A ONE-WEEK LEARNING PACK FOR AGES 3–5

# Autumn Leaves Week

5 days of circle time, centers, art, and movement
for home daycares and small child care programs



Counting 1–10 · Small, medium, large · Seasons order · Color + ink-saver

28 pages · US Letter · Full color · © 2026 Jackson Miller

EDUCATOR GUIDE

# Welcome, How to Use & Contents

**Autumn Leaves Week** is a complete five-day plan for mixed groups of children ages 3 to 5. Children count falling paper leaves, match leaves to their shadows, put things in order from small to large, sort what grows on trees, and follow one tree through the seasons. No real leaves, acorns, or food are needed, so it works in any place, even where leaves do not fall.

### A typical day

- **Circle time**, 10–15 min: a short read-aloud story and talk prompts
- **Math center**, 10–15 min: hands-on counting, comparing, or sorting
- **Literacy center**, 10 min: oral vocabulary and sound games
- **Art & fine motor**, 15–20 min: low-cost paper projects
- **Movement**, 5 min: a short movement game with seated options

### Mixed ages

Each day plan has a **Simpler** idea (often right for younger 3s) and an **Extension** (often right for older 4s and 5s). Choose by what each child is ready for, not by age alone. Printed pages are tools for play and talk, not tests.

### Printing

Print on US Letter paper at **100% / Actual size**. The color and ink-saver files have the same pages and page numbers. Send the family letter (p. 27) home on Day 1.

### What is inside

- 5 educator day plans and a week-at-a-glance
- 5 original read-aloud stories + 1 counting rhyme
- 12 vocabulary cards · 10 number cards · 6 movement cards
- Counting mat, 16 paper acorn counters, leaf shadow match
- Size order, seasons sequence, 2 sorts, tree builder
- Park count, optional tracing, family letter, keys

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# Week at a Glance

Pick and choose; every activity is optional



| | DAY 1<br>Falling Leaves | DAY 2<br>Leaf Shapes & Sizes | DAY 3<br>Squirrels & Acorns | DAY 4<br>Harvest Colors | DAY 5<br>Trees Through the Seasons |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Words** | leaf, fall, wind, branch, pile, count | shape, shadow, small, medium, large, pointy, round | squirrel, acorn, hide, save, more, fewer | harvest, basket, apple, pumpkin, grow, color | season, summer, autumn, winter, spring, next |
| **Circle time** | Mateo and the Falling Leaves + counting rhyme | Nia's Leaf Collection | Sammy Squirrel's Busy Day | Grandpa Lee's Harvest Basket | The Tree Outside Ava's Window |
| **Math** | Count the Leaves | Small, Medium, Large | More or Fewer Acorns | Color Count | Park Count & Seasons |
| **Literacy** | Autumn Words | Describing Leaves | Ll and Pp Sound Sort | Does It Grow on a Tree? | Retell the Seasons |
| **Art & fine motor** | Torn-Paper Leaf Tree | Shadow Shapes | Fluffy Squirrel Tail | Autumn Color Collage | Tree Shape Builder |
| **Movement** | Falling Leaf Twirl | Pumpkin Grow Sizes | Squirrel Scamper | Rake the Leaves | Autumn Freeze Dance |
| **Big idea** | Counting 1–5; why leaves fall | Matching shapes; ordering by size | More and fewer; first sounds /l/ and /p/ | Sorting by where things grow; naming colors | Ordering the seasons; counting a collection |

## Before the week starts

- Read the day plans (pp. 6–10) and stories (pp. 11–12). Skim the safety notes (p. 5).
- Print and cut using the prep list (p. 4). Adults pre-cut for children not yet using scissors.
- Copy the family letter (p. 27) for each family and fill in your program name.
- Gather scrap paper in autumn colors and three objects of different sizes. Clear a movement space.


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EDUCATOR GUIDE

# Day 1: Falling Leaves

Educator plan

**Today's words:** leaf · fall · wind · branch · pile · count

**Prep today:** Cut the number cards (p. 15) and 16 acorn counters per child at the center (p. 17). Print the mat (p. 16). Red, orange, yellow, and brown scrap paper for art.

## Circle time

*10–15 min*

- Read **Mateo and the Falling Leaves** (p. 11). Hold up a finger for each leaf Mateo counts.
- Ask: "What made the leaves fall?" (the wind; the tree is getting ready for winter)
- Show the **leaf**, **tree**, and **wind** cards (p. 13). Blow like the wind together.
- Say **Five Little Leaves** (p. 12), folding one finger down each verse.
- Transition: children twirl slowly like falling leaves, then "land" and walk to a center.

## Math: Count the Leaves

*Pages 15, 16, 17*

1. Child picks a number card 1–5.
2. Touch and count the leaves on the card, one touch for each.
3. Place the same number of paper acorns in the top row of the mat, starting at the left.
4. Count again and say the total: "Four leaves, four acorns."

## Literacy: Autumn Words

*Vocabulary cards, pp. 13–14*

Show 4 cards: leaf, tree, wind, squirrel. Name each and say one thing about it ("The wind is strong"). Ask: "Can a squirrel climb a tree? Can a pumpkin?" Silly questions build talk.

## Movement: Falling Leaf Twirl

*Card on p. 26*

Children stand tall like trees. Say "Whoosh!" and they twirl slowly and sink down to the floor like leaves landing.

## Art: Torn-Paper Leaf Tree

*Scrap paper in autumn colors, glue stick, crayons*

Children draw a trunk and branches (or an adult draws them). They tear scrap paper into palm-sized pieces and glue them on and under the tree as leaves. Collect scraps right away.

## Simpler

*emerging / younger 3s*

Use cards 1–3 only. Count aloud while the child touches each leaf. Glue a few big pre-torn pieces.

## Extension

*ready / older 4s & 5s*

Use the ten-frame cards 6–10 and fill both rows of the mat. Ask: "How many more to make 10?"

## Look for

*informal notes*

One touch for each object. Says the last number to tell how many. Uses the words wind and fall.


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CIRCLE TIME

Read slowly; pause for children to predict and act it out

# Read-Aloud Stories, Days 1–3

## Day 1: Mateo and the Falling Leaves

*original story, about 1–2 min*

Whoosh! The wind blew through the big tree in the park. A red leaf let go of its branch and floated down, down, down.

"One leaf!" said Mateo. He held out his hands, but the leaf landed on his shoe.

Whoosh! Two more leaves came twirling down, one yellow and one orange. "Two, three!" Mateo counted.

Mateo and his dad watched and counted together. Four, five! Five leaves made a little pile on the grass.

"The tree is getting ready for winter," said Dad. Mateo looked up. "Thank you for the leaves, tree," he said.



***Pause & ask:*** *How many leaves did Mateo count? What made the leaves fall?*

## Day 2: Nia's Leaf Collection

*original story, about 1–2 min*

Nia found a leaf with pointy edges. Then she found a round one. Then a long, skinny one. "They are all different!" she said.

She laid them in a row on the table. "This one is small. This one is medium. This one is large."

Her little cousin Sam put his hand on top. "The big one is bigger than my hand!" he laughed.

Nia traced around each leaf with a crayon. The shapes looked like shadows on the paper.

"Can you find the leaf that matches this shadow?" she asked Sam. He looked very carefully, and he found it.



***Pause & ask:*** *What shapes were Nia's leaves? Which leaf was the largest?*

## Day 3: Sammy Squirrel's Busy Day

*original story, about 1–2 min*

Sammy Squirrel ran down the tree. Scamper, scamper! He was looking for acorns.

He found one acorn under a leaf. He found two more by a log. "One, two, three acorns!"

Sammy dug a little hole and hid the acorns. Pat, pat, pat. "I will save these for winter."

Then he found four more acorns. Now he had more acorns than before! He hid those too.

That night, Sammy curled his fluffy tail around himself like a blanket. He was tired, cozy, and ready for cold days.



***Pause & ask:*** *Why did Sammy hide the acorns? Did he find more acorns the first time or the second time?*

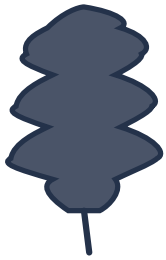

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MATH

Find the shadow that has the same shape as each leaf.

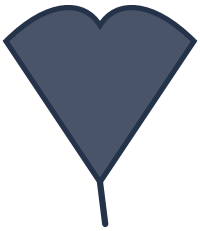
# Leaf Shadow Match (6 pairs)

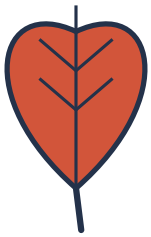

A


B


C


D

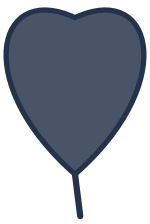

E


F


G


H


I


J


K


L

✂ *Cut on the dashed lines. Small letters are for the answer key only.*


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