Teaching Activity:
Pumpkins are one of the first things that come to mind when we think about October. Ask Cloverbuds the question: What are your favorite things that are made from pumpkins? Share these interesting facts with the group:

1. Pumpkins were first grown in Central America, but are now grown on every continent except Antarctica.

2. The pumpkin is actually a type of squash, most closely related to the zucchini.

3. Pumpkins are a healthy food and can be eaten boiled, baked or roasted. They are also used to make soups, pies and breads. The seeds are roasted and eaten as snacks.

4. Early American colonists cut the tops off of pumpkins, cleaned out the seeds and filled them with milk, spices and honey. They baked them in hot ashes and this is where the pumpkin pie originated.

5. The largest pumpkin ever grown was raised in Illinois and weighed 1502 pounds.

6. The tradition of making jack-o-lanterns started in Ireland, where people hollowed out turnips and beets and placed hot coals in them. They believed jack-o-lanterns would scare away evil spirits. When Irish immigrants came to America, they found that pumpkins made perfect jack-o-lanterns.

7. For more pumpkin information, visit these websites www.wikipedia.org/wiki/pumpkin; www.pumpkin-patch.com; and www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/pumpkins.

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You will need:
◊ Newspaper or tablecloth
◊ One pumpkin for each Cloverbud
◊ Masking tape
◊ Copies of pumpkin painting designs
◊ Acrylic paint
◊ Pen
◊ Paintbrushes
◊ Water pots for cleaning brushes
◊ Paper towels
◊ Gloss sealer in a spray can

Instructions:
Cover the work surface with newspaper or tablecloth. Let each Cloverbud choose a pumpkin (or have them bring one from home). Show the children examples of different designs and let them choose what they would like to paint on their pumpkin. Tape the design to the pumpkin using masking tape, and trace around the design to transfer the lines to the pumpkin skin. You will need to press fairly hard to make an impression on the pumpkin. Remove the paper. If you wish, you can outline the design with a pen, marking directly on the pumpkin. Have the children paint their design and allow it to dry. Spray the whole pumpkin with a gloss sealer. The pumpkin should last for at least a month.