

# Pumpkin Science

Pokin' around the pumpkin patch we found lots of activities to develop youngsters' science process skills. It's time for your preschool scientists to ponder the properties of pumpkins. Let the investigations begin!

by Lucia Kemp Henry

## Inferring

### Undercover Pumpkin

Challenge your little ones to think like scientists with this guessing game. While students are out of the room, drape a cloth over a pumpkin so that it covers the pumpkin but still shows its size and shape. During a group time, use the riddle in the speech bubble to prompt the class to guess the identity of the hidden pumpkin. Your curious kiddies will become science sleuths quicker than you can say "jack-o'-lantern"!

Here is something you can't see. Listen to these clues to guess what it might be.  
It grows from a seed, but it isn't a weed.  
It has a stem. It sits on the ground. Its shape is kind of round.  
Its color is orange like a tangerine. It smiles at you on Halloween.

## Observing

### Pumpkin Perceptions

Once your students have identified the seasonal subject to be studied, lead them in using their observation skills to learn more about the pumpkin. Have your group sit in a circle on the floor around the pumpkin. In turn, invite pairs of children to sit by the pumpkin so that they can touch it, smell it, and look at it closely. Encourage the children to communicate their observations by sharing words that describe the size, shape, color, and texture of the pumpkin. Record the words used to describe the pumpkin on separate cards. Later, reinforce these new science words by using them in the peppy, pumpkin-themed song that follows on page 15.

huge

bumpy

yellow  
orange

# PLANT PARTS MADE SIMPLE

Plant science is as simple as A, B, C with this child-friendly collection of observations, investigations, and experiments.

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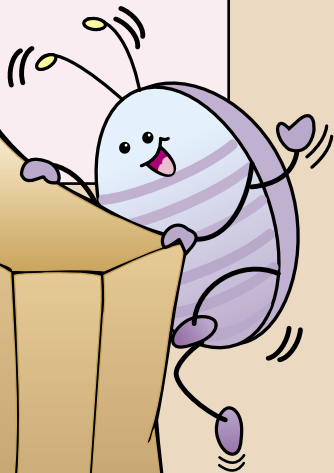
## Predicting

### A SCIENCE MYSTERY

Make the most of your students' budding interest in science with this mystery activity. Several days before the activity, purchase a tomato seedling from your local plant nursery. Make several small holes in the bottom of an eight-ounce clear plastic cup for drainage. Add soil to the cup and then plant the seedling. Keep the cup on a sunny windowsill at home, watering the seedling regularly. Once a few roots begin to peek through the soil around the sides of the cup, bring the plant to school. Secretly place the plant in a large grocery bag. Lead youngsters to discuss what is inside the bag. Then read the clues listed below, pausing after each one to allow time for guessing. After students have identified the object as a plant, remove it from the bag for students to study and discuss.

What is in the bag?

- It is something we can study.
- It is in soil.
- It is alive.
- It grows.
- It is green.
- It has leaves.



## Defining

### THE PARTS OF PLANTS

Sing this song to help your budding botanists learn basic plant parts. To prepare, make a copy of the plant part patterns on page 98. Color and cut out the patterns. Then glue felt to the back of each pattern piece to prepare it for flannelboard use. Display each pattern piece as students sing the accompanying verse of the song below.

(sung to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell")

A seed grows little roots.  
A seed grows little roots.  
The roots grow down into the soil.  
A seed grows little roots.

A seed grows a long stem.  
A seed grows a long stem.  
The stem grows way up toward the sun.  
A seed grows a long stem.

A plant grows many leaves.  
A plant grows many leaves.  
The leaves grow out quite green and strong.  
A plant grows many leaves.

A plant can grow a flower.  
A plant can grow a flower.  
The flower grows and holds the seeds.  
A plant can grow a flower.

