

# Garden Earth Journaling: Fallen Leaves

## Essential Question(s):

*What can you learn from fallen leaves?*



## At a Glance:

Learners will use the journaling practice of leaf-rubbing to learn about trees.

## Background Information:

See *How to Make a Nature Journal* in the Ecosystem Module for further background information and instructions on how to make a nature journal.

## Procedure:

1. Discuss why trees lose their leaves (to save energy and help survive the winter months).
2. Give a brief overview of the 'Fallen Leaves' journal entry.

## Fallen Leaves

During the fall, trees lose their leaves to prepare for winter. Have you ever taken the time to look at all the different kinds of leaves on the ground? There are many colors, shapes, and sizes of leaves. Naturalists often do Leaf Rubbings to record what they have found in their journals. First gather a few materials. You will need a crayon and some paper, or use the paper in your journal. Go outside and find some different leaves on the ground. Observe the different shapes and colors. Some may be more decomposed than others. Also notice the veins in the leaves that carried water and nutrients through the leaf when it was on the tree. Now put a leaf underneath the paper and put it on a hard surface. Rub the crayon over the leaf to get a nice imprint of your discovery. Write about the leaf and where you found it. Do you know what kind of tree it came from? Look it up in a book or online to find out more about your tree.

**Location:** Indoors & outdoors

**Objectives:** Learners will

- 1) explore creative aspects of journaling.
- 2) discover different types of leaves.
- 3) identify trees by leaf shape.

**Skills:** reflection, creative and technical writing, questioning, expression, perception

**Supplies:**

- journal or 'Fallen Leaves' worksheet
- pencil or pen
- crayons
- tree id field guides (optional)

**Subjects:** science, language arts, art.

**Time:** 15 minutes

3. Learners will need to walk around and explore the area before starting their journal writing. Allow learners to find a quiet place outside with their journals and/or 'Fallen Leaves' worksheet. To start, have learners record the date, time, and surroundings of their journal entry.
4. Give learners time to read through and complete the journaling activity (15-20 minutes).
5. Gather learners back together and allow those who want to share to discuss their journal entries.

**Discussion:**

How many different types of leaves did you find?

Do some leaves seem to decompose faster than others? Why?

How may leaf rubbings have been used in the past to study nature?

Were you able to identify what type of tree your leaves came from?