



MINIS AT HOME

volume 1, issue 9

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

Welcome to issue 9 of the Minis at Home newsletter. Each newsletter features a special theme and offers pertinent information, one or more crafts, 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 = HARVEST



The fall is a time when we may notice the leaves on trees changing colors, cooler temperatures, shorter daylight, and migrating geese. We may also visit our local pumpkin patches, farmers' markets and corn mazes. This is a time of year when we might gather together to celebrate all that we are thankful for: family, friends, pets, cousins, toys, ice cream and FOOD. Some of us celebrate **THANKSGIVING** by eating a yummy meal with family. It's a time when we stop to feel thankful for all that we have!

For thousands of years, people all over the world have celebrated the fall **HARVEST**. Winter is on the horizon and fresh food may soon grow scarce, but many fruits and vegetables have just ripened and are ready to eat. Some of the favorites in our area are pumpkins, apples and Indian corn (also known as flint corn or calico corn).

Many people think of pumpkins as linked to Halloween, but pumpkins are a colorful and nutritious favorite that can be enjoyed right through the fall. They make great decorations on tables, outdoor steps and porches.

Hey: did you know that pumpkins are a fruit? You can tell because they have seeds inside them, but many people still call them a vegetable.

Activity: HEAD TO THE FARMERS' MARKET

Go on a family outing to your local farmers' market and notice what's for sale. Unlike supermarkets that stock food from elsewhere, farmers markets usually sell locally-grown in-season fruits and vegetables. If you go to the farmers' market over several weeks, notice how the available produce changes. What are your favorite fruits and veggies? Look at all the different colors, shapes and sizes. Can you decide what color you see the most? Does that change from week to week? What's the biggest fruit or vegetable you see? What's the smallest?

**Activity: CRAFT****Indian Corn Decoration****Materials:**

2 Brown paper lunch bags

String, twist-ties or small rubber bands

Newspaper, magazine paper or paper towels (to stuff into your bags)

Purple, blue, red, yellow and brown crafters acrylic paints

Q-Tip or thin paint brush (you can also use your finger tip as a paintbrush!)

Procedure:

Stuff the paper bags with a small amount of crumpled newspaper, magazines or paper towels.

Squish and form the bag so it looks like a corn cob, leaving the top (open side) of the bag unstuffed.

When you've formed the corn cob, tie a string, rubber band or twist-tie around the top (open) part of the bag, leaving about 3 or 4 inches of the bag unstuffed at the top. This will form the husks.

Make cuts with scissors from the open part of the bag to create the "husks."

Using a paintbrush, Q-tip or your finger, dot the different colors of paint to create corn kernels all over the corn cob.

Make a second corn cob, tie the 2 together, and hang them up as decoration.

Activity: CRAFT

My Thumbprint Pumpkin Patch



Materials:

White construction paper or card stock

Orange crafter's acrylic or finger paint

Paper towel

Green marker

Brown marker

Brown paper bag, raffia or any tan-colored paper

White glue

Scissors

Procedure:

Dip your thumb into the orange paint (not too much—you'll want to see your thumb prints). Dab any gloppy or excess paint onto a paper towel. Press your thumb down onto your paper carefully (don't smear or smudge) over and over to create lots of pumpkins. You can rock your thumb slowly side to side to widen your pumpkin shape. Re-dip your thumb into the paint as needed.

While the pumpkin patch is drying, cut small strips or scraps from a brown paper bag, raffia or any tan paper (great scissors practice!). These tan scraps will be used to create the old corn husks, brown weeds, or vines that you might find on the ground in your pumpkin patch.

After the pumpkins are dry, take a green marker and "connect" the pumpkins with one continuous "vine," if possible. (This is great practice for fine motor control and prewriting strength.)

With the brown marker, add little stems onto the tops of each pumpkin.

Glue the tan paper scraps or raffia all around the paper as ground covering for your pumpkin patch.

Activity: **CRAFT**

Paper Plate Pumpkin Pie

Materials:

1 Paper plate
Orange construction paper
Tan construction paper
Cotton ball
Glue stick
Aleene's tacky glue (or school glue)
Scissors



Procedure:

Fold a paper plate in half and then in half again. Cut it into quarters, using the fold lines as guides.

Cut brown and orange construction paper separately into 1" squares (great cutting practice for children).

Glue orange squares all over the inside of the pie "slice" using the glue stick.

Glue tan squares around the rim or "crust" of the pie using the glue stick.

Add a cotton ball on top to make a scoop of vanilla ice cream or whipped cream using the tacky glue.

Can you place a slice of pumpkin pie at each family member's place setting?

Activity: **MOVE AND SING**

I'm a Little Pumpkin (sung to the tune of I'm a Little Tea Pot)

I'm a little pumpkin orange and round (hold your arms out around your body to make yourself round. You can even puff out your cheeks for extra roundness)

I grew on a vine from a seed in the ground
When I get all grown up, you'll give me a face
And put me outside in a very special place

(original author unknown)

Picking Apples

Just out of reach, so high in the tree (stretch up to the sky w/ both arms)
Is a juicy red apple waiting for me
Get on my toes and stretch up my hands (on tip toes, stretch even higher)
But I still can't reach, no matter how tall I stand!
So, I must jump as high as I can (jump as high as you can with arms stretched up)
Till I have that apple in my little hand
I make it shine; my job is complete (pretend to rub the apple on your shirt or sleeve)
My juicy red apply is ready to eat!

(teachingmama.org 2014)

Activity: LET'S GET COOKING!

Who says pumpkin has to be used only in sweets? This delicious and nutritious pasta with diced pumpkin is easy to make. The recipe was created by chef Rosario Del Nero, Constance's husband and spokesperson for the National Pasta Association. You may wish to start a new Thanksgiving tradition!

Fall Spaghetti with Diced Pumpkin

Servings: 4 appetizers – 2 main courses
(feel free to double this recipe for a large family)

Ingredients

- **8 oz good quality spaghetti**
- **4 Tablespoons butter**
- **8 oz (1.5 cups) peeled and diced (1/2") pumpkin or butternut squash**
- **2 cloves garlic, finely chopped**
- **1 tablespoon fresh herbs, such as parsley and sage leaves, chopped**
- **Salt to taste (for pasta water and sauce)**
- **3/4 cup pasta water**
- **1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated**



Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of water (4 to 5 quarts) to a boil over high heat.
2. While water is heating, chop garlic and dice pumpkin.
3. Once the water has reached a rapid boil, add salt and then the spaghetti. Cook until very al dente (about 1 minute less than the recommended cooking time on the package directions).
4. While the spaghetti is cooking, heat the butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the diced squash and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often. Squash should be lightly golden and soft to the fork. Add garlic and cook for a minute.
5. Season with a pinch of salt (to taste) and add chopped fresh herbs.
6. When pasta is ready, reserve 3/4 cup of pasta water and drain the rest. Return spaghetti to the pot, add reserved pasta water and half of the pumpkin, stirring over low heat for a minute or so, until most of the water has been absorbed by the pasta. This creates a delightfully creamy sauce with none of the calories of cream!
7. Remove pot from heat and add the Parmesan cheese, stirring until the sauce is slightly creamy and all the flavors are well incorporated.
8. Transfer to a platter or portion onto individual plates. Top with the rest of the pumpkin sauce, and serve immediately, adding more cheese if desired.

Recipe Pantomime Poem

By Constance Del Nero

Chop, chop, chop the butternut squash

(Make chopping motions with the side of the hand against a cutting board)

Heat, heat, heat the water till it boils

(Start crouching down and rise up, wiggling fingers to imitate bubbles)

Mince, mince, mince the garlic and the

herbs (Make chopping motions with the side of the hand against a cutting board)

Mix, mix, mix the pasta with the sauce

(Use a wooden spoon or pretend to hold one and make mixing motions)

Sprinkle, sprinkle, sprinkle the cheese on top

(Rub fingers together over an imaginary bowl)

Yum, Yum, Yum in my tum, tum, tum!

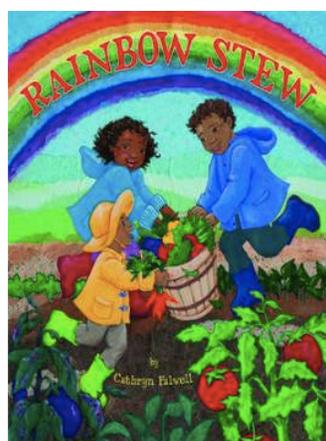
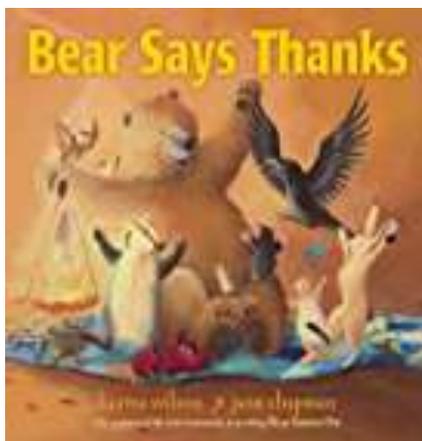
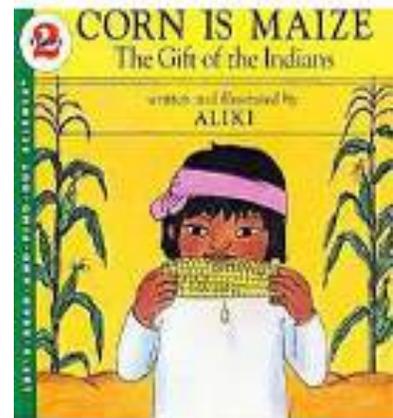
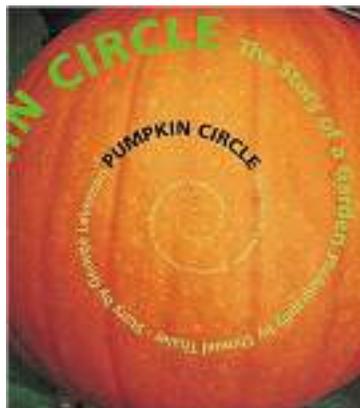
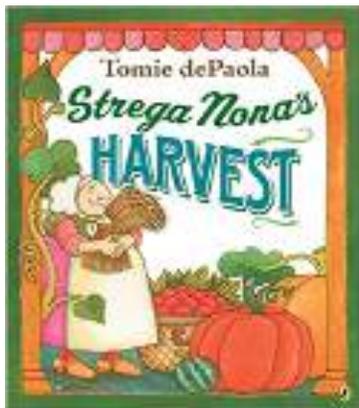
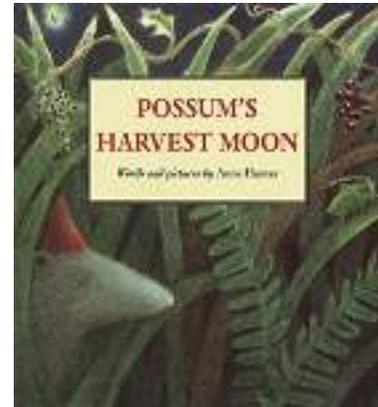
(Make circular movements over your belly)



Literacy: RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Snuggle up in a big comfy chair and read together

- Possum's Harvest Moon* by Anne Hunter
- Strega Nona's Harvest* by Tomie dePaola
- Pumpkin Circle* by George Levenson
- Corn is Maize* by Alike
- Bear Says Thanks* by Karma Wilson
- Rainbow Stew* by Cathryn Falwell



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See you next week with issue 10 of *Minis at Home!*

Share your work on <https://www.instagram.com/minimastersaam/>
or email pictures to Ann Hansen ahansen@academyartmuseum.org
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