



LEAF RUBBING ACTIVITY

INTRODUCTION:

- ✚ If you are looking a fun autumnal activity for all ages, leaf rubbing is definitely something you should try! Anyone can do it, and it is super low budget. All you need is a piece of paper and a writing utensil and you're all set!
- ✚ In this activity file you will find instructions and tips for leaf rubbing, educational information about leaves including their structure and mechanisms for changing color, and some suggestions for art projects involving your finished leaf rubbings
- ✚ This activity is especially fun in groups where you can share your discoveries and discuss what you learn!





MAKING A LEAF RUBBING:

1. Go outside and collect some fallen leaves
2. Place your leaf on a hard surface and place your chosen paper type on top of the leaf.
3. Rub your drawing utensil over the paper where the leaf is. You should start to see an imprint of the leaf appear on your paper.
4. Experiment with different leaves, paper types, and drawing utensils and have fun!

GATHER YOUR MATERIALS:

- + Fallen leaves
- + Crayons, colored pencils, pastels, or any other drawing utensil of your choice
- + Paper of your choice: try wax paper, parchment paper, tracing paper, notebook paper, printer paper, or really any kind of paper you have on hand

TIPS & TRICKS:

- + Try taking a walk around the neighborhood with a trusted adult to find a nice variety of leaves
- + Don't be greedy with the leaves! Be sure you only take a few leaves of each kind so that you leave plenty for others to enjoy
- + Experiment with different levels of pressure during the leaf rubbing process. You will notice that some details like the veins of the leaf become more or less visible depending on the drawing utensil you use and how hard you press down.
- + When you are finished using your leaves for rubbings, be sure to return them to the great outdoors. Leaves contain nutrients which they will return the soil as they break down over time. Fallen leaves are essential for healthy microorganisms to thrive.

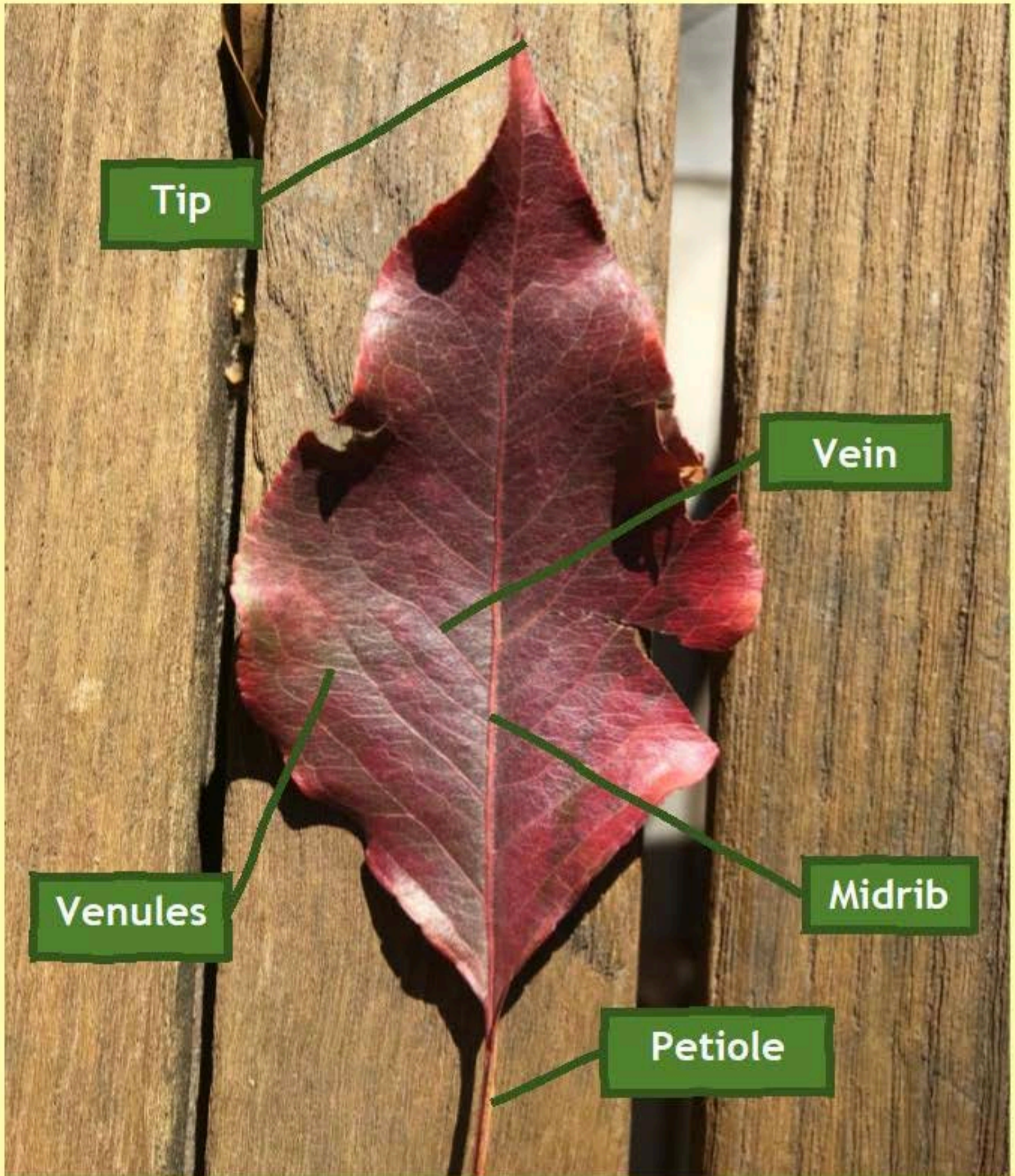
DISPLAYING YOUR CREATIONS:

- + You can easily turn your leaf rubbings into festive fall decorations. All you need is a pair of scissors, some string or yarn, and a hole puncher or some tape.
- + With help from a trusted adult, cut out your leaf rubbings and punch a hole in them. Then, string the leaves onto a long piece of yarn. Alternatively, you can tape the leaves onto the yarn if you don't have a hole puncher.
- + Hang up your leaf garland for everyone to see!





PARTS OF A LEAF:





WHY DO LEAVES CHANGE THEIR COLOR IN THE FALL?

- ✦ Have you ever wondered why leaves put on such a fantastic show in the fall? Why do some trees drop their leaves? What causes the leaves to change color?
- ✦ In the first place, leaves look green to human eyes because of the pigment that helps them make their food called **chlorophyll**. Chlorophyll is green, so to us, a leaf full of chlorophyll looks green.
- ✦ As the days turn shorter and the trees receive less sunlight, they stop making so much chlorophyll, and you can start to see the colors of other pigments in the plant start to come through in yellows, reds, and oranges.
- ✦ The pigments responsible for the yellows and oranges are called **carotenoids** and the pigments responsible for the reds and purples are called **anthocyanins**.
- ✦ As winter gets closer, the tree will do its best to move all the valuable nutrients from the leaves into its trunk so that it can be stored over the winter. When this happens, the leaves turn brown and fall off the tree who doesn't need them anymore.

GROUP CHALLENGES:

To make your walk to gather leaves a little more exciting why not try some of these challenges:

- ✦ Who can find the TINIEST leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the LARGEST leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the REDDEST leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the YELLOWEST leaf?
- ✦ Who can find a PURPLE leaf?
- ✦ Can you find a leaf with YELLOW, PURPLE, RED, and ORANGE in the same leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the most different kinds of leaves?
- ✦ Can you find any leaves with a bug on it?
- ✦ Can anyone find a HEART-SHAPED leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the most CIRCULAR leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the LONGEST leaf?
- ✦ Who can find the WIDEST leaf?
- ✦ Can anyone find fruits or nuts among the leaves?
- ✦ How many squirrels did you see? Who saw the most squirrels?
- ✦ Can anyone find a leaf with A LOT OF TEXTURE?
- ✦ Can anyone find a leaf with ROUGH EDGES?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

These are some questions you can think about or ask each other while you are collecting your leaves:

- ✦ Look at the leaves you have collected so far, can you tell what tree it came from? How can you tell?
- ✦ Describe the similarities and differences between your leaves. Which ones do you think came from the same tree? Why do you think so?
- ✦ Do you know the names of any of the trees you are collecting leaves from? Name the ones you know and try to take a picture of the ones you'd like to know and see if you can get help from a trusted adult later to identify that tree.
- ✦ Do all of the leaves that are on the trees look like they are changing color at the same time. Why do you think this is?
- ✦ Do you see any trees that have pine needles for leaves? Are they changing color? Why do you think this is?
- ✦ Do the fallen leaves have a certain smell? Can you smell it, what does it smell like to you?

