's ornament. Help them thread a piece of string through the hole. Hang the ornaments in a sunny spot.

Related books

Use a tree/leaf identification guide to learn more about the trees in your back yard or park.

National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees: Eastern Region Trees: Trees Identified by Leaf, Bark, and Seed (Fandex Family Field Guides) by Stephen M.L. Aronson

★ Melissa O. Markham, Huddleston, VA

Autumn All Around

Materials

Small paper plates • scissors • construction paper in fall colors • glue • hole punch • yarn

What to do

1. Cut out the centers from small paper plates, one for each child. Cut out a variety of fall-colored leaves from construction paper.
2. Show the children how to create leaf wreaths by gluing a variety of construction paper leaves around the perimeter of the plate.
3. Help them punch a hole into the top of their wreaths and attach a piece of yarn for hanging.

★ Joan Bowman, Langhorne, PA

Clay Leaf Roll-Outs

Materials

Self-drying clay • rolling pin • leaves • paint and brushes

What to do

1. Flatten a lump of clay.
2. Use a rolling pin to roll out the clay about ¼" thick.
3. Place a leaf on the clay and roll over it with the rolling pin.
4. Remove the leaf and let the clay dry.
5. Paint the clay with tempera paint.

★ Jean Potter, Charleston, WV

Clay Pressions

Materials

Polymer clay (Sculpey or Primo) in a variety of colors or white • nature items • old cookie sheets • parchment paper (used for baking)

What to do

1. Condition the clay according to the package directions. This step needs to be done by an adult. The clay is very hard to manipulate at first and small hands will find the task too difficult.

Tip: If buying clay is out of your budget, you can do this activity using homemade clay. However, the result will not be as durable or as long-lasting as polymer clay.

2. Let each child choose a block of clay. Encourage the children to roll and squeeze the clay between their hands to keep it soft.
3. Let the children explore outdoors to find objects that interest them. Encourage the children to investigate the trees, grass, woody plants, large flowers, or even the ground itself.
4. When they find something interesting, show the children how to shape their block of clay into a thick oval and press it over the object.