



Spooky & Kooky

Children delight in dress-up and fantasy play! This week, add hats, face paint, and a few brooms to the dramatic play area. Most preschoolers love Halloween, but some masks and costumes are frightening to young children. Help prepare them by letting them play with some “friendly” masks (such as a simple paper plate with eyes, nose, and mouth cut out). Reassure children that behind each mask they see on Halloween, there’s a person just like them! To address any fears children might have, you can also ask, *Do real people have green faces? Who do you think is under that costume? What can we do when we’re afraid?*

I Saw a Little Ghost

Children can make their own ghost finger puppets.

Have each child drape a white tissue over his or her index finger. Wrap a piece of tape around the tissue (loosely, at the first joint of the child’s finger) to form the head of the ghost. Then make two dots for eyes on each child’s puppet with a black marker. Recite the following poem and invite children to act it out with their finger puppets. Preschoolers delight in making their ghost puppets jump on the word “BOO!”

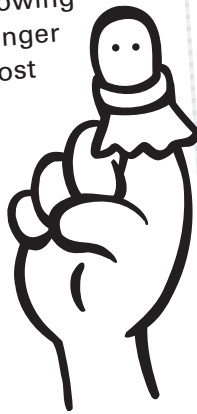
I saw a little ghost,
(hold up ghost puppet, look surprised)

He saw me too.
(open eyes wide)

I said “Hi”
(wave with puppetless hand)

And he said, “BOO!”
(shout “BOO” and move finger puppet in jumping motion)

—Annie Stiefel



Pumpkin Fun

There’s a lot you can do with this orange fruit!

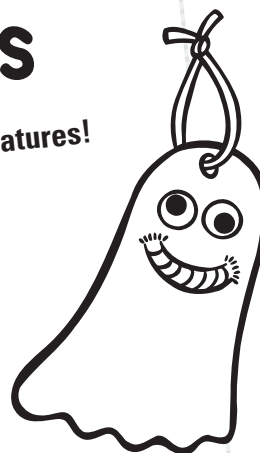
- * Put a teaspoon of vinegar, one cup water, and food coloring in a bowl. Add pumpkin seeds and stir, then spread on paper towel to dry. Use as math manipulatives or “painting” (draw with glue on paper, then sprinkle seeds on). It’s great fine-motor practice!
- * At circle time, blow up an orange balloon and use a black marker to draw eyes, nose, and mouth. Use your jack o’ lantern to introduce any pumpkin activity.



Ghosts & Spiders

Children use their hands and feet to create spooky creatures!

To make **ghosts**, pair children up and have partners trace each other's bare feet on heavy white paper. They cut out the shapes, lay the cut-outs with toes pointing down, and voila! Ghosts! Provide wiggle eyes, paper scraps, glitter, yarn, and glue for children to decorate their ghosts. Punch a hole in the top of each ghost, thread with string, and hang from the ceiling or windows.



To make **spiders**, have children place one hand (fingers spread) on a sheet of black paper. Trace the outline of the four fingers (do not include the thumb) using chalk or a white crayon. Then trace another hand. Cut out the spiders, glue together as shown, and punch holes for eyes. Let children decorate their spiders with glue and glitter, and hang from the ceiling and windows! You can even drape a bit of gauze over the spiders to make webs.



Recipe

Orange Putty

Children can bounce it, snap it, or stretch it!

This rubbery putty is made from ordinary glue and liquid starch. Playing with it will help children strengthen fine-motor skills!

- * 1/2 cup white glue
- * 2 drops yellow food coloring
- * 1 drop red food coloring
- * 1/4 cup liquid starch (use a new bottle of starch for best results)

Mix glue and food coloring together. Then add the starch slowly, stirring until glue begins to ball up and become rubbery. (If the putty becomes too stiff, add more glue. If it's too soft, add a bit more starch.) Store in an airtight container in refrigerator. Makes 1/2 cup.



Recipe

Spooky, Kooky Pizza

Children will enjoy making this tasty, healthy recipe as they measure, pour, pat, and decorate the dough. This recipe makes eight mini-pizzas.

- * 2 1/4 cups flour
- * 1 1/4 sticks unsalted butter, cut into bits
- * 3 tablespoons sugar
- * 1/4 teaspoon salt
- * 1/2 cup cold water
- * 1 teaspoon vanilla



Toppings: sliced and chopped apples and pears, shredded coconut, and cinnamon sugar.

1. Combine flour, butter, sugar, and salt in a mixer until it is the consistency of coarse meal.
2. Add water and vanilla. Continue to mix until the ingredients just begin to clump together. (You may not need to use all the water.) Do not overmix.
3. Divide the dough into eight pieces and form each piece into a ball. Let children roll or pat out a five-inch diameter pizza with each piece.
4. Have children spread their pizzas with peanut butter, apple butter, a bit of jam, or any combination of these.
5. Have children decorate their pizzas with the toppings to create jack o' lantern faces.
6. Cook on ungreased cookie sheets at 400°F for 15 minutes, or until golden brown.

Paint a Pumpkin

Take a trip to a pick-your-own pumpkin patch (many offer hayrides and cider too). Back in the classroom, give children different colors of tempera paint, and colored contact paper cut into triangles, circles, squares, and rectangles. Help children peel off the backing and stick the shapes onto their pumpkins, creating faces or designs. Then have children paint their pumpkins (the entire surface). When paint is completely dry, children can peel off the shapes to reveal the bright orange skin underneath. Line up all the pumpkins for everyone to admire!



A Spider on My Head!

Be prepared for lots of giggles when children put on these silly headbands!

To begin, cut a two-inch wide strip of oaktag or heavy paper to make a headband for each child. Let children sponge-paint their headbands with tempera paint.

Next, cut eight strips of black construction paper for each child. Work with children to accordion-fold all the “spider legs” to make them springy.

Wrap the headbands around children’s heads and tape in back to secure. Next, tape the spider legs to the headbands, four on each side. Children can wear their headbands as they do the “Halloween Hokey Pokey.”

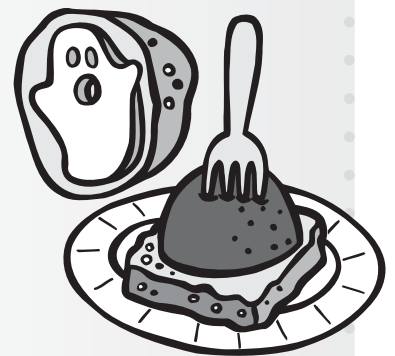
You put your scary face in,
You put your scary face out,
You put your scary face in,
And you shake it all about.
You say “Trick or Treat”
And you turn yourself around,
That’s what it’s all about!

The springy spider legs will jiggle with each step! Invite children to help make up new verses by replacing the words “scary face” with “funny feet,” “long legs,” “spider head,” and so on.

Ghastly Ghostly Potato Prints

Children can make spooky stamps!

1. To make a set of four ghost stamps, cut two large potatoes in half. Carve a simple ghost shape (or use a ghost cookie cutter to press in lines) on the surface, and with a potato peeler, pare away everything around it to create a ghost shape. Using the sharp end of the peeler, dig out two eyes and a mouth.
2. Make a handle by inserting a fork into the skin of each potato half.
3. Place paper towels or sponges on paper plates and pour a small amount of white tempera paint onto each.
4. Dab off the excess paint on the paper plate, so that the paper towel or sponge becomes an “inkpad.”
5. Have children press the ghost stamp into the “inkpad” and then press it onto black construction paper.





Owl Fun

Sing this fingerplay to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot."

I saw a little owl,
(hold hands to eyes like binoculars)

High in a tree,
(raise hands over head)

I looked at him,
(put hands on hips)

And he looked at me.
(hold hands to eyes again)

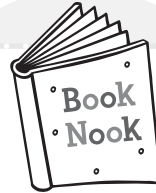
When the moon came out,
(form a circle with arms)

The owl said,
"Whooooooooo!"

He flapped his wings,
(flap arms)

And away he flew!

—Annie Stiefel



Picture books are a non-threatening way to explore the spooky images of Halloween.

Georgie by Robert Bright (Doubleday, 1959)

Georgie and the Noisy Ghost by Robert Bright (Doubleday, 1971)

Georgie's Halloween by Robert Bright (Doubleday, 1972)

It's Halloween! by Jack Prelutsky (Greenwillow, 1988)

The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything by Linda Williams (Crowell, 1986)

Mouse's First Halloween by Lauren Thompson (Simon & Schuster, 2000)

On Halloween Night by Ferida Wolff (Mulberry, 1997)

Pumpkin Eye by Denise Fleming (Holt, 2001)

Scary, Scary Halloween by Eve Bunting (Clarion, 1988)

The Teeny Tiny Woman by Paul Galdone (Houghton Mifflin, 1984)

What a Scare, Jesse Bear by Nancy White Carlstrom (Simon & Schuster, 1999)