

Trees & Plants

5. Leaves should be completely dry within four weeks. Compare them to leaves that were not pressed.

More to do

Art: Properly pressed leaves will last a long time. They can be used to make greeting cards or may be pressed between sheets of wax paper and hung in a window. Make a reusable place mat by mounting leaves with white glue on light cardboard and covering both sides with clear vinyl or laminate.

Math: Have children count the leaves and sort them by size, color, shape and variety.

Related books

Fresh Fall Leaves by Betsy Franco

Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf by Lois Ehlert

When Autumn Comes by Robert Maass

Why Do Leaves Change Color? by Betsy Maestro

■ Mark Crouse, Nova Scotia, Canada

4+

Choose a Leaf

Science skills

Children learn about leaves through observation and the sense of touch.

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Materials

Leaves

Chart showing leaves common to your area

Magnifying glasses

What to do

1. Divide children into pairs and give each pair three of the leaves.
2. With eyes closed, one child in each pair selects one of the leaves and feels it carefully.
3. The child's partner mixes the leaf with the other two.
4. The first child (with eyes still closed) then carefully feels all three leaves and tries to pick out the original leaf. The partner says whether the choice is right or wrong.
5. Have children in each pair switch places and repeat the activity.
6. Ask children to describe how they knew which was their original leaf.
7. Give children a magnifying glass and tell them to examine their leaves. Ask them if they can see the stem and veins, and if they notice any insect-made holes or variations in color.
8. Encourage the children to try to match the leaf to those on the chart.

■ Diane Billman, Marietta, GA

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How Much Will It Grow?

4+

Science skills

Stimulate children's curiosity and interest in the way plants grow.

Materials

Magic Growing Powder by Janet Quin-Harkin
Plant food or fertilizer
Marker

2 identical potted plants
Chart paper
Camera, optional

What to do

1. Read the book.
2. Review the purpose of the "magic growing powder" that was used in the story.
3. Relate the idea of "magic growing powder" to fertilizer or plant food.
4. Introduce the two identical potted plants and the plant food to the class.
5. Ask the children to make predictions about what might happen to each of the plants if all conditions are kept the same except that one is watered with tap water and one is watered with a plant food solution.
6. Measure and record the height of each plant. If possible, take a photo of the two plants side by side for comparison later on.
7. Place the plants in an area of the room where they will receive adequate light and be in easy reach of the children so they can assist in daily care and monitoring.
8. Water the plants appropriately, keeping a daily record of the care of each. Measure each plant and record the results after a few days. Continue to measure and record over a period of time so that the children can see the changes and evaluate the effectiveness of the plant food.
9. Photographs may also be made at the end of the experiment to demonstrate a "before and after" relationship to the children.

More to do

More science: Try this experiment with several types of plant food to determine the best product. Each child could keep a personal learning log to record the steps in the experiment and the results.

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