

Theme: Halloween

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

Picking pumpkins – children can pretend to pick pumpkins and put them into a wagon.

Rolling pumpkins – have children pretend to be pumpkins rolling down the hill.

Musical pumpkins

Spider Web – give the children some yarn or string to create a “web” on a chair by wrapping the yarn around it.

Spider Walk – have the kids walk like a spider on their hands and feet – they can race each other, or do a relay race, depending on the age of the children

Math Activities:

- ❑ Counting pumpkins – felt ones on flannel board
- ❑ Arrange real pumpkins by size
- ❑ Count the seeds in a pumpkin when you make a jack-o-lantern!
- ❑ How many legs does a spider have?
- ❑ Bean bag toss—make bean bags in Halloween shapes or colors; toss into a basket for points—add up your points!

Science Activities:

- ❑ Pull seeds out of the pumpkin; notice the texture of the “goop” in the pumpkin
- ❑ Save and plant the seeds
- ❑ Observe pumpkin seeds with a magnifying glass
- ❑ Measure ingredients to bake pumpkin bread or pumpkin cookies
- ❑ Read about how pumpkins grow
- ❑ Spider watch – let children observe spiders in a jar, then return them to their natural habitat.

Small Motor/Manipulatives:

- Make a collage with Halloween stickers and cookie cutter shapes
- Make your own simple Halloween puzzles and cut into 2 or 3 pieces; laminate them and let children have fun putting the puzzles together.
- Make Halloween necklaces by stringing cereal and a jack-o-lantern cutout.

Snacks:

Pumpkin Stew

Pumpkin bread and/or cookies

Decorate a cake with chocolate frosting and chocolate cookie crumbs for “dirt”; insert Milano cookies for “tombstones”—you can even write “R.I.P.” on the tombstones with chocolate frosting!

Gummy worms coming out of chocolate pudding....

Decorate sugar cookies for Halloween

Decorate a lettuce leaf with olive eyes, carrot whiskers, tomatoes for ears... for a fun salad!

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Visit a pumpkin patch to pick out pumpkins for jack-o-lanterns; tour the patch to see where the pumpkins grow

Decorate for Halloween with children’s own artwork

Cut out large Halloween figures (non-scary ones—a friendly “ghost”, jack-o-lantern, black cat, etc.) to use as seat markers for circle time.

Dramatic Play:

- Halloween costumes
- Kitchen tools – pretend to be baking Halloween treats
- Make paper bag “costumes” and let the children decorate their own!
- Pretend to be a spider.
- Practice trick-or-treating! Set up boxes for houses and let the children “trick-or-treat” through the imaginary neighborhood! Talk about safety.

Books (Choose several from this list or other favorites):

Scary, Scary Halloween, by Eve Bunting, Jan Brett

Halloween Bugs, by David A. Carter

Horrible Harry at Halloween, by Suzy Kline

My First Halloween Board Book, by DK Publishing

Dora's Spooky Halloween, by Sonali Fry

The Best Halloween Ever, by Barbara Robinson

Clifford's Halloween, by Norman Bridwell

Monster Halloween Party (Backyardigans), by Laura Driscoll

Max's Halloween, by Rosemary Wells

Dragon's Halloween, by Dav Pilkey

Happy Halloween, Little Critter! by Mercer Mayer

Froggy's Halloween, by Jonathan London

Angelina's Halloween, by Katharine Holabird

Happy Halloween, Biscuit! by Alyssa Satin Capucilli

Dora's Halloween Adventure, by Sarah Wilson

Touch and Feel Halloween, by Dorling Kindersley Publishing

Pooh's Happy Halloween, by Disney Press Staff

Cheerios Halloween Play Book, by Lee Wade

Spot's Halloween, by Eric Hill

Shake Dem Halloween Bones, by Mike Reed

Allie Gator's Halloween Ride, by Heather Alexander

Arthur's Halloween, by Marc Brown

Halloween Rescue! by Cynthia Stierle

Halloween Is.... by Gail Gibbons

I'm Not Afraid of Halloween! by Marion Dane Bauer

Clifford's First Halloween, by Norman Bridwell

Corduroy's Best Halloween Ever! by Don Freeman

It's Halloween, Peter Rabbit, by Beatrix Potter

Halloween Surprise, by Christ Embleton-Hall

ABCs of Halloween, by Patricia Reeder Eubank

The Halloween Play by Felicia Bond

Where is Baby Pumpkin? by Karen Katz

Happy Halloween, Stinky Face, by Lisa McCourt

Maisy's Halloween, by Lucy Cousins

Art:

- Make popcorn balls and decorate them as "faces"
- Make a mobile with various Halloween cookie cutter shapes
- Decorate a pumpkin!
- Make bats to hang from the ceiling
- Make black spiders out of pompoms and pipe cleaners... cut children's faces from photos and put on the spiders! Hang on a spider "web" outside the front door to greet everyone each day. Kids love this!
- Cut out a white paper "ghost" and let children decorate them; display them throughout the room
- Make paper plate Halloween masks
- Let children spatter paint over cookie cutter stencils with black and orange paint
- Children can make skeleton prints of their own arms with white paint on the arm (elbow to fingertips) and pressing the arm down on a sheet of black construction paper!
- Make paper plate jack-o-lanterns. Decorate with shaped pieces of black paper.
- Sponge painted ghosts: Cut out ghost shapes from some inexpensive sponges from the dollar store. Children can dip them into white paint and press on dark construction paper to make ghost prints.
- Decorate trick-or-treat bags!
- Pumpkin seed art—use the dried pumpkin seeds from the science activity for collage art!
- Broom painting! Use a straw broom, dip into orange paint, and "paint" on a large sheet of newsprint or butcher paper. This is very messy, so you may want to have the kids take off their shoes and roll up their pants legs!

Circle Time Activities:

- Add-a-line stories: Begin a Halloween story by starting with one sentence and let each child add another sentence to the story. For the younger children, you may have to ask leading questions to get them started.
- Display many different pumpkin faces representing expressions that are happy, sad, excited, scared, etc. Ask the children which pumpkin is happy? How does this pumpkin feel? How does that pumpkin make you feel? (source: <http://123child.com/UBB/showthread.php?t=3085>)
- Have a police officer come talk to the children about Halloween safety tips.
- Make ribbon rings by tying orange and black ribbons, scarves, or strips of fabric to a jar ring. Children can wave it around while singing or listening to music.
- Sing lots of songs and do lots of fingerplays! You can put the names of favorite Halloween songs on the backs of Halloween cutouts; let each child take a turn picking up a cutout—the group sings the song that is on the back.
- Make a large di out of a box decorated for Halloween; write the name of a song on each side and let children roll the di, with everyone singing the song that is on top of the di when it lands.