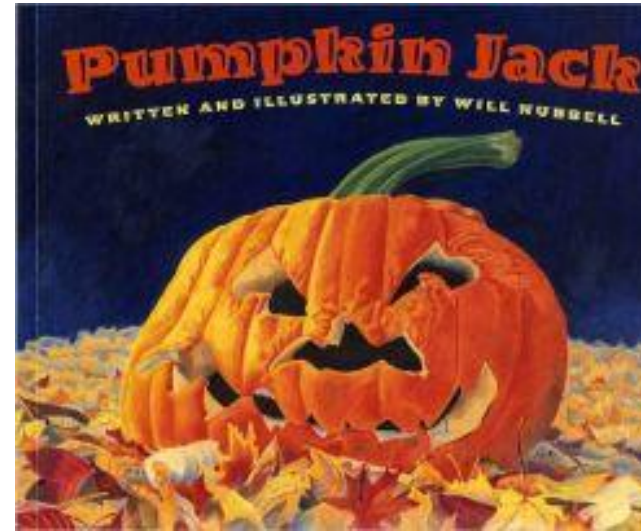


October 2014 Book of the Month

Pumpkin Jack

By: Will Hubbell

When Tim carves his first pumpkin, he names it Jack. When it finally begins to decay, he puts it in the garden rather than in the trash bin. As the months go by, Jack Grows moldy, sinks into the leaves, hides in the snow, and finally sprouts a new plant. By the next fall, there are plenty of pumpkins for Tim to share at school. He keeps just one for himself and when he finishes carving it, he says "Welcome back, Jack!" The plant cycle throughout the seasons is told in a satisfying, straightforward fashion.



Background Knowledge:

There are flowering and non-flowering plants and edible and non-edible plants that are grown in North Carolina. The pumpkin plant serves as both a flowering and edible plant, which is important for students to know when categorizing. A pumpkin **plant** starts with a **seed**, then the **roots sprout** underground, the leaves sprout from the **soil**, the **flowers blossom**, and the **fruit** or **pumpkin** appears last. Pumpkins are important agricultural products that are grown in North Carolina.

Pumpkin Investigations

Sink vs. Float

Bring in various sizes of pumpkins. Make a chart (descriptions) of the different kinds of pumpkins (large, small, smooth, bumpy, rough, stem, no stem, heavy). Have students make a prediction if the pumpkin will sink or float. Record predictions on a T-chart (Float/Sink). Have students use a scale to weigh their pumpkins. Compare the weights of the pumpkins and test them all to see if they sink or float. (Yes, they ALL float)! Record findings in science notebooks. Test other items similar in size and shape of the pumpkin to determine if they sink or float and discuss reasons why.

What's in a Pumpkin?

Have students brainstorm what they think is inside a pumpkin. How does it feel? Cut open several pumpkins and place students in groups with the pumpkins. Have students scoop out the pulp. How does it feel? Smell? Have students record findings in their science notebooks.

Seed Count

Have students estimate how many seeds they will find inside a pumpkin. During the pumpkin investigation, have students separate, remove and count the seeds. Compare the number of seeds found from each group. Have students make pumpkins from orange construction paper and record the number of seeds found on the pumpkin. Then have students make number facts to match the given sum recorded on the back of the pumpkin.

The Lifecycle of a Pumpkin

Have students draw and write about the lifecycle of the pumpkin. Then have students make a “craftivity” to model the lifecycle.

Click on the link below for detailed instructions and directions to this activity.

<http://www.agintheclass.org/Portals/0/LessonFiles/pumpkin%20life%20cycle%20chain.pdf>

Lifecycle Video

This is a link to a short video that shows the lifecycle of a pumpkin and how it transforms from a seed into a beautiful pumpkin.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXLnCd4JMH4>

Pumpkin Pie, Oh My! And More

Bring in Pumpkin Pie and Sweet Potato Pie and conduct a taste test, with cool whip, of course!

Have students graph their favorite and write about it. Discuss how they taste the same/different.

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

1 ½ cup raw pumpkin seeds

1 pinch of salt

2 tsp. melted butter

Preheat oven to 300*

Toss seeds in a bowl with the melted butter and salt. Spread the seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake for about 45 minutes or until golden brown; stir occasionally.

Creative Writing

Have students name their own pumpkin. Write about what you would do with it, how you would take care of it, and how it comes back.

Have your students write the recipe. Also have them come up with an original pumpkin recipe.

Pumpkin Ag Mag

http://www.ncagintheclassroom.com/Portals/1/pdf/curricula/g3_lesson13.pdf