

The PBS Kids logo, featuring the letters 'PBS' in a circle above a stylized face with large eyes and a wide smile, with the word 'KIDS' below it.

KIDS

The logo for 'It's a Big Big World', featuring the text 'It's a BIG BIG World' in a playful, rounded font. A globe is integrated into the letter 'B' of the second 'BIG'.

Leaves, leaves, leaves

Curriculum Idea: Leaves have many functions, are diverse in many ways such as shape, color, texture, and size, and play an important role in nature.

Related Episodes: What a Wonderful Leaf

Age Range: 4-6

Subject: Botany

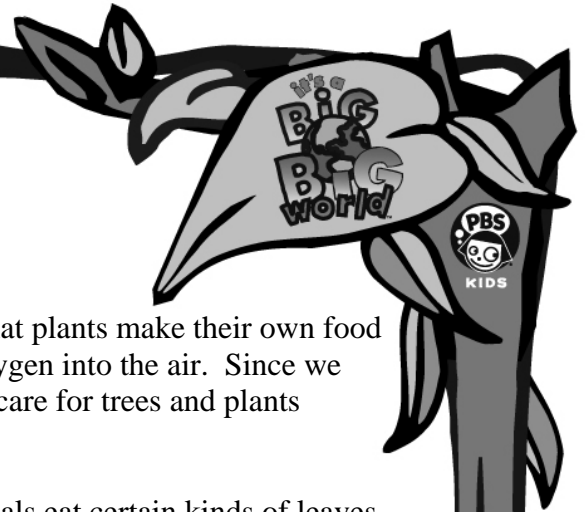
Skills: Comparison, Art, Observation, Categorization

Materials: Bag, leaves, paper, crayons/markers/pencils, glue, (optional: additional craft supplies)

Directions: Take a walk with your child through your yard, neighborhood, or local park and look at all of different types of leaves you see. Bring a bag for leaf collecting. Point out to your child leaves of different colors, shapes, textures, and sizes, and have him collect a variety of leaves.

When you return home, help him sort through his leaves and begin his leaf art project. Let him use his imagination to make any sort of creation that he would like to. He could decorate the edges of a piece of paper like a picture frame and glue a leaf in the middle that he would like to display. Or, use a leaf as the body of a person or animal and then add limbs and other features. Maybe there are lots of leaves he'd like to glue down into a leaf collage. Or, glue a row of leaves onto the paper and decorate them as cars, drawing a street beneath them. The possibilities are endless!

Talk About It: Look at the leaves he collected and ask him to describe some of the different features he sees. Encourage him to compare the leaves. Ask questions to help prompt his thinking. For example, can he find a leaf with a smooth edge? Are there others that do not have smooth edges? What words would he use to describe those edges? Take a leaf that he did not use in his project and fold it in half and ask him if the two sides are the same size and shape. Ask him to try it with another leaf. What did he notice? He may also want to compare the thickness of different leaves. Or, point out the veins in a leaf and ask him to find ones that have more or less veins. Ask him what he thinks the veins are for.



Talk about the function of leaves on trees and plants. Explain that plants make their own food using energy from the sun. As part of making food, they put oxygen into the air. Since we need oxygen to breathe, this is one reason that it is important to care for trees and plants around us.

You may want to remind your child that just because some animals eat certain kinds of leaves, that does not mean that they are ok for everyone to eat. There are some leaves that we buy at the grocery store or grow in a garden that are safe to eat, but he should never eat a leaf he finds without being told that it is ok to eat.

Take It Further: In the episode, Oko paints a maple leaf and tells Winslow about leaves that change color. How leaves change over time is sometimes a slow process that can be difficult to observe. To help your child observe this process, he can create a “leaf journal” to help him watch how the leaves on a tree or plant near your house change through the seasons. Together, select a tree or other plant to observe. At various times (perhaps the 1st and 15th of every month), have your child draw a picture or take a photograph of the leaves on a plant. Put them together into a book so your child can flip through and see how the leaves have grown and changed through the seasons. Ask your child some questions to prompt his observations. Do the leaves look differently on this day than on that day? What else does he notice about how the plant is changing? Does the number of leaves on the plant change as time goes on?