

OCTOBER

Pumpkin Math



Activity Description: Students will practice counting while learning about different parts of a pumpkin plant.

MATERIALS

- Small pumpkins
- Green yarn (enough to connect all pumpkins)
- Leaves
- Large spoon/scoop
- Newspaper
- Knife
- Blank paper

Activity Steps

Activity Prep: Cover a table with newspaper. Set pumpkins on the paper in a line connected by the yarn to represent a vine. Add leaves to the yarn. Use a knife to cut the tops off of enough pumpkins for students to remove seeds. Note: For younger students you may wish to draw pumpkin/leaf/seeds ahead of time. If time/space is limited, you may wish to remove seeds and wash prior to conducting the activity.

Step 1: Give one piece of paper to each student.

Step 2: Tell students about the lifecycle of a pumpkin: (1) A pumpkin starts as a seed planted in the soil. (2) A seedling pokes above the soil. (3) The small plant grows into a long vine. (4) Flowers start to grow on the vine. (5) Flowers turn into small green pumpkins. (6) The pumpkin grows, turns orange and is picked.

Step 3: Have students draw a pumpkin on their paper. Have students count the number of pumpkins on display and write the number on their paper.

Step 4: Have students draw a leaf on their paper. Have students count the number of leaves and write the number on their paper.

Step 5: Have students draw a seed on their paper.

Step 6: Have students work together to remove pumpkin seeds and count. Students are to write the number on their paper.

Processing Questions

- Are pumpkins a fruit or a vegetable? Listen for students to share their guesses. Explain that pumpkins are a fruit (they contain seeds) but when it comes to cooking, they are often referred to as vegetables.
- How do pumpkins get to us? Listen for students to share that farmers grow them, they are taken to a grocery store/farmers' market/restaurant and we purchase them.

Extension Opportunity

Introduce students to a unique snack—baked pumpkin seeds. Soak raw seeds in saltwater and bake until crispy. Search online for various seasoning recipes.



Commodity
Pumpkins

Featured State
Virginia

Suggested Book
Pumpkin Countdown
by Joan Holub

Make a Snack!
Bake pumpkin bread or muffins for a warm treat.