



Lovely Leeks



It's winter down on the farm, and Tractor Ted is helping to harvest leeks. With their green tops, white stems and feathery roots, leeks make a great starting point for children's art. Try the following activity, and introduce your group to a new and delicious vegetable.

THIS ACTIVITY...

- helps children to explore and learn about leeks
- uses the art and craft techniques of printing and sticking
- allows children to develop their cutting skills
- offers lots of opportunity for storytelling and creating characters
- offers lots of opportunity for listening and following instructions

WHAT TO DO

Show children online footage of leeks being harvested, and introduce some real leeks. Look at their green leaves and white stems, slice them into sections and sniff the fresh juice. If you are unable to source leeks with their roots intact, show children a photo of a whole leek. Talk about how the leek grows in soil and uses its roots to suck up water and food. Explain that you are each going to make your own leek picture.

• **Printing the background**

Slice leeks into chunks. Prepare sheets of brown parcel paper and put ready-mixed dark brown paint in shallow dishes. Show the children how to hold a leek chunk and dip it into the paint to print circles and ovals on the paper. Look at how the prints have created a textured soil effect.

• **Drawing the leek collage shapes**

Draw long thin rectangles on white card, rounded skirt shapes on green card and smaller skirt shapes on beige card. Draw a horizontal line across the green and beige shapes, near the narrower end, and draw vertical lines to meet the horizontal line (see photos).

• **Cutting out the leek collage shapes**

Invite the children to create green and beige fringes by cutting along the vertical lines and stopping at the horizontal line. Ask them to cut out the white rectangles. Support children with cutting as necessary.

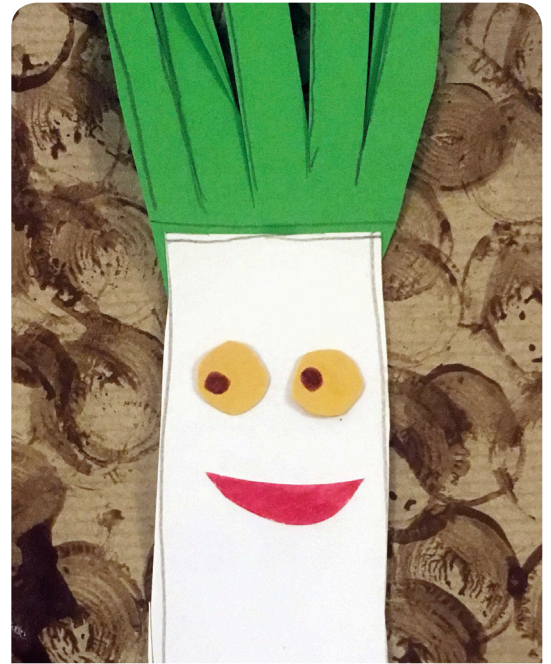


• Making the leek collage

Glue the green fringe behind the top of the white rectangle to make the leaves. Glue the beige fringe behind the bottom of the white rectangle to make the roots. Cut out eyes and mouth, and let the children glue them onto their leek to make a face. Glue the completed leek onto the printed brown paper soil.

• Naming the leeks

Help each child to give their leek a name. Encourage them to choose alliterative names – Lily Leek, Lena Leek, Lukasz Leek, Lali Leek. Write out name labels to stick beside each leek. Talk to the children about their creations and help them develop personalities and stories for their leek characters.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Use a blunt, soft (B or 2B) pencil to draw the shapes. This makes the lines thick and dark – easier for children to cut along.
- Although you can use coloured paper for the leek collage pieces, thin card is easier for children to cut. Make the pieces as large as possible.
- Stick each individual leek onto a card and use for 'hunt the leek' games, characters in storytelling and role play props.
- Look at the pattern of concentric circles in the fainter prints, and compare the printed pattern with the cut end of the leek.
- Older children who are ready can draw their own rectangles, and draw on faces rather than using ready-cut collage features.
- Emphasise to the children that the leeks must not be wasted. Cut away the painty bits of leek and use the remainder for recipes. If you have more leeks than you need for your recipe, make sure they are composted.

RHYME TIME

Look, look, lots of lovely leeks,
Lots of lovely leeks all standing in a row.
Pull up a leek,
Trim the top,
Into the kitchen,
Chop, chop, chop!
Into the pot with potato and stock,
Lovely leek soup for my tea!

