Leaves

Home Connection:

- The Friday prior to your exploration of leaves, send each child home with a brown paper bag.
- Explain to them using pictures, a book, or a look outside that the trees are changing, and can they notice the change.
- Once they make the connection that the leaves are changing their colors and are falling off the trees, explain to them that next week they will be exploring leaves and that you need their help by having them go on Nature Walks around their neighborhoods to collect leaves. They are to fill their brown bag with leaves from their neighborhood with the help of their families.
- By sending the bags home to their individual communities you are most likely going to then collect a variety of types and colors of leaves for the children to explore!

Reading:

- I love using the book Leaf Man by Lois Ehlert for my Morning Meeting. The book follows a group of autumn leaves as they are blown by the wind over various backdrops and take on a different configuration in each location. Within the book the illustrator uses collages of real leaves to help form all of the illustrations. For instance, a leaf man, leaf birds, leaf fish, leaf prairies, and a leaf forest.
- After reading the book, have the children take out their brown bag of collected leaves and ask for them to construct an object using the pictures. Give them ideas by sitting with them and constructing your own picture. Sometimes for the younger students I guide them through this process by selecting one of the collage pictures from the actual book and ask for them to recreate their own version of a leaf man, leaf birds, leaf fish, etc.
- After they have constructed their leaf collage and are happy with the results, have them glue the picture onto construction paper. I have found in the past that using either black or white construction paper really allows for the color in the leaves to pop! It is easier for the children to use a liquid glue and a paint brush in order to help the leaves not tear or break.
- Once the children’s leaf collages are dried, I ask for them to describe what they have created using their leaves so that I can then label each child’s creation.
- We then display the artwork in hallway along with a copy of the book.
Handwriting:

- A big part of our curriculum within the fall is for the children in Pre-Kindergarten to not only recognize their first name but to also be able to spell their first name. To help with this task we have the students construct Leaf Names!
- To begin you will have the child use their name template to count the amount of the letters used within their first name.
- Once they have counted the letters used in their first name, they are then to them count the same number of leaves from their brown bag.
- Again, you will use liquid glue and paint brushes to adhere the correct number of leaves onto construction paper. For this project we ask for the children to select a piece of construction paper from colors in which the leaves change during the fall. For example, red, orange, yellow, brown, purple, and green.
- Once the leaves have dried, it is time to write their first name!
- This step is based upon the readiness of your students. For some students, it is necessary for me to dot-dot their first names and have them trace over them. For others they are able to look and copy the letters in their first name from their name plate at their individual spots. Either way is fine and will need to be completed using either a black marker or a black Sharpe.
- We love using this project because this is one that can be conducted time and time again within the program simply by changing the items or theme!