Title: Fall Pumpkin Fun

Life Skill Area: Acquiring, Analyzing and Using Information

LIFE SKILLS TAUGHT
Nutritional flexibility and creativity
Basic painting skills
Decorating for the fall season
Fall harvest products
Acquiring, Analyzing and Using Information

MATERIALS NEEDED
1. Sections of landscaping timbers or fence posts, 5 to 8 inches long, may be rough or imperfect as this contributes to “character” of pumpkin
2. Orange latex paint and 1-inch paint brushes, preferably disposable
3. Light-weight branch from tree, approximately 1 inch in diameter and cut in sections 2 to 3 inches long
4. Raffia
5. Artificial leaves, green or fall colors
6. Electric drill and 1/8\textsuperscript{th} inch drill bit
7. Wood kitchen matches, heads removed
8. Low-temp hot glue and glue sticks
9. Paper plates
10. Plastic to cover work surface and clothing

PROCEDURES
1. Before workshop, drill hole (1/8\textsuperscript{th} inch diameter by 1 inch deep) in center of top of each landscaping timber or fence post section as well as each branch section.
2. Cover work surface and clothing with plastic.
3. Place timber or post section—the pumpkin—on paper plate, top side up (top has 1/8\textsuperscript{th} inch hole).
4. Paint sides and top of pumpkin orange, leaving bottom unpainted.
5. Allow to dry during discussion and snack.
6. Carefully place pumpkin on clean paper plate.
7. To attach stem, squeeze hot glue into hole in section of branch; quickly insert headless matchstick 1 inch. To trial-fit stem, place match into hole in pumpkin top. If stem does not rest against pumpkin, snip 1/8\textsuperscript{th} inch off matchstick and try again. When stem fits,
squeeze glue inside and around pumpkin hole and quickly insert exposed matchstick. Firmly press stem to pumpkin to attach.
8. Hot glue 3 or 4 leaves around stem near the base. Last, tie several strands of raffia around base of stem forming bow.

DISCUSSION
Explain traditional uses of pumpkins as fall decoration and in recipes. Explain the different types of pumpkins, such as Jack-O-Lantern, Oblong, Miniature. Demonstrate with the Food Guide Pyramid where pumpkin is classified, and the number of daily recommended servings from the fruit and vegetable groups. Serve a pumpkin-based snack that is new to them, such as pumpkin cookies.

HOME ACTIVITY
Place the pumpkin decoration in a prominent place in the home. Search for recipes for unusual uses for pumpkin, then experiment. Discuss which foods are favorites, which are not, and why.