

# Circle Time Lessons

## Unit overview

- Day 1 Pumpkins, Pumpkins**  
Introduce the new unit: **Pumpkins**. Describe pumpkins using your five senses.
- Day 2 Pumpkin Patch**  
Describe what you see at a pumpkin patch. Take a poll and graph responses.
- Day 3 Pumpkin Life Cycle**  
Learn new vocabulary while singing a song about the life cycle of a pumpkin.
- Day 4 Apples & Pumpkins**  
Compare and contrast using a Venn Diagram.
- Day 5 Pumpkin Science**  
Explore sense of touch by examining bumpy and smooth gourds. Learn new vocabulary for the parts of a pumpkin.

### Pumpkins, Pumpkins

Activate Background Knowledge

Day 1 lesson plans

Introduce the new unit (Pumpkins) to the students. A pumpkin is a type of fruit that grows in the fall. While there are different varieties of pumpkins, they share many of the same characteristics.

**Objectives:**

- The students will observe objects with curiosity.
- The students will express themselves using words and sentences.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

**Activities:**

- Show photographs of different sized and shaped pumpkins. Important - Bring in a few real pumpkins. Invite students to explore the pumpkins by passing them around the table seated on the carpet.
- Guide students in describing the pumpkins using each sense. Create a class chart to describe the pumpkins.
- Sing and act out "I'm a Little Pumpkin."

**Extension Idea:** Teach the ABC sign for **pumpkin**. Ask your non-dominant hand out with a flat. With your dominant hand, flick the top of your flat.



### Pumpkin Patch

Graphing responses

Day 2 lesson plans

Engage students in a discussion about visiting a pumpkin patch? What kinds of activities can you do at a pumpkin patch?

**Objectives:**

- The students will actively participate in conversation.
- The students will answer questions.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

**Activities:**

- Show photographs of pumpkin patches. Ask students to discuss each photo. Activate the students' background knowledge.
- Take a poll. Students use name cards or post-it notes to "vote" for their answer on a bar graph. Have you ever been to a pumpkin patch?
- Sing the song, "Pumpkin Picker."

**Extension Idea:** Use the "Pumpkin Picker" game to practice counting and color recognition.



### Pumpkin Life Cycle

Day 3 lesson plans

A life cycle is a series of changes that living things go through as they grow. All living things go through life cycles!

**Objectives:**

- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will arrange objects into a series.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

**Activities:**

- Show photographs of various stages of a pumpkin plant. Ask students if they believe this is the same type of plant. Why or why not?
- Introduce the word "cycle." Tell students that this word has the Greek language meaning, "circle." Show how the pumpkin goes in a circular pattern by creating an anchor chart.
- Sing the "Life Cycle Song." You can use the stages of the cards to help guide the song.

**Extension Idea:** Have students color each part of the attached life cycle puzzle. Cut puzzle apart and have students put it back together in correct order.



### Apples & Pumpkins

Compare & Contrast

Day 4 lesson plans

Both pumpkins and apples grow in the fall. Compare & contrast the characteristics of these foods to see how they are the same and different.

**Objectives:**

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will notice and extend simple patterns.

**Activities:**

- Show photographs of apples. Have students discuss how they are the same as and/or different from pumpkins.
- Place hula hoops or a large piece of paper on the carpet to create a Venn Diagram. Anything in the pumpkin circle only, anything in the apple circle only, and anything in the middle is both.

**Extension Idea:** Use the "Apples & Pumpkins" game to practice comparing and contrasting.



### Pumpkin Science

Day 5 lesson plans

Autumn is the perfect time for students to observe mini pumpkins and gourds. Ask parents for donations of these items or visit a local pumpkin patch and have students pick their own.

**Objectives:**

- The students will observe objects with curiosity.
- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will sort objects by property (texture).

**Activities:**

- Allow the students to touch the pumpkins and gourds. Ask them to talk about what they feel with their hands. What does the outside of the gourd feel like? Is it smooth or bumpy?
- Section off a tray or the science center table into 2 parts and label them "I can sort smooth" and "I can sort bumpy." Encourage students to touch each gourd and then place it into the matching category.
- Print the pumpkin diagram and laminate as desired. Use a real pumpkin and examine the different parts: the stem, skin (and maybe leaves!) on the outside. Cut a pumpkin open and examine the seeds, pulp, and flesh. Use the labels to identify each part of the pumpkin diagram.

**Extension Idea:** Gather a variety of items, including the pumpkins and gourds. Using a container with water on the side, predict and then experiment to see which items sink and which items float.

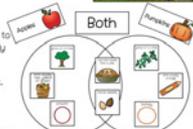


### Apples & Pumpkins

Both

Day 4 lesson plans

Use the "Apples & Pumpkins" game to practice comparing and contrasting.



# Circle Time Lessons

## Unit overview

### Day 6 Jack-O-Lanterns

Develop social-emotions skills by recognizing the emotions of others.

**Jack-o-Lantern**  
Developing Social-Emotional Skills

Jack-o-Lanterns are pumpkins with carved designs. Some are happy, some are scary. Many people make them for Halloween. What kind of face will you make on your Jack-o-Lantern?

**Objectives:**

- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.
- The students will recognize others' feelings and respond appropriately.

**Activities:**

- Show photographs of children. Ask students to discuss how they think each child is feeling. Why?
- Sing the "Pumpkin Faces" song to the tune of "Where is Thumbkin"? Had up pumpkin emotion cards and have students mimic each emotion.
- Play the "Scarey Cat" Carpet Game.

**Extension Use:** Use playdough and mold it into the shape of pumpkins. Use beans, rocks, or other small objects to make Jack-o-Lantern faces (Playdough recipe from Day 2).

**To Play the Game:**

- Line up the pictures of the pots in numerical order. Identify the numbers and colors together.
- Hide the scarey cat under one of the pots and recite the poem to find it.
- Children guess where the cat is hiding by identifying the number and color.

### Day 7 Seeds, Seeds, Seeds

Pumpkins are full of seeds. We can count them and bake them to make a delicious snack!

**Seeds, Seeds, Seeds**  
Inside the pumpkin

The inside of a pumpkin has flesh, pulp, and lots of seeds. The seeds can be planted to grow a pumpkin plant. Seeds can also be roasted in the oven to make a delicious snack.

**Objectives:**

- The students will interact and participate in circle time.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.
- The students will follow oral directions.

**Activities:**

- Cut open a real pumpkin. Discuss with the students what they observe. Keep the seeds to bake.
- Recite the crisp clip poem, "Pumpkin Seeds." Remove a clip from the baking tray as the poem counts down.
- Bake pumpkin seeds to make a delicious snack.

**Extension Use:** Use a real pumpkin. Cut it open and count the seeds. Use a scale to weigh the seeds. Use a measuring cup to measure the seeds. Use a cookie sheet to bake the seeds.

### Day 8 Pumpkin Color

Most pumpkins are orange. Sort pictures into categories based on color.

**Orange Pumpkins**  
Attributes of a pumpkin

Unlike apples which grow in a variety of colors, most pumpkins are the same color: orange!

**Objectives:**

- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.
- The students will sort objects by property (size, shape, color, use).

**Activities:**

- Look at the real pictures of pumpkins. Ask the students what they already know about pumpkins.
- Sort different pictures into 2 different groups: Things that are orange and things that are not orange.

**Extension Use:** Experiment with color theory. Provide students with red & yellow colored water and eye droppers. Students mix colors to make a new, secondary color.

### Day 9 Pumpkin Shape

A 3 dimensional circle is called a sphere. Pumpkins are spheres. Recognize spheres in pictures through sorting.

**Shape of a Pumpkin**  
Spheres

A sphere looks like a circle. While some pumpkins are tall and some are small, most pumpkins are in the shape of a sphere.

**Objectives:**

- The students will sort objects by property (size, shape, color, use).
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

**Activities:**

- Look at the pictures of the different balls. Discuss how each picture is round like a circle. This is a sphere that rolls down the hill.

**Extension Use:** Experiment with color theory. Provide students with red & yellow colored water and eye droppers. Students mix colors to make a new, secondary color.

### Day 10 Conclusion

Invite students to recall the things that they've learned about pumpkins. Write their ideas on this "can-have-are" chart.

**Conclusion**  
Unit Conclusion

To conclude the unit, ask the students to describe what they have learned about pumpkins.

**Objectives:**

- The students will respond to comments and questions.
- The students will draw something and name what it is.

**Activities:**

- Invite students to list the things they have learned about pumpkins. Create a chart or poster using the can-have-are headers. Students can then write the ideas on index cards or on the pumpkin shapes provided.
- Sing the "Pumpkins, Pumpkins" song together.

**Extension Use:** Cut open a real pumpkin. Have students estimate the number of seeds and record on chart paper. Label 10 paper plates with the number 10 and have students place 10 seeds on each plate. Repeat estimations and revise as needed.

# Pumpkins, Pumpkins

## Activate Background Knowledge

Day 1  
Lesson  
Plans

Introduce the new unit (Pumpkins) to the students. A pumpkin is a type of fruit that grows in the fall. While there are different varieties of pumpkins, they share many of the same characteristics.

### Objectives:

- The students will observe objects with curiosity.
- The students will express themselves using words and sentences.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

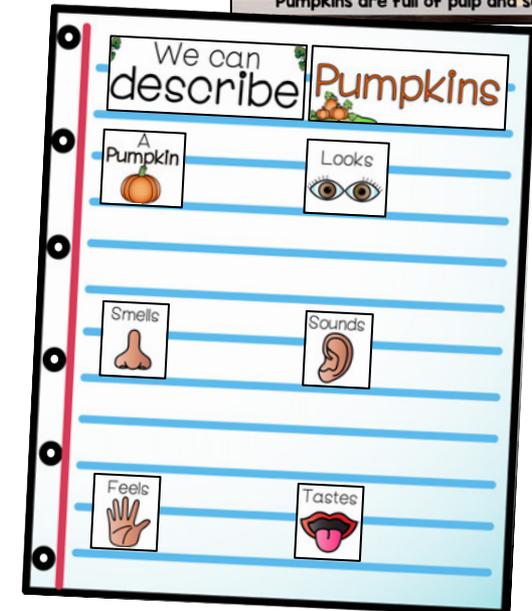
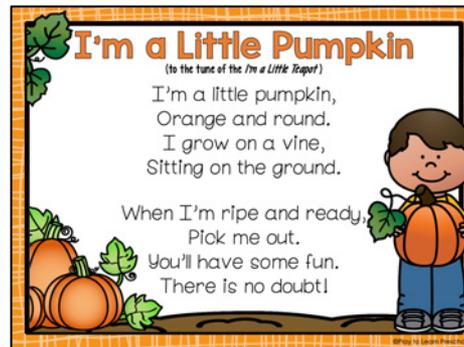
### Activities:

1. Show photographs of different sized and shaped pumpkins.
  - *Important* – Bring in a few real pumpkins. Invite students to explore the pumpkins by passing them around the class while seated on the carpet.
2. Guide students in describing the pumpkins using each sense. Create a class chart to describe the pumpkins.
3. Sing and act out “I’m a Little Pumpkin.”



#### Extension Idea:

Teach the ASL sign for **pumpkin**. Hold your non-dominant hand out with a fist. With your dominant hand, flick the top of your fist.



# Pumpkin Patch

## Graphing responses

Day 2  
lesson  
plans

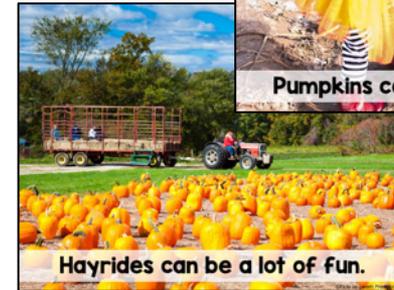
Engage students in a discussion about visiting a pumpkin patch. Who has been to a pumpkin patch? What kinds of activities can you do at a pumpkin patch?

### Objectives:

- The students will actively participate in conversations.
- The students will answer questions.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

### Activities:

1. Show photographs of pumpkin patches. Ask students to discuss each photo. Activate the students' background knowledge.
2. Take a poll. Students use name cards or post-it notes to "vote" for their answer on a bar graph. Have you ever been to a pumpkin patch?
3. Sing the song, "Pumpkin Picker."



**Extension Idea:** Make pumpkin spice play dough (recipe card attached). Use the playdough to make a pumpkin patch. Have students line up the pumpkins from biggest to smallest.



<https://playtolearnpreschool.us/autumn-harvest-play-dough/>

### Pumpkin Spice Play Dough

Make this ahead of time, or ask a parent volunteer to make it and send it in!

- 1 cup flour
- 1 Tbsp cream of tartar
- 1/2 cup salt
- 1 cup water
- 2 Tbsp oil
- 2 Tbsp pumpkin pie spice
- Orange food coloring, as desired

In a medium saucepan: mix together cream of tartar, salt, water, oil, spices, and food coloring. Gradually add flour.

Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until dough pulls away from the pan sides. Remove from heat. Put on the kitchen counter and knead until smooth.

### Pumpkin Picker

(to the tune of the "Have you Ever Seen a Lasso?")

Have you ever picked a pumpkin,  
A pumpkin, a pumpkin?  
I picked a pumpkin,  
In a patch?  
Yes, a tall one,  
No, a small one.  
Have you ever picked a pumpkin,  
In a patch?

Have you ever picked a Pumpkin?	
Yes	No
Zimele	Deetya
Amber	Claire
Mason	
Jenee	

# Pumpkin Life Cycle

Day 3  
lesson  
plans

A life cycle is a series of changes that living things go through as they grow. All living things go through life cycles!

## Objectives:

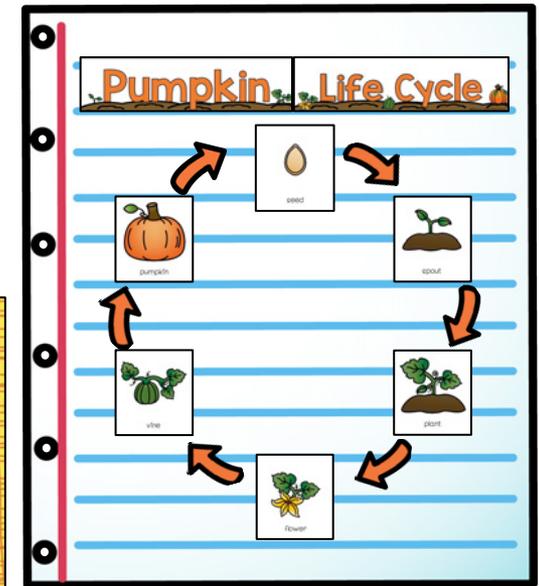
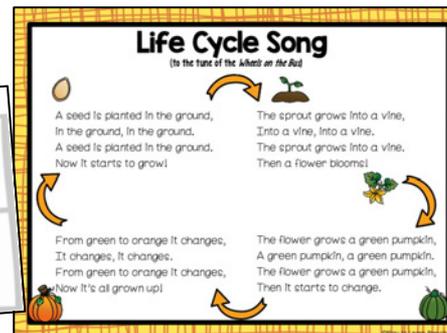
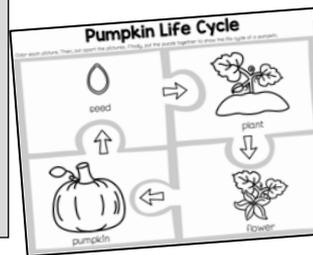
- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will arrange objects into a series.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

## Activities:

1. Show photographs of various stages of a pumpkin plant. Ask students if they believe this is the same type of plant. Why or why not?
2. Introduce the word "cycle." Tell students that this word comes from the Greek language meaning, "circle." Show how the pumpkin's life cycle goes in a circular pattern by creating an anchor chart.
3. Sing the "Life Cycle Song." You can use the stages of the life cycle cards to help guide the song.



**Extension Idea:** Have students color each part of the attached life cycle puzzle. Cut puzzle apart and have students put it back together in correct order.



# Apples & Pumpkins

## Compare & Contrast

Day 4  
lesson  
plans

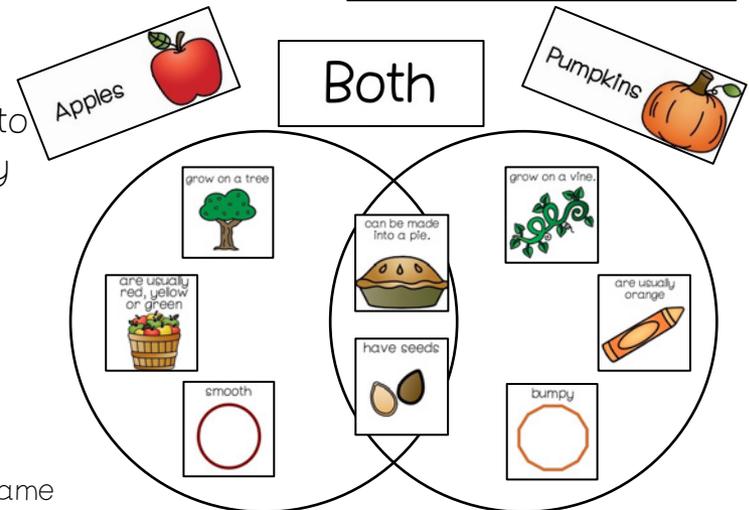
Both pumpkins and apples grow in the fall. Compare & contrast the characteristics of these foods to see how they are the same and different.

### Objectives:

- The students will notice similarities and differences and ask questions.
- The students will notice and extend simple patterns.

### Activities:

1. Show photographs of apples. Have students discuss how they are the same as and/or different from pumpkins.
2. Place hula hoops or a large piece of paper on the carpet to create a Venn Diagram. Anything in the pumpkin circle only applies to pumpkins and anything in the apple circle only applies to apples. The area where they overlap in the middle is for characteristics of both pumpkins and apples. Show Venn Diagram pieces and complete as a class.
3. Play Apples & Pumpkins Grid game.



### To Play:

1. Create a grid where each column has the same picture and each row is the same color. Discuss the pattern and relationship of the cards.
2. Students close their eyes while the teacher removes 1 card.
3. Students use their knowledge of patterns to determine which card (color and picture) is missing.



Which one is missing?

### Extension Idea:

Make homemade applesauce using attached recipe, or send home recipe cards for students to make with their grown-up.



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<https://playtolearnpreschool.us/homemade-applesauce/>

# Pumpkin Science

Day 5  
lesson  
plans

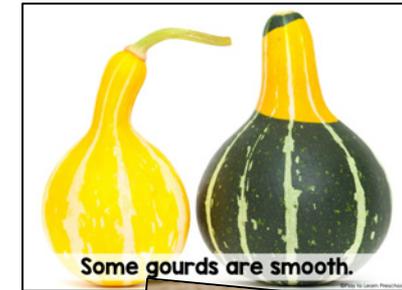
Autumn is the perfect time for students to observe mini pumpkins and gourds. Ask parents for donations of these items or visit a local pumpkin patch and have students pick their own.

## Objectives:

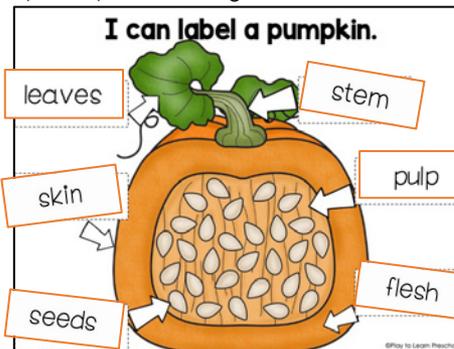
- The students will observe objects with curiosity.
- The students will use new vocabulary.
- The students will sort objects by property (texture).

## Activities:

1. Allow the students to touch the pumpkins and gourds. Ask them to talk about what they feel with their hands. What does the outside of the gourd feel like? Is it smooth or bumpy?
2. Section off a tray or the science center table into 2 parts and label them "I can sort Smooth" and "I can sort Bumpy." Encourage students to touch each gourd and then place it into the matching category.
3. Print the pumpkin diagram and laminate as desired. Use a real pumpkin and examine the different parts: the stem, skin (and maybe leaves?) on the outside. Cut a pumpkin open and examine the seeds, pulp, and flesh. Use the labels to identify each part of the pumpkin diagram.



**Extension Idea:** Gather a variety of items, including the pumpkins and gourds. Using a container with water or the sink, predict and then experiment to see which items sink and which items float.



# Jack-o-Lantern

## Developing Social-Emotional Skills

Day 6  
lesson  
plans

Jack-o-Lanterns are pumpkins with carved designs. Some are happy. Some are scary. Many people make them for Halloween. What kind of face will you make on your jack-o-lantern?

### Objectives:

- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.
- The students will recognize other's feelings and respond appropriately.

### Activities:

1. Show photographs of children. Ask students to discuss how they think each child is feeling. Why?
2. Sing the "Pumpkin Faces" song to the tune of "Where is Thumbkin?" Hold up pumpkin emotion cards and have students mimic each emotion.
3. Play the "Scaredy Cat" Carpet Game.



### Pumpkin Faces

(to the tune of the Where is Thumbkin?)

Where's the pumpkin?  
Where's the pumpkin?  
Here it is. Here it is!

This is a happy one.  
... some pumpkin fun.  
too.  
tool

Play to Learn Preschool

### To Play the Game:

- Line up the pictures of the pails in numerical order. Identify the numbers and colors together.
- Hide the scaredy cat under one of the pails and recite the poem to find it.
- Children guess where the cat is hiding by identifying the number and color.

### Scaredy Cat

Scaredy Cat, Scaredy Cat  
Hiding from me.

He's in a pail.  
Which one could it be?

Play to Learn Preschool



**Extension Idea:** Use playdough and mold it into the shape of pumpkins. Use beans, rocks, or other small objects to make jack-o-lantern faces!  
(Playdough recipe from Day 2)

# Seeds, Seeds, Seeds

## Inside the pumpkin

Day 7  
lesson  
plans

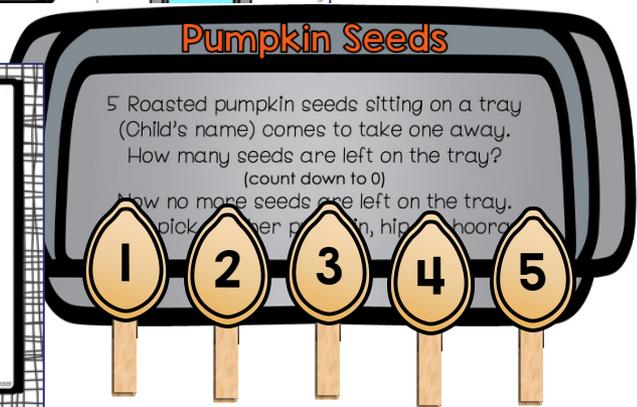
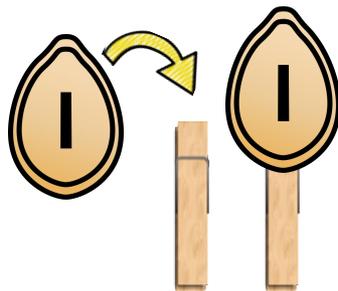
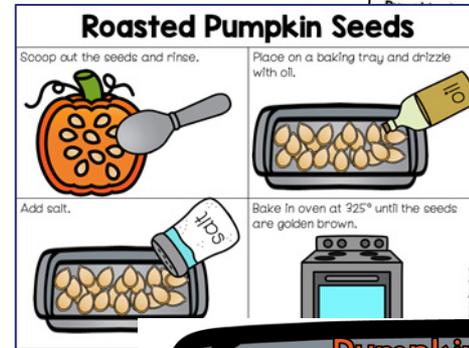
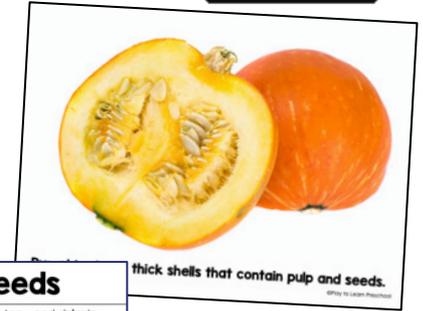
The inside of a pumpkin has flesh, pulp, and lots of seeds. The seeds can be planted to grow a pumpkin plant. Seeds can also be roasted in the oven to make a delicious snack.

### Objectives:

- The students will interact and participate in circle time.
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.
- The students will follow oral directions.

### Activities:

1. Cut open a real pumpkin. Discuss with the students what they observe. Keep the seeds to bake.
2. Recite the chip clip poem, "Pumpkin Seeds." Remove a clip from the baking tray as the poem counts down.
3. Bake pumpkin seeds to make a delicious snack.



#### Extension Idea:

Plant a few pumpkin seeds in a small pot. Remember that living things need sun, water, and love to grow.

#### Safety Reminder:

Supervise children closely. Children under the age of 4 should not eat pumpkin seeds, as they may pose a choking hazard. Check with parents first to make sure that there are no allergy concerns.

# Pumpkin Color

## Attributes of a pumpkin

Day 8  
Lesson  
Plans

Unlike apples which grow in a variety of colors, most pumpkins are the same color: orange!

### Objectives:

- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.
- The students will sort objects by property. (size, shape, color, use)

### Activities:

1. Look at the real pictures of pumpkins. Ask the students what they already know about pumpkins.
2. Sort different pictures into 2 different groups: Things that are orange and things that are not orange.

**Extension Idea:** Experiment with color theory. Provide students with red & yellow colored water and eye droppers. Students mix colors to make a new, secondary color.



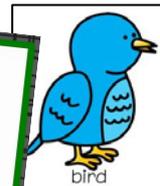
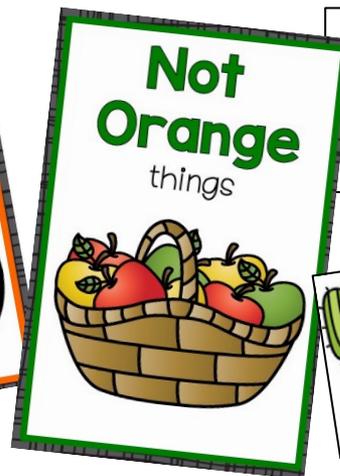
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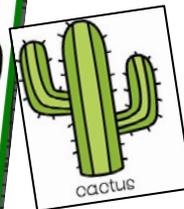
butterfly



carrots



bird



cactus



# Pumpkin Shape

## Spheres

Day 9  
Lesson  
Plans

A sphere looks like a circle. While some pumpkins are tall and some are small, most pumpkins are in the shape of a sphere.

### Objectives:

- The students will sort objects by property. (size, shape, color, use)
- The students will play with words, sounds, and rhymes.

### Activities:

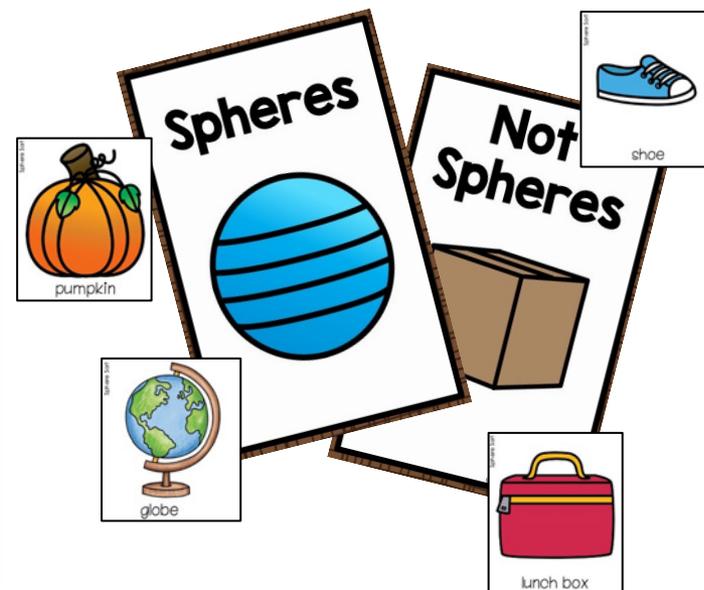
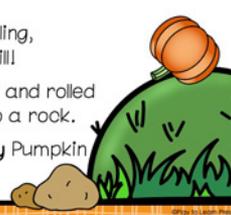
1. Look at the pictures of the different balls. Discuss how each picture is round like a circle. This 3D shape is called a sphere.
2. Sort pictures into 2 different groups: Things that are spheres and things that are not spheres.
3. Sing "The Roly-Poly Pumpkin" song together.

#### Extension Idea:

Investigate which spheres roll faster. Collect small pumpkins and balls of different sizes. Set up a small ramp and roll spheres down two at a time. Which item rolls fastest? Why do you think that happened?

**The Roly-Poly Pumpkin**  
(to the tune of the Frog Chirp Song)

Oh, the Roly-Poly Pumpkin  
Rolled down a hill.  
Once it started rolling,  
It couldn't keep still!  
It rolled and rolled and rolled  
Until it bumped into a rock.  
Then that Roly-Poly Pumpkin  
Came to a stop!



# Conclusion

## Unit Conclusion

Day 10  
lesson  
plans

To conclude the unit, ask the students to describe what they have learned about pumpkins.

### Objectives:

- The students will respond to comments and questions.
- The students will draw something and name what it is.

### Activities:

1. Invite students to list the things they have learned about pumpkins. Create a chart or poster using the “can – have – are” headers. Students can then write the ideas on index cards or on the pumpkin shapes provided.
2. Sing the “Pumpkins, Pumpkins” song together.

#### Extension Idea:

Cut open a small pumpkin. Have students estimate the number of seeds and record on chart paper. Label 10 paper plates with the number “10” and have students place 10 seeds on each plate. Revisit estimations and revise as needed.



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**Pumpkins, Pumpkins**  
*(to the tune of the If You're Happy and You Know It)*

If a pumpkin is orange, clap your hands  
If a pumpkin is orange, clap your hands  
If a pumpkin is orange, and it's round with seeds  
If a pumpkin is orange, clap your hands.

Continue with new verses:  
• Stamp your feet  
• Touch the sky  
• Spin around  
• Jump for joy



<https://playtolearnpreschool.us/pumpkin-explorations/>

**We know about Pumpkins**

can	have	are

**We know about Pumpkins**

What I know about PUMPKINS.  
A pumpkin is a fruit.  
Name: Eldean

What I know about PUMPKINS.  
Pumpkins are orange.  
Name: Spencer

What I know about PUMPKINS.  
All fruits have seeds.  
Name: Derek

What I know about PUMPKINS.  
They are round.  
Name: Jason

# Centers

# Center Activities

- Line Tracing
- Cutting Practice
- Visual Discrimination
- Make a Jack-o-lantern face
- Writing Practice
- Picture Puzzles
- Rhyming Pumpkins
- Beginning Sound Sort
- Pumpkin Shapes
- Pumpkin Patterns
- Play dough Math Mats
- Book Recommendations

### Line Tracing

**Fine Motor Center**

**Objective:** The students will use tools for writing and drawing.

### Scissors Practice

**Fine Motor Center**

**Objective:** The students will control the small muscles of their hands.

3 pages in each student, page and using

### Visual Discrimination

**Working memory**

**Objectives:** The students will show persistence in approaching tasks.

**Procedure:** Print the picture cards. Mat on cardstock and/or laminate as desired. Cut apart. Place cards facing down. Students take turns flipping over 2 cards at a time. If the cards match, the student gets to keep the pair. If they don't return them to the face-down position and try again.

### Writing Practice

**Literacy Center**

**Objectives:** The students will write letters.

**Procedure:** Copy each page and place into a plastic sleeve (or print on cardstock and laminate). Students use a dry erase marker to trace the word.

### Make a Jack-O-Lantern

**Working memory**

**Objectives:** The students will observe designs with curiosity.

**Procedure:** Print the black & white pumpkin onto orange cardstock or print the large pumpkin in full color. Invite students to choose 1 jack-o-lantern face. Use the simple black shapes to create the same face on the big pumpkin.

### Picture Puzzles

**Fine Motor**

**Objectives:** The students will coordinate hand-eye movement.

**Procedure:** Copy each page, mat, and laminate as desired. Students match the puzzle pieces together.

### Beginning Sound Sort

**Literacy Center**

**Objectives:** The students will identify the beginning sound of each word.

**Preparation:** Copy the picture cards. Glue the cover on the front, and the sorting mats on the inside. Cut and laminate the smaller pieces.

**Procedure:** Students sort the pictures by their beginning sound.

### Pumpkin Patterns

**Math Center**

**Objective:** The students will identify and extend simple patterns.

**Procedure:** Print the pattern cards and pieces, mat, laminate and cut apart. Students identify the pattern and extend it by placing the next correct piece.

### Rhyming

**Objectives:** The students will identify rhyming words.

**Procedure:** Print the pages. Mat and laminate. Locate the rhymes. They place the pictures together.

### Beginning Sound Sort

**File Folder Game**

**Objectives:** The students will use visual discrimination skills to match the pumpkins to the correct shape.

**Procedure:** Copy the picture cards. Glue the solid black shapes (first 2 pages) inside a file folder. Cut and laminate the pumpkin pieces. Students place matching pictures together.

### Pumpkin Shapes

**File Folder Game**

**Objectives:** The students will use visual discrimination skills to match the pumpkins to the correct shape.

**Procedure:** Copy the picture cards. Glue the solid black shapes (first 2 pages) inside a file folder. Cut and laminate the pumpkin pieces. Students place matching pictures together.

### Play Dough Math Mats

**Math Center**

**Objectives:**

- The students will identify numbers.
- The students will manipulate objects with hands.

**Procedure:** Print the play dough math mats. Laminate. Make the pumpkin pie playdough (recipe included on page 15) ahead of time, or recruit a parent volunteer to make it and send it into your classroom. Students choose a math mat. Using a ball of pumpkin pie playdough, they complete each of the 4 math activities.

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