

Fine motor and Language activities for Carved Pumpkin

1. Carve a pumpkin (eyes, nose mouth, ears, top); keep the pieces including the seeds and pumpkin guts.
2. Put pumpkin guts and seeds in a ziplock bag.
3. After you've carved the pumpkin put the cut-out pieces back in the pumpkin and the ziplock bag of pumpkin guts back into the pumpkin.
4. Have the child reach inside the pumpkin to get the ziplock back out. If they are hesitant don't force it, you take it out. Poke the bag, keeping it closed. Vocabulary: poke, orange, squishy, eww, wet, seeds. Have the just look at the bag and poke the bag.
5. If they ask you to open the bag, open it and let them touch the pumpkin guts. If they are unsure have them poke it with a spoon.
6. Spoon some pumpkin guts out on a tray so they just look at it. Parents can model touching it and encourage, but never force them to touch it. You can also give them a tool to touch it so it is not their hands. It may take a few times of doing this a few days before they will touch it and some kids will never touch it.
7. Remove the insides; Put them away. Name a piece (eye) wait, poke it out and repeat the word (eye). Do this slowly until all pieces are out. You can call the handle or top a hat. If your child wants to poke the pieces out let them. As they poke it out say the name of the part. Another level: You say the name and they poke out that part. Where's the eye, poke it out. See if they take out the correct part. If they take out a different piece name that. You poked out the nose, here is the eye and show them.
8. Put the pumpkin on the table and let them poke the pieces out and put them back in. Let them explore it as a puzzle. If it is not fitting give them the words to let them try first then help. Vocabulary: Turn it, push, in, out, on, eye, nose, mouth, hat, ears.
9. When the pieces are all out. Turn off the lights and shine a flashlight in the pumpkin so they can see the jack-o-lantern.