

Flipping Through Nature:
Card Decks to Guide Outdoor Exploration

Exploring Leaves

Explore beautiful shapes, colors, and
mysteries of leaves.



Find a few interesting leaves.

What do you notice about them?



Don't pick leaves off living plants.

What do the veins look like on your leaves?

tree
branches



parking
spaces



something
else

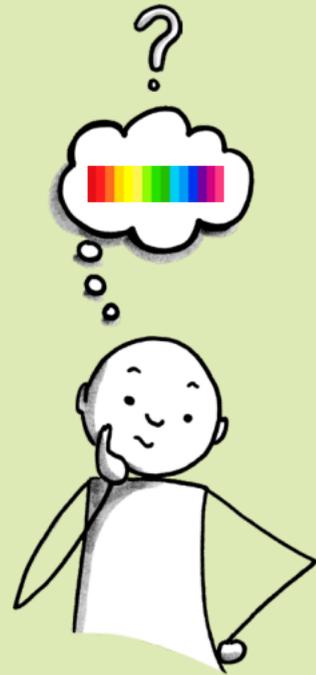


Do veins look/feel the same on both sides?

What colors do you see in your leaves?



What might cause
those colors?





What do your leaves feel like?

soft? fuzzy?



smooth? tough?



something else?



Why might leaves have different textures?

What are the edges of your leaves like?



spiny



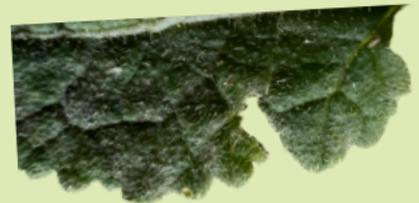
smooth



like a saw

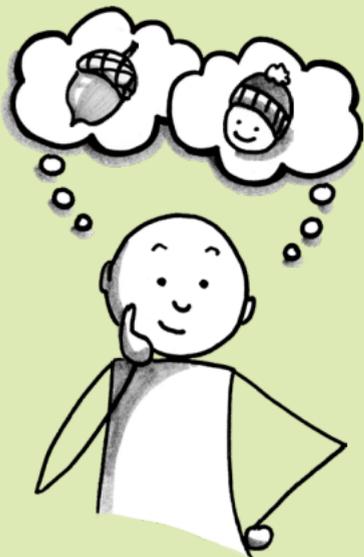


curvy



something else?

What do the shapes of your leaves remind you of?



feather?



heart?



hand?

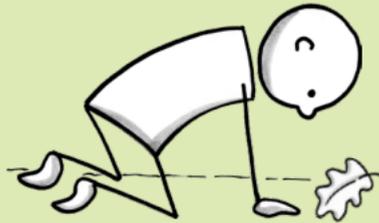


something else?

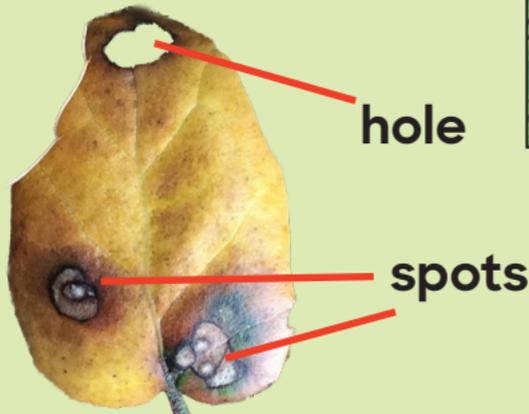


Do you see spots or holes?

These may be from tiny bacteria or fungi.



spots

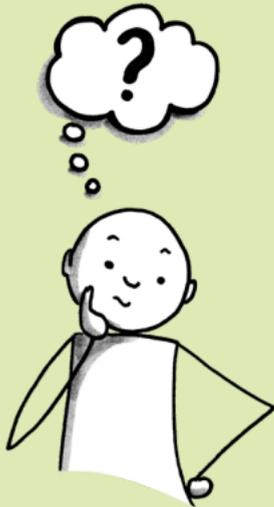


hole

spots

When a leaf dies, fungi and bacteria consume it.

Do you see parts of leaves missing?
What may have happened
to them?





Leaves are important to ecosystems.

Caterpillars and other insects eat leaves.





**If leaves have signs of being eaten,
they are food for other
living things!**



**They are
supporting the
ecosystem.**

Caterpillars are extremely important for ecosystems.

Birds eat them and feed them to babies.



Some become butterflies.



Some become moths.

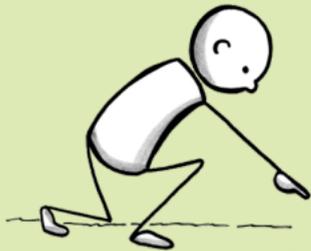


caterpillar



Can you find lines (or tunnels) on leaves?

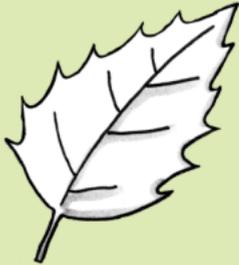
Lines on leaves are evidence of leaf miners. Leaf miners are moth, beetle, or insect larvae feeding in the leaf.



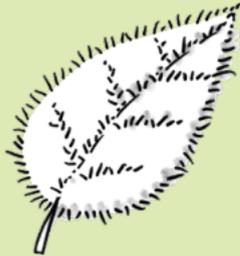
Why might some lines start thin and then get wider?

How might your leaf protect itself from being eaten?

spines?



tiny hairs?



strong taste?



other ways?





Do you notice any bumps on leaves?



The bumps are likely galls formed when insects feed or lay eggs.

Insects important to the ecosystem live in leaves on the ground.



Removing leaves harms the ecosystem.



Take photos of your most interesting leaves.



What questions do you have about leaves?

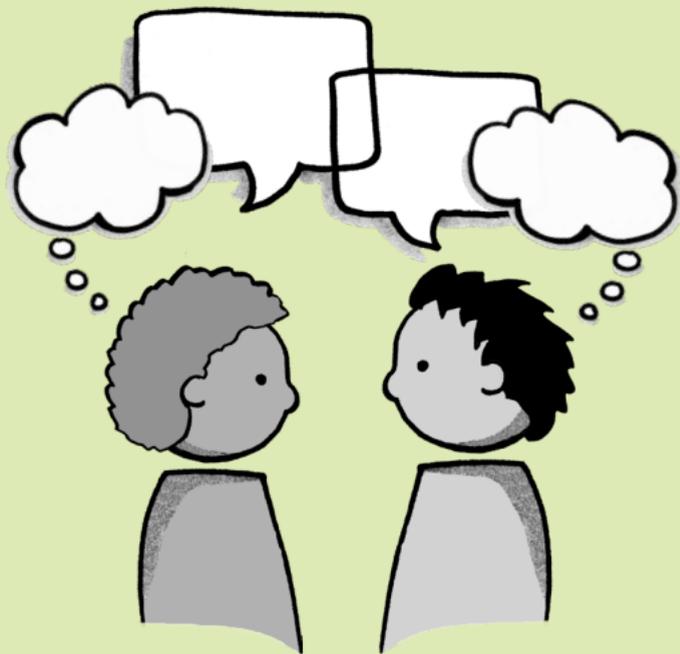


How could you learn more about leaves?
Where else could you observe leaves?

Think back on your experience.

Think about or discuss:

- What did you learn about leaves?
- What did you do that helped you learn about leaves?





To see more *Flipping Through Nature: Card Decks to Guide Outdoor Exploration* activities, visit lwrnce.org/center-for-environmental-learning. There you will also find guides for using the *Flipping Through Nature* card decks, photo acknowledgments, and more information.



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