



Date: Spring Activity

Lesson: Big Pumpkin

Grade: Pre K - 2nd

Connections to: critical thinking, hands-on experiment, literature

Lesson Description:

In this lesson, students listen to a story about the power of teamwork, learn about the life cycle of a pumpkin and their nutritional value and plant their own pumpkin seed.

Materials

- Big Pumpkin by Erica Silverman
- Yarn (enough for 1 yard per student)
- Small (2x3) zip lock bags (1 per student)
- cotton balls (1 per student)
- bowl of water
- pumpkin seeds (1 per student)
- A witch hat (if you have one, just for fun)
- optional pumpkin pie tasting for each student
 - utensils, napkins, plates and gloves to serve

Prepping for the day

- Complete the advisor planning toolkit
- Gather all materials needed (1 to 2 weeks prior)
- Read through lesson procedure and determine, within your team, who will be responsible for each step
- As a team
 - Read Big Pumpkin by Erica Silverman
 - Familiarize yourself with how to make a seed necklace
- Individual
 - read through the step/steps you will be responsible for and be prepared to present in front of the class

Day of Procedure

1. Explain to students that today we must get ready for Halloween. Ask students why they think we would get ready for Halloween in the spring? Encourage answers that display planning ahead (there are no wrong answers for this question).
2. Tell the students you are now going to read a story and you will need some help from them (you can choose the participants ahead of time or during the story, you will need students to play the role of a Mummy, Vampire, Ghost, and a Bat). Place your magical or very real witch hat on your head and begin reading, Big Pumpkin by Erica Silverman. Call up the students to act out pulling a pumpkin off the vine, students remain until the bat pulls the pumpkin off the vine, students work together to pull the pumpkin off the vine. One volunteer can read the story as the other volunteer helps students get in line and work together.
3. After completion of the book, ask students the following:
 - a. What was the problem in the story and how did it get solved? (you can guide the class to talk about teamwork, and prompt discussion about the bat and why he was laughed at)
 - b. Poll the students - ask how many have ever had pumpkin pie
 - c. Share a nutritional fun fact about pumpkin - Did you know an orange pumpkin has LOTS of vitamin A. Vitamin A helps your vision.
 - d. Tell students, now that we have seen how a pumpkin grows in the story, it's time to plant our own pumpkin for pumpkin pie. Discuss with students how long it will take to grow their pumpkin (refer to chart on seed package). Guide students to understand that in order for pumpkins to be ready by Halloween, they have to be planted in the spring.
4. Make a seed necklace with the students. Advise teacher that the seed will start to sprout and can be planted about 10 days after starting to sprout.
5. Optional - if having a pumpkin pie tasting with the class, review the nutrition of a pumpkin, review the taste test rules - tried it, liked it, loved it but we never yuck it!
6. Thank the class for letting you share all about pumpkins and ask them to follow-up with pictures of how their pumpkin plants are doing.