Autumnal Art
Foundation & Key Stage 1
1 hour 45 mins

Nature’s colour palette is spectacular in autumn! Come along to find out how busy our plants are, producing seeds, making colourful leaves and getting ready for winter. Take a tour around the Botanic Garden, look for signs of autumn and be inspired to create a colourful autumn print to take back to school. Have a go at our scavenger trail to collect leaves, seeds and seedpods, which you can take away to create an autumn display back in the classroom.

Learning outcomes

During this session pupils will:

• Gain an understanding of the changes that happen to plants and the environment during autumn
• Find out why and how leaves change colour, and why fruits and seeds are produced
• Explore the Garden by completing a scavenger hunt trail for autumn treasures
• Learn the process of making a simple print

National Curriculum subject areas

Early Years Foundation Stage:
Communication and language – listening and attention, understanding
Personal, social and emotional development – self-confidence
Understanding the world
Expressive arts and design – exploring and using media and materials

Key Stage 1:
Art: use a range of materials, develop techniques
Science Year 1: plants – identify deciduous and evergreen trees
Science Year 1: seasonal changes – changes across the seasons

Pre-visit activities

Classroom discussion
• What is a Botanic Garden? What kind of plants and trees grow here? Where did they come from originally? What else might you see on a visit to the Botanic Garden?
• Take a look at our website to find out more:
  http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
**Autumn survivors**

- How do we know it is autumn? What is happening outside that gives us clues that it is this special time of year?
- Take a look at what's going on out in your school grounds and see if you can decide which plants will survive autumn and winter and which will perish!

**Post visit activities**

**Make a leaf banner**

- Cut up squares of calico or an old sheet. Place a leaf with an interesting shape on the fabric and splatter paint around its edges with old brushes or toothbrushes. When it is dry, remove the leaf and attach the banner to a long twig (lots of twigs can be found on the ground in the autumn). Attach a string to each end of the twig to hang the banner.

**Create an authentic autumn**

- Turn your classroom into an autumn landscape. Create massive leaves in autumn colours, and huge 3D seed pods, nuts and fruits made from recycled materials.

**Help your school habitat**

- Help wildlife during the autumn by providing energy-rich foods and clean water. Remember to change the water and food regularly. Use wildlife books to help you identify the different animals you see. You can also make a chart to record and keep track of your sightings.

**Resources**

- The Nature’s Calendar website is a great place to help you find out more about seasonal changes, and is where you can record and view seasonal events that show the impact of climate change on our wildlife: [http://www.naturescalendar.org.uk/](http://www.naturescalendar.org.uk/)
- Explore this website for more detailed information about why leaves change colour in autumn, and find ideas for practical science classroom experiments: [http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/leaves.html](http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/leaves.html)
- If you fancy having a go at more autumnal-themed art, look here: [http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/autumn-crafts](http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/autumn-crafts)

If you have any comments or feedback on these activities, or need any further information, please contact the Education Officers at education@obg.ox.ac.uk.