

The Pumpkin Cycle

Objective:

Use a model and follow directions to understand the pumpkin life cycle.

Nebraska State Standards:

Science 2.3.1.c – Identify external parts of plants.

Science 2.3.2.b – Describe how living things change as they grow.

Science 2.3.4.a – Recognize seasonal changes in plants.

Materials:

Orange paper plates; two per student

Construction paper in brown (seed), dark green (leaf), yellow (blossom), light green (small pumpkin), orange (large pumpkin) and black (face)

Brown or green yarn; five pieces per student, 6-8" long

Tape, Scissors, Stapler, Hole punch

Activating Prior Knowledge:

Before beginning this activity, discuss with students the definition of a life cycle. Then, read books such as Pumpkin Circle: The Story of a Garden, Pumpkin Jack, or The Pumpkin Patch to reinforce the life cycle of a pumpkin. Finally, explain the lesson to the students.

Procedure:

1. Have each student draw a jack-o-lantern face with a black Magic Marker on the colored side of one of the paper plates.
2. Staple the paper plates together around the edges with the orange sides facing outward. Make sure to leave enough space on one side of the pumpkin to pull the seed, leaves, flower and growing pumpkins out with the pieces of yarn.
3. Use cardboard patterns of the different stages of a pumpkin or have students design their own pieces on construction paper.
4. Punch holes on each side of all of the pieces except the seed. (Since it is the last shape of the chain only one hole is needed.) Tie pieces of yarn between each piece according to the cycle of a pumpkin. (See figure for the correct order of pieces.) Tape the first piece of yarn inside the jack-o-lantern.
5. When the pieces are assembled, stack the shapes neatly and place them in the opening of the paper plate jack-o-lantern.

Closure:

Discuss the activity by starting with the seed shape, and slowly pull out shapes of the pumpkin as you tell the story of how pumpkins grow.

