

# Stems & Leaves

## day four

Learn, Grow, Eat & Go!  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
week 3

### LESSON A: Sink & Float



Experiment with sink vs. float concepts using natural items.

**Objectives:** Students will collect natural items outdoors, form a hypothesis to answer the question (will it sink or float) test their hypotheses and make a discovery by observing the items in the water/making comparisons by observing others natural materials.

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Materials/Prep:** Outdoor space where children can collect leaves, bark, sticks, rocks and flowers, water table or shallow basin of water.

#### Lesson Narrative:

1. Today we will be using our scientist eyes to gather items from nature for our experiment.
2. When the children are finished gathering the items, they can set them in a pile beside the water table.
3. Now we are ready to begin our experiment. Pick up an item from the pile.
4. Ask the children. How many think the \_\_\_\_\_ will sink to the bottom of the water table or float on top of the water. Count the votes and record the guesses on chart paper. When all guesses have been counted, place the item into the water. They will check their guesses and discuss anything they observe or find interesting.
5. Repeat the process with the different items collected.
6. Choose various sizes and shapes of leaves to put in the water.
7. After you have repeated this process with approximately 8 different items, (Half of the items should be different shapes and sizes of leaves. The other half of the objects should include items that will sink such as a rock.) Note how many of the leaves floated or sank to the bottom.
8. It is interesting that all the leaves floated? Why do you think the leaves floated and some of the other items sank? Take responses and discuss.

Song of the week

Lead students to learn this week's song with motions before this lesson.



PILOT DRAFT

### LESSON B: Leaves We Eat

**Objectives:** Students will use their five senses to explore edible leaves the leaves that they can eat.

**Time:** 10 minutes

#### Materials/Prep:

A variety of fresh leaf lettuce and/or spinach ( at least 2 per child, a bag of mixed baby greens works well for this lesson), running water or a wash basin filled with water to wash leave, paper towels to dry leaves (or a salad spinner), Ranch dressing, or vinaigrette (optional), tasting plates.

Sample spinach, lettuce and other edible leaves.



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## Lesson Narrative:

1. Introduce the food experience activity by reviewing the five senses. Ask children: What do you use your eyes for? Ears? Fingers? Nose? Mouth?
2. Today we are going to use our senses to learn all about spinach/lettuce leaves. These are types of leaves we can eat. Who has ever tried spinach or lettuce before?
3. Explain that fresh vegetables that come from a plant like spinach/lettuce leaves must be washed before we eat them. These plants grow outdoors in the soil. (Show a book or picture of how spinach/lettuce grows.)
4. Demonstrate how to wash the leaves and dry on a paper towel or use a salad spinner. Then allow each student to wash and dry his/her own leaves and place on their plate. Everyone will want a turn at the salad spinner!
5. Let's begin to explore the leaves with our senses.
  - a. What does the leaf look like now? (Wet, green, bumpy...)
  - b. How does the leaf feel when you touch it? (Smooth, wet, slippery...) Does the leaf smell?
  - d. Invite the children to taste the leaf by tearing a small piece off with their fingers. How does the leaf taste? Is it sweet, like fruit? Is it sour like a lemon? Is it bitter?
  - e. Does the leaf make a sound when you bite into it or tear it?
6. Model and encourage tasting of the leaves. I like the sweet, crispy leaves. They taste fresh and juicy. Would you like to try some?

PILOT DRAFT

Find the letters in your name that are written on leaves.



## ACTIVITY: Leaf Letters

**Objective:** Students will explore leaves, using the sense of sight, smell, touch and sound, while working on letter recognition.

**Materials:** Leaves with each letter of the alphabet written on them, permanent marker (Sharpie)

## Lesson Narrative:

1. Look at all my leaves. What do you notice about them? (Hopefully, someone will notice letters written on the leaves)
2. Today we are going to spell our names with the letter leaves. What is the first letter in your name? (Allow students to answer.) Let's find that letter. If a student is struggling, pick out a few letters from the tub including the first letter of the child's name and have him/her pick. Continue until he/she has spelled his/her name. You may need to write the student's name down and let the student match letters.
3. What letter is this? What sound does this letter make? Talk about the letters and sounds as you pull from the leaves. Finding sight words is an option for older students.

Read the book, picture walk or discuss daily during the unit on stems. Choose one or two questions each time you read aloud or discuss the book.

1. Point out rhyming words in book
2. Review seeds and roots while reading this book.
3. Describe the stem of a corn plant.
4. Do carrots have a stem?
5. What holds the peppers, corn, broccoli & okra up?
6. Describe the stem of a pumpkin.
7. How are cucumber, pumpkin, green bean and tomato stems similar?
8. What is the job of a stem?
9. What are some stems that were in the book? What are some stems that were not in the book?
10. Stems connect what 2 parts of a plant? (roots and leaves)



today's garden  
journal prompt:

Draw a picture of a leaf you can eat.

Literature Connection: