



MINIS AT HOME

volume 1, issue 8

Greetings kids, parents, grandparents, guardians, friends and neighbors!

Welcome to issue 8 of Minis at Home newsletter. Each newsletter will feature a special theme and offer pertinent information, a craft, and recommended reading.

Grownups: please work on projects together with your children. Your pARTicipation is important! We will offer hints and tips for ways to create art as a twosome or a family.

This week's theme = LEAVES

Leaves are everywhere right now: Look up and you'll see plenty on tree branches. Look down and you'll see lots on the ground. Many leaves on trees, bushes and plants are turning to warm golds, browns, oranges, yellows and reds. This happens in the fall months when the weather grows colder and days get shorter. Trees that lose their leaves every fall and grow new ones in the spring are called **deciduous** trees. They are different from **evergreen** trees, often decorated around the holidays, that stay green all year long. Some of the deciduous trees found here in Easton have leaves of beautiful colors.



Activity: BUDDING NATURALIST

Go on a leaf hunt with a grownup. Look at leaves you find on the ground. What colors are they? How big are they? Can you find leaves of similar colors from different trees? Collect a few to take home. When you get them home set them out in a row. Count them. Line them up from small to large or according to color. How many leaves have more than one color? Do some of the leaves have holes in them or spots?

For those who want to venture far afield:



Activity: ARMCHAIR NATURALIST

Ask your grownup to Google the following kinds of trees:

- Maple
- Walnut
- Sassafras
- Sweet Gum
- Birch
- Oak
- Gingko
- Dogwood



Now look back at the leaves you collected. Do any come from these trees?

When leaves change color, they look as if they are playing dress up! Let's look at why they change. Green plants use a special process called **photosynthesis** to make their own food (sugar). Leaves contain **chlorophyll**, a green pigment that lets them absorb light. In the spring and summer when it's warm out and days are long, leaves produce chlorophyll. But when the weather gets colder and there is less light, photosynthesis stops. As leaves lose their chlorophyll, their green color fades away. Their natural colors — oranges, reds, and yellows that were there all along — are left to shine through.

Trees may look sad when their leaves turn brown and fall off, but there's no need to worry about them going hungry when their leaves stop making chlorophyll. That's because trees store extra energy during the summer to use when photosynthesis stops. Even when their leaves are gone, their roots continue to draw water and nutrients from the soil. The winter is a time for trees and plants to rest and sleep...just like hibernating bears.



Craft: LEAF PEOPLE AND CRITTERS



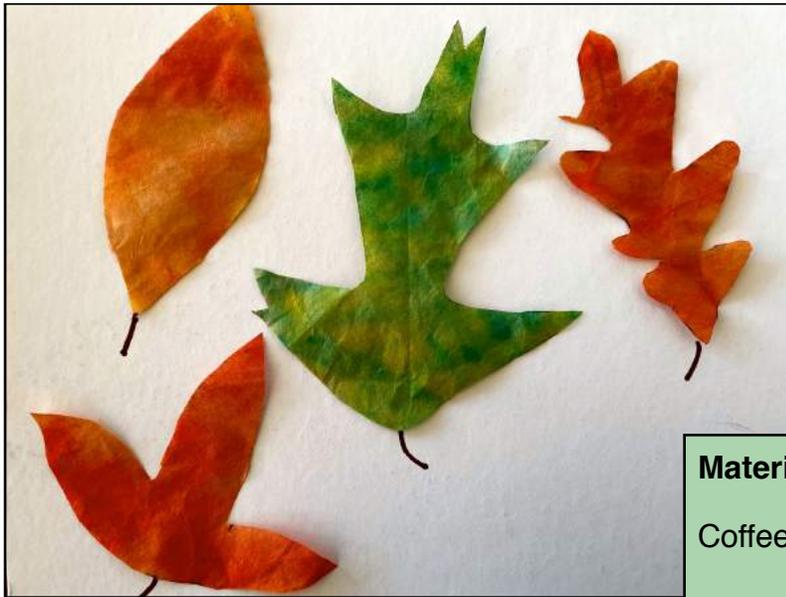
Materials:

- Leaves that are not brown or "crispy" yet
- Small sticks, that can be cut or broken into smaller pieces
- Acorns, pebbles or other small items like berries or seeds that you find on the ground
- Construction paper on which to glue your designs
- Aleene's Tacky Glue

Procedure:

Head outside with a basket or bowl and collect different kinds of leaves that you find on the ground. Notice their shapes, sizes and colors. Also, make sure to collect small sticks, acorns, or berries. Bring them inside to create leaf people, leaf creatures, and leaf designs. You can make this into a game by rearranging the pieces multiple times and coming up with different critters. Try making a critter and having family members guess what it is. You may want to name your critters, too. Take pix so that your "leaf folks" will outlast the fall.

Craft: COFFEE FILTER LEAVES



This is a great way to introduce the concept of color mixing!

Materials:

Coffee filters or paper towels

Water-based markers in yellow, red, and blue

Scissors

Spray bottle with water or eye dropper

Glue stick

Paper for mounting leaves

Procedure:

Scribble all over your coffee filter or paper towel using red and yellow in some areas and blue and yellow in others, making sure to leave some white spaces: Do not scribble over the entire surface! This will allow room for the colors to run.

Spray or drip water on top of your scribbles until you see the markers blend and the colors change.

Wait for your coffee filter or paper towel to dry and then cut out leaf shapes.

Display your beautiful leaves on windows or glue onto paper.

Activity: MOVE AND SING

All the Leaves Are Falling Down

(Tune: London Bridge Is Falling Down)

All the leaves are falling down, falling down, falling down
(Imitate leaves falling down)

All the leaves are falling down; it is autumn.

Take the rake and rake them up, rake them up, rake them up
(Imitate raking leaves)

Take the rake and rake them up; it is autumn.

Make a pile and jump right in, jump right in, jump right in.
(Jump forward)

Make a pile and jump right in; it is autumn.

(Adapted from Diane Chancy)

Leaves Are Falling

(Tune: Frère Jacques)

Leaves are falling (Start standing up with your arms up in the air and your fingers moving like leaves rustling in the breeze. Dance and sway while you lower your body slowly to the ground)

Leaves are falling

To the ground

Without a sound (Lie flat on the ground like a fallen leaf)

Days are getting shorter

Nights are getting longer

Fall is here

Fall is here

(Original author unknown)

Literacy: POEM TO SHARE

Here's a terrific poem about fall leaves "playing dress up" by George Cooper

(One cool thing about this poem is that Constance's grandmother learned it in school when she was a little girl in the 1890s, and she taught it to her mother, who taught it to her. Constance's grandmother lived to be 107!!)

Come, Little Leaves

"Come, little leaves," said the wind one day,
"Come o'er the meadows with me and play;
Put on your dresses of red and gold,
For summer is gone and the days grow cold."

Soon as the leaves heard the wind's loud call,
Down they came fluttering, one and all;
Over the brown fields they danced and flew,
Singing the glad little songs they knew.

"Cricket, goodbye, we've been friends so long;
Little brook, sing us your farewell song;
Say you are sorry to see us go;
Ah, you will miss us, right well we know.

"Dear little lambs in your fleecy fold,
Mother will keep you from harm and cold;
fondly we watched you in vale and glade;
Say, will you dream of our loving shade?"

Dancing and whirling, the little leaves went;
Winter had called them, and they were content;
soon, fast asleep in their earthy beds,
The snow laid a coverlid over their heads.



(This poem has been put to music. You can listen to a version of it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45uoreSO23Q>)



Literacy: **POEM TO SHARE**

Not So Fast with the Bag!

by Constance Del Nero

Leave me some leaves
so that I can jump in
fall is here: let the fun begin.

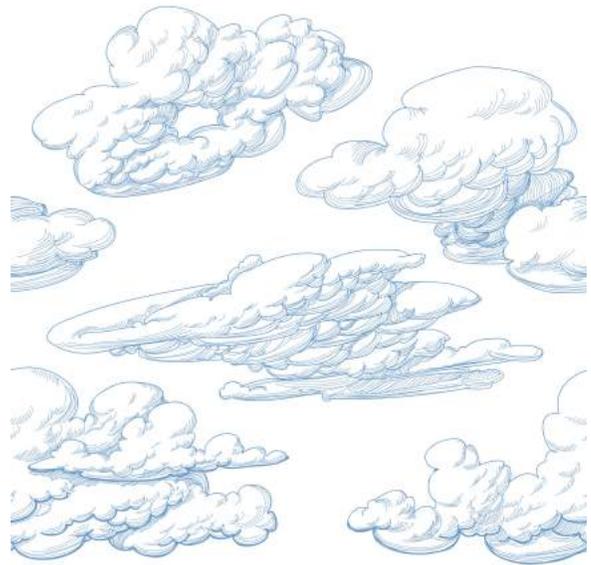
I'll dream that I'm leaping
from a high-up plane
or that I'm burrowing under
to avoid the rain.

Green ones, brown ones,
yellow and red:
Fall leaves make a lovely bed.

I'll lie on the heap,
look up at the sky,
and watch the clouds drifting by

Is there one like a dragon,
a car or a cat?
A ship, a crocodile
or a sleeping bat?

Leave me some leaves
so I can make a big pile
I want to keep playing
for a little while.



Literacy: RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Snuggle up in a big comfy chair and read together

Leaf Jumpers by Carole Gerber

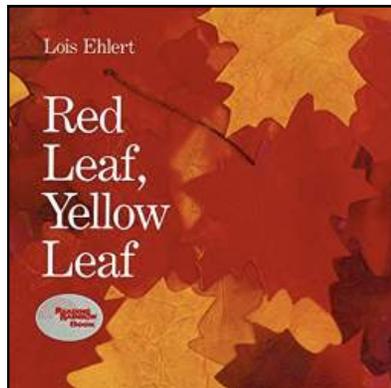
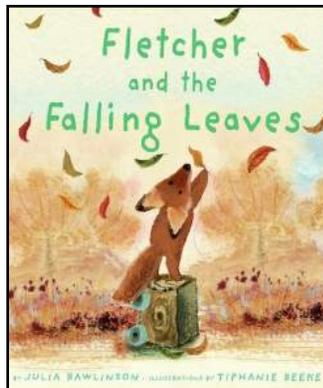
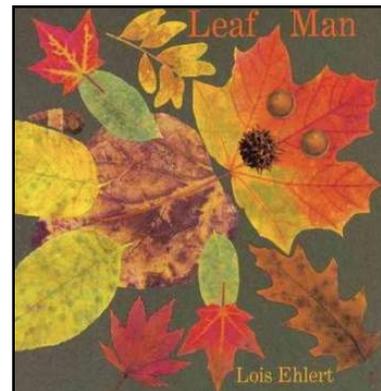
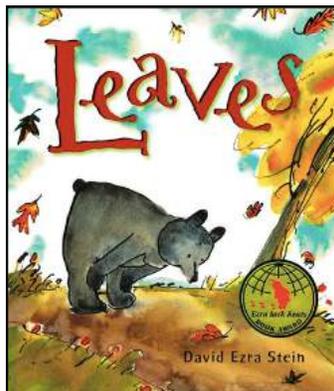
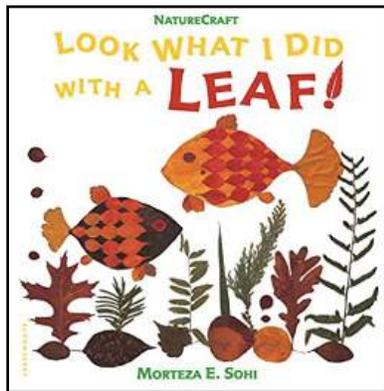
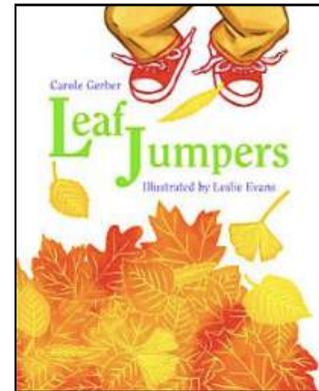
Look What I Did with a Leaf by Morteza Sohi

Leaves by David Ezra Stein

Leaf Man Lois Ehlert

Fletcher and the Falling Leaves by Julia Rawlinson

Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf by Lois Ehlert



Creatively yours,

Ann Hansen,
Director of Mini Masters at
the Academy Art Museum

ahansen@academyartmuseum.org

Constance Del Nero,
Director of Children's
Education and Community
Programs

cdelnero@academyartmuseum.org



See you next week with issue 9 of **Minis at Home!**

Share your work on <https://www.instagram.com/minimastersaam/>

or email pictures to Ann Hansen ahansen@academyartmuseum.org

or Constance Del Nero cdelnero@academyartmuseum.org



Please Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/minimastersacademy>