Pumpkins, Pumpkins

Bonus Activities

Welcome to Gee Whiz Education

At Gee Whiz, we are excited that you have chosen to download our complimentary, "Pumpkins, Pumpkins" activity booklet. The experiences you find in this booklet are very similar to the ones we include in our curriculum which is specifically designed for mixed-age groups.

Below you will see a box that contains the developmental areas the experiences included in this booklet address and the associated picture codes. When you read the activity plans, just look for these codes. They will tell you what developmental areas you are addressing as you do each experience. This makes documentation super easy. You will also see codes (e.g., LD1). These are Learning Indicators (skills). Please see the Gee Whiz User's Guide for more information on the Learning Indicators: https://geewhizeducation.com/gee-whiz-users-guide/

Following this page, you will find hands-on experiences for ALL ages in your group! Items in red may need a little more time to prep or gather. We hope you find them super easy to follow and a lot of fun! Please, feel free to reach out to us at customerservice@geewhizeducation.com if you have any questions. We are excited to have you try our experiences and hope you will also look into our curriculum. You can find out more at www.geewhizeducation.com.

Gee Whiz Developmental Areas &
Language Development (LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4)
Literacy Knowledge (LK1, LK2, LK3, LK4, LK5)
Math Knowledge (MK1, MK2, MK3, MK4, MK5, MK6)
Science Knowledge (SK1, SK2, SK3)
Approaches to Learning (AL1, AL2, AL3)
Logic & Reasoning (LR1, LR2)
Social Studies Knowledge (SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4)
Creative Arts & Music (CA1, CA2, CA3, CA4)
Social & Emotional Development (SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4)
Physical Development & Health (PD1, PD2, PD3, PD4, PD5)

This symbol indicates the experience addresses character education.

Get Moving!

This symbol indicates the experience helps children build gross motor skills.

This symbol indicates the experience can, or should, be done outdoors.

Pumpkins, Pumpkins

Enjoy the following activities with your children as desired.
In most cases, you can substitute jack-o-lanterns for pumpkins if that works better for your program.

Whole Group Activities (all ages)

Exploring Together: Little Pumpkins
(all ages, 💬 ♥ ? ♫ 📍 ☺ ✋)

Materials:
☐ **A real pumpkin in a paper bag or cardboard box**

- This experience invites children to use their senses as they build background knowledge about pumpkins. Adding a song incorporates music, movement and language as well.
- Sit on the floor with the bag or box containing the pumpkin. Peek inside and act excited. Chances are, the children will become very curious! Have children use their senses to figure out what is inside the bag/box. Can they figure it out without looking? Challenge those children who are more verbal to describe what they feel. Then, once the children think they know what is inside the bag/box, remove the pumpkin and invite the children to explore it. How does it feel? Look? Sound? Even smell?
- Next, sing the following song and do the movements with children. If you would like, you can change the words to say, "I'm a little jack-o-lantern…"

I'M A LITTLE PUMPKIN
(tune: "I'm a Little Teapot")

I'm a little pumpkin
Big and round
(put arms out to sides to make body round)
Sitting on the frosty ground.
(sit down)
Push me to the left and then the right,
(rock back and forth)
And I will roll right out of sight!
(roll away)

EXTENSION: If desired, carve the pumpkin into a jack-o-lantern with the children. Be sure to use tools specifically designed for carving because they are not sharp.

Questions to Spur Thinking
(adjust as needed if you are using a jack-o-lantern)

- *What color is our pumpkin?*
- *What other things are the same color as our pumpkin?*
- *Where do pumpkins grow?*
- *What do you like to eat that is made with pumpkin?*

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you think is inside the box/bag?*
- *Was your guess correct?*
- *What do you know about pumpkins?*
- *What would you like to learn about them?*

Exploring Together: Pass the Pumpkin
(all ages, 💬 ♥ ✋ ? 📍 ☺ ♫)

Materials:
☐ **Small pumpkin** (a pumpkin gourd works well because it is very hard) OR plastic/foam or construction paper pumpkin if a real one is not available (NOTE: If you want to, you could use a permanent marker to draw a jack-o-lantern face on the pumpkin gourd ahead of time)
☐ Music

- This game is fun and exciting! It also challenges children to practice cooperation and self-regulation as they play. Additionally, the children will build listening skills as they pass the pumpkin when the music is playing and stop passing when the music stops.
- Have children sit in a circle and show them the pumpkin (or jack-o-lantern). Invite them to explore the pumpkin/jack-o-lantern. Those children who are more verbal can talk about their own personal experiences with pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns.
- Next, introduce the game, "Pass the Pumpkin (or Jack-o-Lantern)." Begin playing recorded music and have the children pass the pumpkin around the circle. When the music stops, the child holding the pumpkin must finish the statement, "Pumpkins are _____" if he/she is more verbal. If not, that is OK! Continue playing the game until each child has a turn to complete the statement.

  EXTENSION: More advanced children can play the game in a different way. To play with these children, have them complete the statement with a word that begins with the letter P (or J … if you are using a jack-o-lantern). For instance, "Pumpkin are perfect" or "Jack-o-lanterns are jolly!" See how many different words they can come up with as they play.

Pumpkins, Pumpkins

Small Group Activities (Toddlers-4 Years)

What Is Inside?
(Toddler-4 years, ?)

Materials:
- ☐ **Real pumpkin** - Use a pie pumpkin if available. Cut the top to make a "lid." Keep the "lid" on for now.
- ☐ Large bowl, large metal spoons
- ☐ Baking sheet, aluminum foil, olive oil

- While we (as adults) know what is inside a pumpkin, young children may not. This experience invites children to make and test predictions, explore using their senses and use language to share ideas with others.

- Invite children to explore the pumpkin. Talk with them about what they believe might be inside. After children make their predictions, remove the "lid" and invite them to use their senses to explore. What do they smell? See? Feel?

- Next, the children can use metal spoons to help clean out the pumpkin. Put the seeds and fibrous strands in a large bowl. Save the seeds for roasting or planting later, if desired. As children clean out the pumpkin, talk together about whether or not their earlier predictions were correct.

- After cleaning up, cut the pumpkin into chunks (only you should use the sharp knife). Brush with olive oil and place on a baking sheet covered with aluminum foil. Roast at 350 degrees until soft.

- Once roasted, give each child a small piece of pumpkin to taste. How does cooking the pumpkin change it? Do they like the way it tastes?*

- Advanced Preschoolers: These children can help brush the cut pieces of pumpkin with olive oil. They can also help spoon the cooked pumpkin from the rinds once roasted and cooled.

** Always check with parents/caregivers before serving any foods.*

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you think we are going to find inside the pumpkin when we open it?*
- *Were your predictions correct?*
- *How did the pumpkin change when we cooked it?*

- *What part of the pumpkin did you use to make prints?*
- *How could you use the pumpkin and paint to create designs in different ways?*

Pumpkin Printing
(Toddler-4 years, ?)

Materials:
- ☐ **Small pumpkins** (the type that are like gourds)
- ☐ Sponges or folded paper towels in shallow dishes soaked with orange paint
- ☐ Large sheets of paper

- Using small pumpkins to make prints is a different way for children to experience art. This activity challenges children to problem-solve as they test their own ideas.

- Provide materials listed above. Children can press the bottoms, sides, or even tops of the small pumpkins into the paint-soaked sponges or paper towels and then on paper. Let them take this experience in any direction they would like. Remember… art should be open-ended! As the children create, talk together about the designs the pumpkins make. This is also the perfect time to talk about the color orange! Adapt as needed for different developmental levels.

- Toddlers/Twos/Young Threes: These children may benefit from wrapping the tops of the pumpkins with paper towels and rubberbands to make a "handle" for them to hold.

- Older Threes/Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children may want to explore other ways of using the pumpkins to make prints. For instance, they may decide to paint on the pumpkins and then wrap the paper around them to create designs. Encourage them to use their imaginations and problem-solve while participating in the activity.

Pumpkins, Pumpkins

Small Group Activities (Toddlers-4 Years)

Patterning Fun
(Toddler-4 years, ✋ ? ♥ 📍 ❶ ☺ 💬)

Materials:
☐ **Fall or Halloween Patterning Cards & Strips (see p. 8-11)** - To prepare, print out the version you prefer to use (or both!), mount to heavy paper and cut apart.

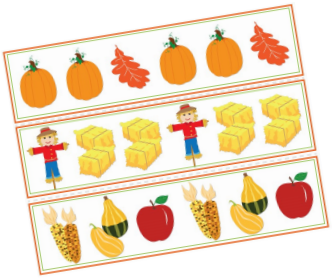
- Patterning is an important skill. The Fall or Halloween Patterning Strips and Cards are a fun, hands-on tool you can use to help children of different developmental levels practice copying, extending or even creating patterns. This material is also wonderful for helping children build both expressive and receptive language skills.

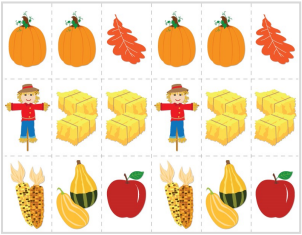
- Set out the pattern strips and cards and invite those children who show interest to explore! As you interact with the children, challenge those who are more verbal to name the items they see on the strips and cards. Then, use the pattern strips and cards in different ways with different developmental levels.

- Toddlers/Twos: For this group, just focus on the skill of matching. Lay out the strips and then hold up one of the cards. See if the children can point to one of the pictures on the strips that is "the same." Repeat with all the cards. Be sure to name each picture as the children match it to help them build receptive language skills. This is a great strategy for ELL/DLL children as well.

- Threes: For this group, focus on copying patterns. Have these children copy the pattern by placing the cards directly above the pictures that match on the cards. Talk about the entire process while engaging with the children.

- Fours/Advanced Preschoolers: These children can not only copy the patterns (see the description for Threes) but they can also extend the patterns by placing the picture cards at the end to keep the pattern "going." Additionally, these children can also use the cards to create their own patterns.





Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What picture on strip do you like best? Why did you choose that one?*
- *What do you think comes next?*
- *How could you use the cards to make a new pattern?*

- *Which jack-o-lantern shows how you feel today?*
- *Which jack-o-lantern shows how the most people feel today? The least? The same?*

How Do You Feel Today?
(Toddler-4 years, ❶ ? ✋ 📍 ♥ 💬)

Materials:
☐ **How Do You Feel? chart** - Print out p. 12. Glue to a larger sheet of green construction paper and attach an index card (like a pocket) to the side of each picture. See illustration on p. 13 to see what your chart might look like when it is ready to use.
☐ Plastic spoons or craft sticks

- This chart is great because it not only gives children the opportunity to share their feelings, it also incorporates math!

- Hang up the prepared, "How Do You Feel?" chart in a place where the children can access it easily. They will probably be very curious once they see the chart. When this happens, invite those children who are more verbal to share how they think each jack-o-lantern is feeling based on his/her facial expression. Then, point to and read each emotion. Be sure to also read the title at the top! Then, have each child put a craft stick or a plastic spoon in the pocket beside the jack-o-lantern that matches his/her emotion today. You could do this at the beginning of the day and then again at the end of the day. That way, the children can discover that emotions often change during the course of the day!

- Advanced Preschoolers: These children can count the number of craft sticks or plastic spoons in each pocket and then compare. Which has the most? Least? The same?

Pumpkins, Pumpkins

Infant Activities *(also great for Toddlers!)*

I Like Pumpkins
(Infants, ❤ 📍 ✋ ♫ ☺ 💬)

Materials:
☐ **Real pumpkin**

- Songs are wonderful tools you can use with infants to build receptive language and vocabulary! Place a real pumpkin on the floor in front of you. If the infant is crawling, see if he/she will crawl to the pumpkin. If not, you can hold the infant in your lap with the pumpkin in front of you.

- Explore the pumpkin with the infant, using plenty of language to describe how it looks and feels. Then sing the following song.

I LIKE PUMPKINS
(tune: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star")

I like pumpkins, yes, I do.
I like pumpkins, how 'bout you?
Orange and smooth and oh, so round.
Tap and you will hear a sound.
I like pumpkins, yes, I do.
I like pumpkins, how 'bout you?

Shake It!
(Infants, 💬 ✋ 📍 ☺ ❤)

Materials:
☐ **Pumpkin/Jack-o-lantern sound shakers** - To make, fill empty plastic water bottles partially with sand or dry rice. Secure the lids with glue and duct tape. Wrap orange construction paper around the bottles and brown paper around the cap. Add a jack-o-lantern face, if desired.

- Shakers are fun for infants to explore. Not only do they encourage them to use their senses, they also help them to build fine motor control. You may want to fill the bottles with different materials or even different amounts of the same material so they make different sounds.

- Sit on the floor with the infant in your lap and a shaker (or shakers) in front of you. Pick up a shaker and shake it. What does the infant do?

- Invite the infant to shake the shaker him/herself or provide assistance if necessary. Talk as the infant explores the shaker. Use plenty of language to describe the sounds created by the shakers as well as the infant's response to them. This is an excellent way of exposing the infant to cause & effect (e.g., when you move the shaker, it makes a sound).

Pumpkins, Pumpkins

School-Age Activities

How Many Seeds?

(School-Age, ? ❶ ♥ ☺)

Materials:

- ☐ **Pumpkin**
- ☐ Large bowl, sharp knife (teacher-use only; put out of reach after using)
- ☐ Spoons (different sizes/types)
- ☐ Strainer, baking tray with edges

- This experience challenges school-age children to make and test estimations. It also exposes them to counting by 10s.
- How many seeds do YOU think are inside a pumpkin? Explore with the children to find out! Place the pumpkin on a table. Ask children if they know what is inside. Seeds, of course! Have children estimate how many seeds they think are inside the pumpkin. Print their predictions on paper.
- Have children watch as you cut the top from the pumpkin. Then have them use spoons to remove the seeds and fibrous strands. They can experiment to see which type/size of spoon works best for this task.
- Next, have children separate the seeds from the fibrous strands. They can place the seeds in a strainer. Wash well and then put on a baking tray with edges. Allow to dry.
- Have children work together to count the seeds. An effective way to do this is to have the children make sets of 10 and then count by 10 to determine the total. Compare the actual amount to the children's estimates. Who was the closest?

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Which type of spoon worked best for cleaning the pumpkin. Why?*
- *Whose estimate was closest to the actual amount? Whose was the farthest away?*
- *Do you think all pumpkins have the same amount of seeds? Why? Why not?*

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What colors did you choose for your pumpkin weaving? Why did you pick those colors?*
- *What do you like about weaving? What don't you like?*
- *What other things do you think you could make by weaving?*

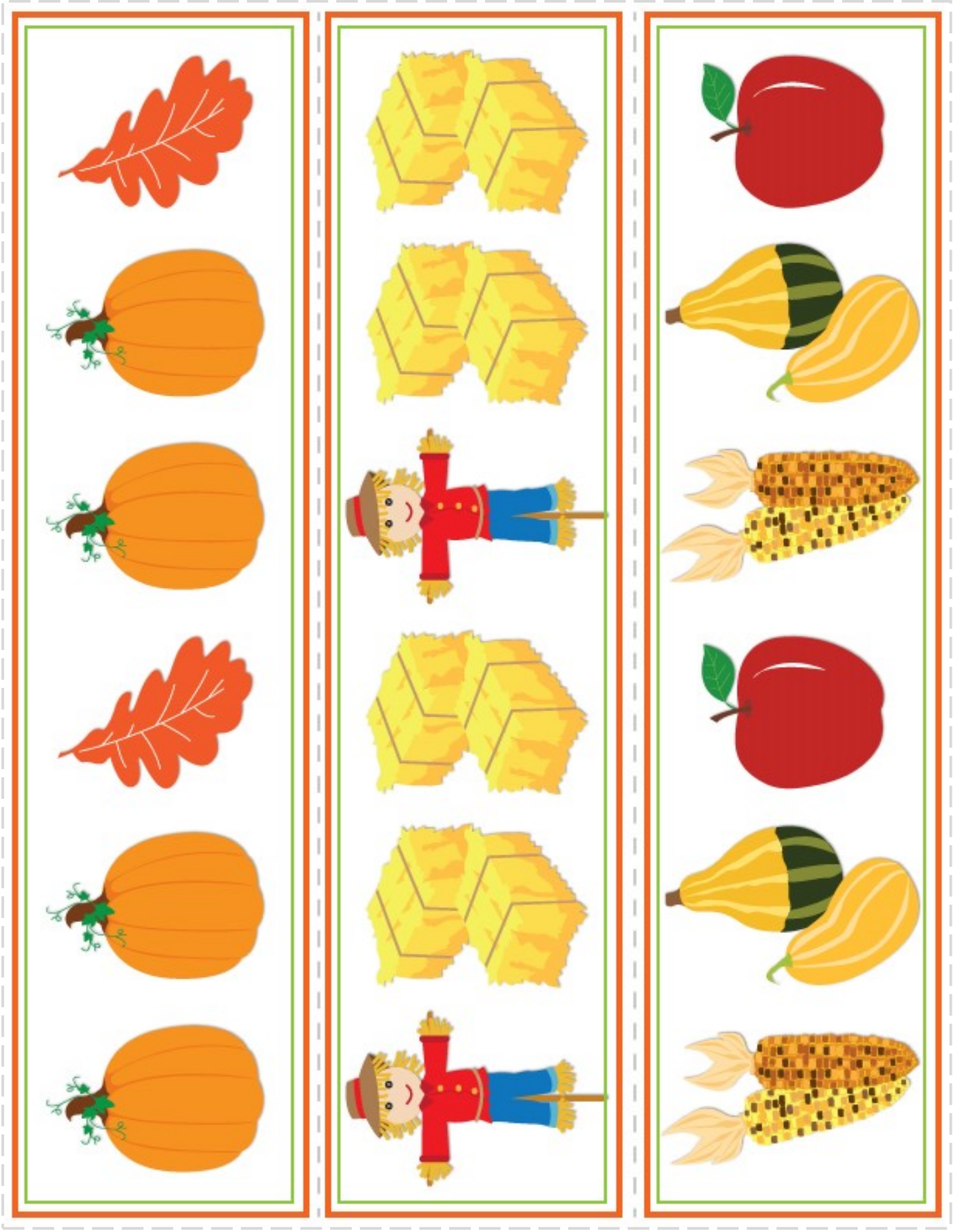
Pumpkin Weaving

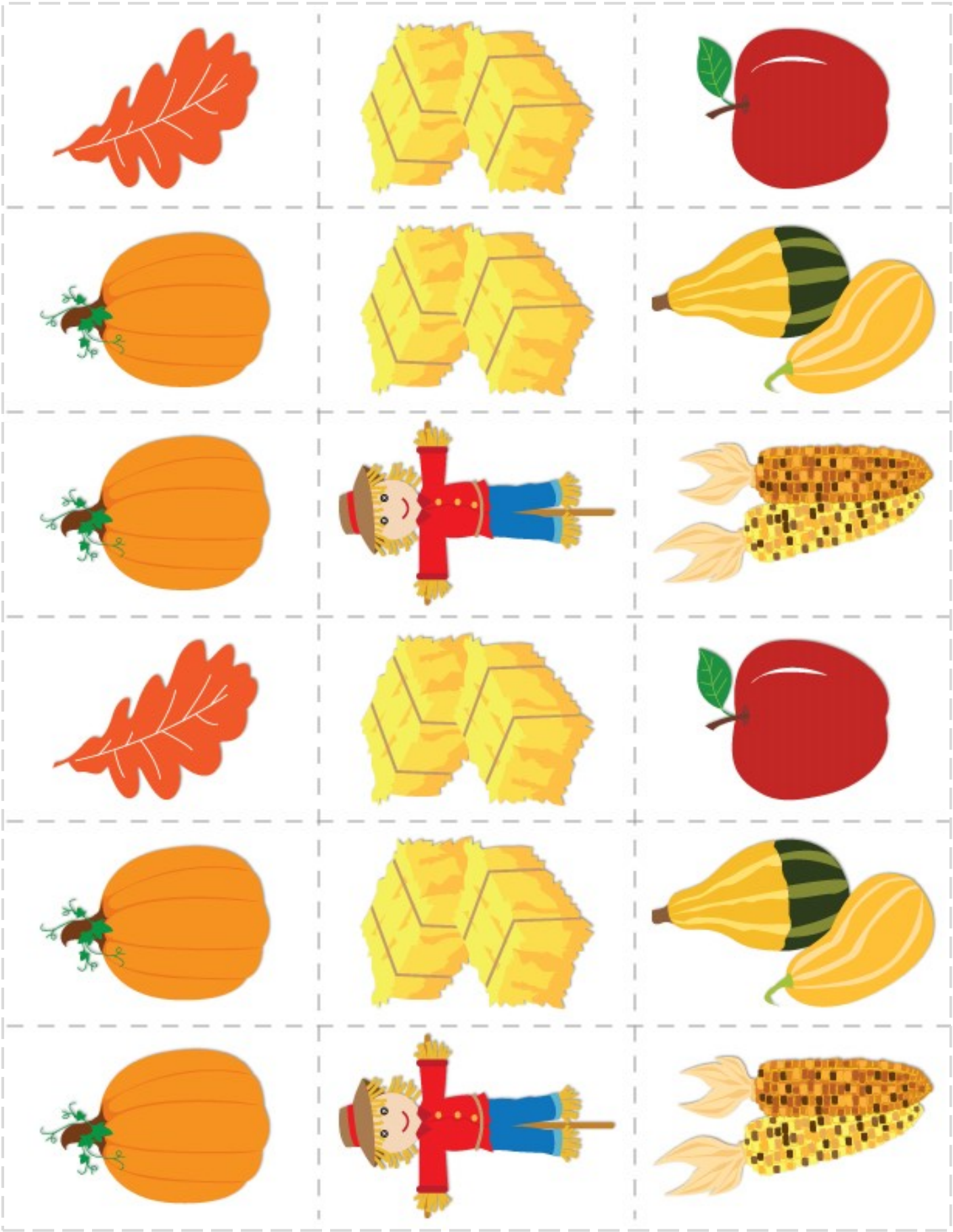
(School-Age, ? ☺ ♥)

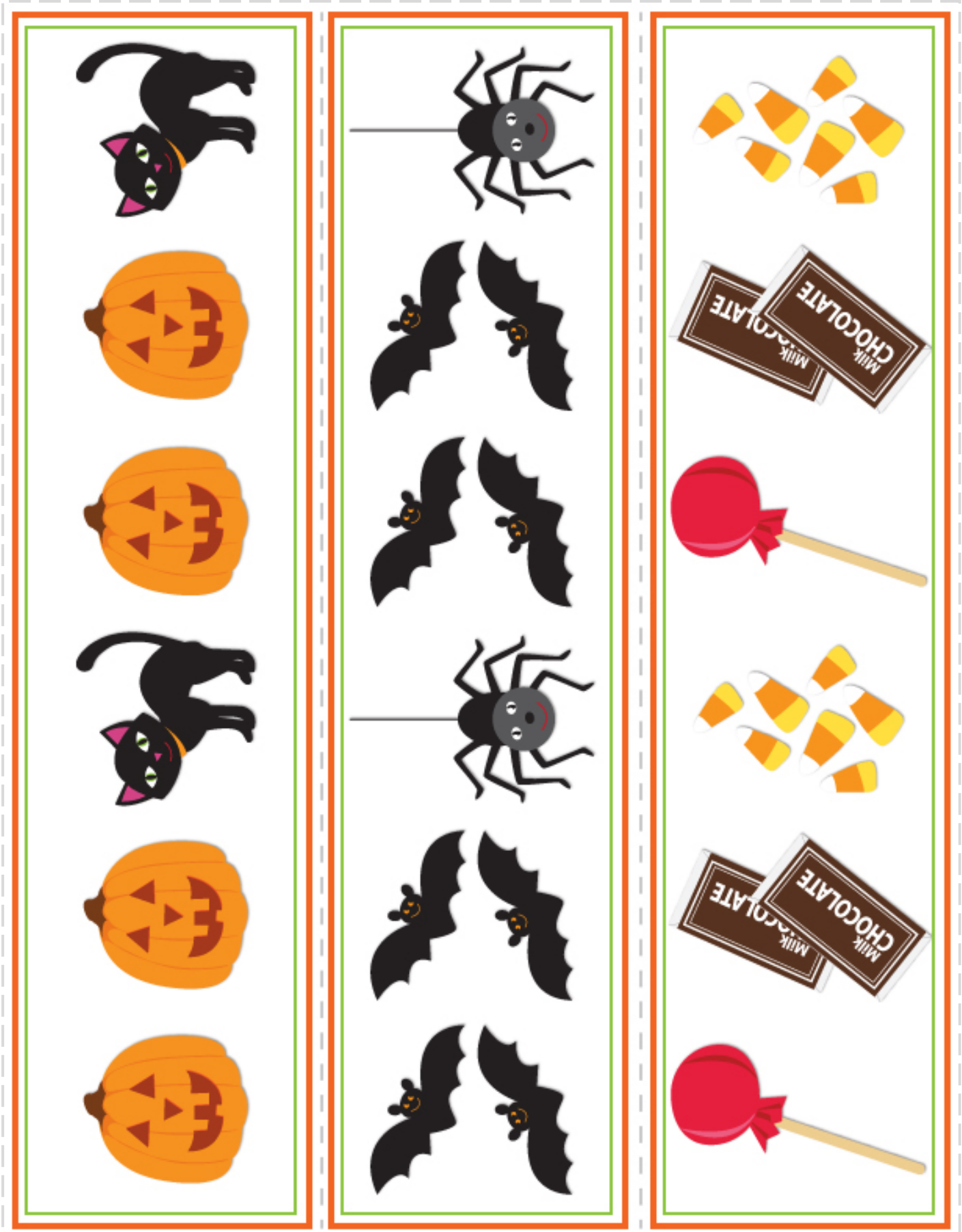
Materials:

- ☐ **Orange, black, green and/or brown construction paper**
- ☐ Scissors

- Weaving is an activity that requires children to problem-solve, utilize eye-hand coordination and practice patience. It can be a very challenging skill for children to master and yet it has benefits in many developmental areas. During this experience, school-age children will have the opportunity to practice weaving while creating something fun!
- Set out the materials listed above and as your school-age children show interest, introduce weaving. First, the children will each need to fold a sheet of orange construction paper in half. Then, they will need to cut slits from the fold to about 1" from the edge. IF your children are not familiar with how to do this, here is a short video you may want to share before they begin: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOmYCURzd7Y
- After the children cut the slits, then have them cut black, green, and/or brown construction paper into 1" wide strips they will use for weaving. Once cut, they can weave the strips in and out of the orange paper.
- Once the children finish weaving, they can cut their paper into a simple pumpkin shape. Because the children will choose to use different colors of strips and they will be cutting their own pumpkin shapes, the end results will all look very different!






MILK CHOCOLATE
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How Do You Feel Today?

happy

sad

grumpy

sleepy

How Do You Feel Today?
happy
sad
grumpy
sleepy

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