

EXPLORE SPEECH & LANGUAGE AT...

# Fall Festivals - Revisited!

Throughout the months of October and November at local farms



Explore opportunities for curiosity, creativity, and communication when you visit a fall festival! This guide, originally published in 2014, has been re-vamped to include additional ideas for apple picking and other pick-your-own produce activities. For a list of area farms with fall festivals, pumpkin patches, and pick-your-own orchards, check out this [2015 guide for MD and Northern VA](#).

## TALKING

**EXPLORE:** Verb Tenses  
**ENRICH:** Expressive Grammar  
**ENGAGE:** Talk about experiences using past tense verbs.



Children learn new concepts best when they become tangible or able to be experienced personally. Fall festivals are full of activities that can then be used to help your child learn how to put verbs in the past tense.

**PARENT PROMPT:**

- After finishing an activity, ask your child to describe what he/she did using verbs in the past tense. For example, "I PICKED a pumpkin," or "I RAN through the corn maze."
- Depending on your child's level of ability, you can have your child practice regular past tense verbs (which are spelled with -ed and sound like /t/ as in "walked," /d/ as in "explored," or /id/ as in "painted") or irregular past tense verbs (such as rode, slid, and cut).

**Pick-your-own BONUS:** Challenge your child to work on both subject pronouns and past tense verbs by having them use "I, he, she, we, they": We walked to the orchard. You lifted me up. I picked an apple.



## WORD PLAY

**EXPLORE:** The /p/ Sound  
**ENRICH:** Articulation of Individual Sounds for Clear Communication  
**ENGAGE:** Practice words with /p/ that are found at the pumpkin patch.



What more perfect place is there to practice the /p/ sound than a pumpkin patch? When you start your day, remind your child of how to say a good / sound: the lips press together, then open quickly with a puff of air.

**PARENT PROMPT:**

- For the /p/ sound in the initial and medial positions, have your child practice saying "PumPkin Patch" with his/her best speech sound.
- Challenge your child to find and practice saying the names of 10 other items at the pumpkin patch that have the /p/ sound in them, such as "apple."

**Pick-your-own BONUS:** Make up tongue-twisters with your child that have the /p/ sound in them about what you're doing, such as "Please Pass a pPple" or "Picking PumPkins at the PumPkin Patch." See if your child can each one three times in a row while you're picking!



## LISTENING

**EXPLORE:** Size Attributes  
**ENRICH:** Comprehension of Size Words  
**ENGAGE:** Practice understanding size words such as "big," "medium," and "little."



Farms have items of a variety of sizes - big tractors, small pumpkins, and everything in between. If you make the concept of size an area of focus for the day, your child will become more aware of the sizes of objects around him/her and pick up size vocabulary words quickly.

**PARENT PROMPT:**

- Throughout your day, point out items that are big, medium, and small: "Look at that BIG scarecrow!" "This ear of corn is LITTLE and this one is MEDIUM." "Do you want a BIG cup of cider or a LITTLE one?"
- Ask your child to follow directions using those size words. For example, "Can you find a small pumpkin?" or "Let's go through the medium haunted house."
- You can expand on your child's understanding of size words by also using synonyms such as "large," "small," and "tiny."

**Pick-your-own BONUS:** While picking apples or other produce, ask your child to put 3-5 in size order - from biggest to smallest or from smallest to biggest.



## SOCIAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

**EXPLORE:** Requesting  
**ENRICH:** The Ability to Ask For Something  
**ENGAGE:** Practice requesting a desired object or activity.



Fall festivals are full of enticing activities and are therefore ideal location work on requesting. When you first arrive at the pumpkin patch, make a list of the possible activities your child can do. For example, go on a hayride, go through the corn maze, play in the hay bales, paint a pumpkin, etc. If your child is younger, you may want to print out some pictures of activities you think will be at the pumpkin patch to add visual support to the list.

**PARENT PROMPT:**

- Have your child use complete sentences to request which activity he/she wants to do: "Can we please go through the corn maze?" If he/she use single word or simply points to a picture, you can expand on the sentence from "Slide," to "Slide, please," "I want the slide, please," or "Can we please go on the hay slide now?" depending on your child's level of ability, or have him/her repeat the expanded sentence.

**Pick-your-own BONUS:** While picking produce, encourage your child to details in his/her requests to be more specific. For example, if he/she can "Can I pick an apple, please?" you can model, "Can I pick that round, green apple, please?" and have your child repeat the expanded version back to you.

