



Autumn Dictionary

OBJECTIVE: Read to learn new vocabulary related to autumn.

STANDARDS: Science: Organisms and environments; Changes in the earth and sky; Social Studies (NCSS): People, places, and environments

“Deciduous trees lose their leaves in autumn every year.”

BEFORE READING

Pre-Teach Concepts

Look at a dictionary with children, and identify the different parts.

Display your classroom dictionary and ask children, “How do we use this book?” Encourage children to share their ideas. Elicit that the words are listed in alphabetical order and that the dictionary gives the meanings of words. Show children a sample entry, pointing out the pronunciation guide, part of speech, and definition. Tell children that in this issue, they will read a dictionary of words about autumn.

DURING READING

Draw Conclusions

Help children use clues to understand autumn animal behavior.

After reading the entry for *hoard*, ask, “Why does the entry say squirrels hoard nuts in autumn?” (*The squirrels hoard nuts to eat in winter, when food is hard to find.*) “Why do you think food is hard to find in winter? Why would it be easier for the squirrel to find its nuts in autumn?” Lead children to see that in winter, the weather gets cold, and there is ice and snow. That makes things like plants, berries, and nuts much harder to find.

AFTER READING

Apply and Extend

Brainstorm more autumn words, and find their correct placement in the dictionary.

Ask, “What other words remind you of autumn?” Spark ideas by talking to children about autumn activities, holidays, and foods. Write children’s suggested words on the board. (For some examples, see Read-Aloud Background.) Then challenge children to tell where each word would go in the alphabetical order of the dictionary.

READ-ALoud BACKGROUND

More Autumn Dictionary Words

- **apple cider** (ap-uhl sye-dur) *noun* Apple cider is a drink made by pressing juice out of apples. It is thicker and darker than apple juice.
- **chlorophyll** (klor-uh-fil) *noun* Chlorophyll is a green pigment in plants. It helps plants make food. Some trees stop making chlorophyll in autumn. Then the other color pigments in leaves, like red and orange, are easier to see.
- **crops** (krops) *noun* Crops are plants that farmers grow in large amounts. Some crops that are ready to be picked in autumn are apples, pears, pumpkins, and corn.
- **deciduous** (di-sij-oo-uhss) *adjective* Deciduous trees lose their leaves in autumn every year. They grow a new set of green leaves in spring.
- **evergreen** (ev-ur-green) *noun* Evergreens have green leaves all year long. They lose leaves, but not all at once. As old leaves fall off, new ones grow in their place.
- **foliage** (foh-lee-ij) *noun* Foliage means a lot of leaves all together. For example: People take drives to see the colorful autumn foliage.
- **gourd** (gord) *noun* Gourds are fruits that have hard skin and grow on vines, like pumpkins, squashes, and cucumbers. In autumn, people use gourds for decoration.

The ABCs of Information

- A dictionary is a reference book. Reference books like the dictionary, thesaurus, and encyclopedia give people information.
- Many reference books use alphabetical order, which makes it easier to look up words. Imagine looking for a word that could be anywhere in the dictionary. It would take a very long time if you had to look on every page!