

Early Learning Express: October 2015 Update

We had a lot of fun on board the ELE as we explored the season of falling leaves and Halloween traditions. During the first round of visits children participated in the song “Five Little Leaves” by being the wind and blowing leaves, one by one, from the branches of the tree until zero remained. We followed this up by using our artist and detective eyes to appreciate Lois Ehlert’s magical leaf collages in her book *Leaf Man*. Have you ever seen a cow entirely made out of leaves? Finally, we practiced being poets by listening to, reciting, and repeating Maurice Sendak’s poem “October” from *Chicken Soup with Rice*, which clearly recalled fond memories for many of the teachers on board as well!

The real hit of the month, however, was the magical shadow puppet theater presenting “The Five Little Pumpkins”. We took time to discuss how each of the pumpkins was feeling something different, just like each of us do at different times. “Again! Do it again!” was a common refrain, even after the second time through. But, of course, we had to move on to read actual books. Books of the season were *The Little Old Lady Who was not Afraid of Anything* by Linda Williams, and for those who could listen to one more, *Humbug Witch* by Lorna Balian.

Upon disembarking from the ELE, one teacher exclaimed to the children, “Wasn’t that great?! We got to go to the theater today!” What a great compliment that was for me. It’s a real treat to be able to travel from place to place and bring engaging storytelling, songs, and theater to so many young people and their caregivers. Thank You!

