

*Dear Family,*

**In my class today** we learned about pumpkins.

**Did You Know?**

- Pumpkins can vary in size from less than a pound to over 1,000 pounds! Many parts of a pumpkin are edible, including the flower, leaves, seeds, and the soft part of the rind. The word “pumpkin” comes from the Greek word “pepon,” which means large melon. Many of us are familiar with orange pumpkins, but they can also be other colors, including yellow and white.
- Pumpkins are actually fruits, not vegetables. They are eaten by many cultures around the world. The pumpkin plant begins as a small teardrop-shaped seed. When planted, the seed produces leafy vines which then sprout flowers. The flowers quickly wither, and small round green pumpkins emerge at the base of the flower. Pumpkins mature in approximately four months and are harvested in early fall.

**Ask Your Child:**

- Describe the pumpkin.
- Explain what was inside the pumpkin.
- Tell me what you did with the seeds.
- Where do we find pumpkins?
- Tell me how pumpkins grow.

**Activities To Do With Your Child:**

- Your child brought some pumpkin seeds home. You can roast the seeds and eat them or you can plant them!
- Here is the recipe for roasting the seeds:  
Rinse the seeds and pat them dry with a paper towel. Cover a cookie sheet with aluminum foil. Coat the seeds with cooking oil and spread them out on the cookie sheet. Sprinkle them with salt. Place the cookie sheet in the oven at 325 degrees Fahrenheit and cook until golden brown. Watch them closely so they do not burn.
- Here is how to plant the seeds:  
Start pumpkin seeds indoors in early May. In a container of potting soil, make holes about one inch deep and two inches apart. Drop a seed into each hole. Place the container in a sunny location and water the seeds daily. The pumpkin plants will begin to grow in seven to ten days. Continue to water them until the seedlings have four leaves each, then transfer them outside. Plant the pumpkin vines in a place where they will have plenty of room to grow. Pumpkin vines grow quickly and can become several feet long.

**Vocabulary To Use With Your Child:** hollow, pulp, seed, rind, stem, carve



*The Pumpkin and Its Parts*

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