

The Leaf Thief by Alice Hemming

Book Synopsis: *The Leaf Thief* by Alice Hemming with art by Nicola Slater tells the story of an anxious and very busy squirrel's journey to find an elusive leaf thief. This beautifully illustrated book explores the idea of change - the change of the seasons and the emotions that change may cause in all creatures.

A recorded reading of this book is [available here](#).



Connection to Iowa History

Squirrels of all shapes, sizes and colors have called Iowa home for many years. The most common type of squirrels seen in Iowa are fox squirrels and eastern gray squirrels. They enjoy eating nuts, berries, stems and roots. Squirrels also like to chew on pinecones and acorn hulls which is fitting since the Bur Oak is Iowa's official state tree. When you head outside, keep an eye out for squirrels hiding in the trees and running across the grass.

Goldie's Kids Club Storytime Activity

After reading the story, design and create your own handprint acorn. You can make one or a whole bushel of acorns to give away as gifts or decorate your home.

Instructions ([Video Instructions Available](#))

- 1 Trace.** Using a pencil, trace around your hand up to your wrist onto a piece of printer paper. This will serve as the bottom part of the acorn.
- 2 Cut.** Using your scissors, carefully cut around your hand outline. Set aside.
- 3 Making the Cap.** Using the cut out of your hand for reference, draw a slightly elongated semi-circle shape slightly wider than your wrist. Be sure to include a rectangular stalk in the middle of the top of the cap.
- 4 Cut.** Using your scissors, carefully cut around the outline. Set aside.
- 5 Color.** Using markers, crayons, or colored pencils, color the hand outline a lighter brown color and the cap a darker shade of brown. However, you can be as creative as you would like with the colors.
- 6 Connect.** Apply glue to the top (wrist area) of the hand outline. Place the cap section on top of the glue with the rectangular stalk on the top and the fingers pointing down. Set aside to dry completely.
- 7 Display or Gift.** If making multiple acorns, cut a piece of string and attach the cutouts to create a banner of acorns to display in your home. Another option is to write a short message on the acorn cap and give it friends and family as a gift.
- 8 Share!** After you complete your activity, share your work with the State Historical Museum of Iowa. Email a photo of your project to museum.education@iowa.gov. We want to share your creation with others!

Materials

- Printer Paper
- Markers, color pencils, or crayons
- Scissors

Instructions continued on next page

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Instructions Continued

9 Questions to Spark Learning

- What is your favorite activity to do in the fall? Why?
- Why do you think the squirrel in the story was upset about change?
- Do you have any special fall memories? What was it and why was it so memorable?