



**Baltimore Woods
Nature Center**
Nature in your hands

Make an Autumn Suncatcher



During the fall, the days get shorter while the night gets longer. The reason that leaves change colors in the fall is due to a reduction in sunlight that leads to a breakdown of **chlorophyll**, or the part of a leaf that makes it green. When the green plant pigment breaks down, the beautiful red, orange, yellow, and purple colors on a leaf are exposed, giving us the beautiful leaves we see every fall.



Today, we will make a suncatcher that you can put on your window as a reminder of the changing seasons and the reason for the colorful leaves outside!



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Materials:

- Coffee filters
- Scissors
- Food coloring (red, orange, yellow, and/or purple)
- Several small cups
- A liquid dropper, or small paintbrush
- Tape (optional: double-sided tape)

Instructions:

1. Start by going on a walk around your neighborhood, local park, or backyard. Notice if any of the leaves are changing colors. Look around the ground and collect a few colorful leaves to bring back home with you. Be sure to only take a few leaves, try to pick leaves of several different colors.
2. Once you are back home, fill your small cups with a little bit of water. Add one or two drops of food coloring to each cup of water.
3. Carefully cut out the shape of some leaves from your coffee filters. You can use the template below or cut your own shapes out that look like the leaves you collected!





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4. Use your liquid dropper or paintbrush to drop food coloring onto your coffee filter leaves. You can try to make the leaves look like the ones you collected, or create your own colorful leaf masterpieces. Get creative!

5. Once your leaves are completely filled with color, allow them to dry.
6. Use tape, preferably double-sided, to attach your leaves to a window in a sunny spot. Enjoy the autumn sunshine and colorful leaves!





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Leaf Template

