

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Activity: Time to dance: Leaves and conkers

Dancing is great for balance and coordination, helps develop gross motor skills for big movements and is a fun way to build strong and healthy muscles. This autumn inspired activity will also encourage imagination and creativity.

Learning aims

- Physical development – gross motor skills, balance, coordination
- Creativity and imagination through experimenting with body movements
- Respond physically to music, feelings and ideas.



Resources

- Boxes, or similar
- Collections of autumn leaves, conkers, conkers with spiky shells
- Autumn music e.g. Autumn from the Four Seasons by Vivaldi (optional).

Activity outline

1. Separate the collections of leaves, conkers and spiky shells into different boxes with lids. Pass the boxes around the circle and encourage children to shake the boxes and listen to the sounds, feel the weight and guess what may be in the box
2. Take one box at a time and explore the contents. Drop leaves from a height and watch how they twist and turn as they fall, find out how easily they can be blown and listen to the crunch of the dried leaves. Notice the roundness and shine of the conkers, how they roll and bounce when gently dropped. Feel the spikes of the shells and notice how they don't roll far, but stop where they drop
3. Choose one of the resources and encourage children to show with their bodies how the object moves, e.g. twist, turn and gently sway to the floor like a leaf, curl up tight in a ball like the conker and roll from front to back, or stand with legs and arms wide with fingers spread in a spiky shell pose
4. Allow children time and space to experiment with different movements. Encourage them to explore the resources and then use their imagination and creativity to try to mimic their movements. Encourage the children to watch each other and copy their moves
5. Play some autumn related music and encourage children to repeat their leaf, conker and shell movements to the music. Adults joining in and copying the children or creating new movements for children to mirror will enhance and extend the activity.

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Extension ideas:

- When children are confident with their moves for the different autumn resources, play a calling game where an adult (or child) calls out 'leaf', 'conker' or 'shell' at random and the children have to move according to the item. You can give plenty of time between each call to allow children to explore their movements or make it a more challenging, fast-paced game where the children have to twist and turn gracefully like a leaf and then suddenly strike a spiky shell pose and then roll on the floor like a conker.

NDNA products to support you with this activity:

- Face to face training - [Expressive Arts and Design](#)