

Leaf Investigations

Dawn M. Loomis-Vierck, 1st Grade Educator, Discovery Charter School, DLoomis-Vierck@columbus.k12.wi.us

What are the lessons about?

The purpose of these lessons is to have field experiences that will lead to compare/contrast of trees, leaves, and plants in a rural and urban settings. The emphasis put on fallen leaves from deciduous trees in fall. After the field experiences, journal writings, in classroom study, and compare/contrast venn diagram they can be used to create art like beautiful collages or mobiles.

How to carry out lessons:

- A. First, we take a field experience to a local woods, where there is a high volume of oak trees. Students collect leaves and acorns and make drawings and write observations inside their science journals. Then press leaves between newspaper inside the classroom labeled with their names to dry. Need: labeled collection bags for A & B.
- B. Next, we take a field experience around our city, where there are ash, lotus, crab apple, and a high volume of maple trees. Students collect leaves and seeds and make drawings and write observations inside their science journals. Then press leaves between newspaper inside the classroom labeled with their names to dry.
- C. Then, for inside classroom study hand out the leaves in labeled manila paper folders. Organize students into pairs and have them select two different leaves one from the rural and one from the urban setting. Hand out venn diagrams and have them label one side "woods" lightly outline the leaf on the circle and then have them label the other side "city" and have them outline the leaf on the circle. Then the pairs will investigate by compare/contrast (size, color, shape, tree, texture) the leaves on the venn diagram. Afterward, we meet at the carpet and discuss our findings on a larger venn diagram together.
- D. Last, I have small student groups come up to my table. They select leaves to make a collage on 8.5 X 11 cardstock. They lay out the leaves in the place where they want them glue it and brush it with Modge Podge. Dry them and then glue them onto black construction paper and display. I have also had them place the leaves under white construction paper and rub a crayon over them to make a collage like that and glue the black construction paper on the back. There are some art additional leaves at this website: <http://artful-kids.com/blog/2010/11/11/last-of-the-autumn-leaves/>

Literature Resources: *Autumn Leaves* by Ken Robbins, *Red Leaf*, *Yellow Leaf* and *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert, *We're Going on a Leaf Hunt* by Steve Metzger