

Tiny Scholars Academy

October Curriculum Guide

Theme: Senses, Shadows & Spooky Wonders

Month:	October
Theme:	Senses, Shadows & Spooky Wonders
Age Groups:	Infants (6 wks–12 mo) • Toddlers (12–36 mo) • Preschool (3–5 yrs)
Standards:	Rhode Island Early Learning & Development Standards (RIELDS)

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MONTHLY OVERVIEW & LEARNING GOALS — OCTOBER

Big Idea: October is a magical month of exploring our senses, understanding shadows, and celebrating the playful spirit of the season. Children investigate light and dark, explore spooky-fun themes, and deepen their scientific thinking through observation.

Monthly Theme Weeks

Week 1 **Our Amazing Senses**

Week 2 **Shadow Science & Light**

Week 3 **Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)**

Week 4 **Costumes, Community & Kindness**

Guiding Questions

- What do our five senses tell us about the world?
- What makes a shadow? How can we make shadows bigger or smaller?
- What makes something 'spooky'? How do we manage big feelings like fear?
- How do communities celebrate together? What is a tradition?
- How can we be kind and inclusive during celebrations?

■ Infant Room — Monthly Goals

- Develop all five senses through seasonal sensory play
- Explore light and shadow through gentle visual stimulation
- Strengthen social-emotional security during festive changes in routine
- Build language through sensory narration by caregivers
- Develop gross motor: rolling, crawling, supported standing

■ Toddler Room — Monthly Goals

- Name all 5 senses and identify corresponding body parts
- Explore shadow-making and light/dark concepts
- Develop emotional vocabulary: scared, excited, silly, brave
- Practice patterns using pumpkins, bats, and leaves
- Build community vocabulary: parade, costume, neighbor, trick-or-treat

■ Preschool Room — Monthly Goals

• RIELDS-aligned learning through senses, light, and community themes

• Conduct shadow investigations and record data (D5,D9)

• Write emotion words and create 'How I Feel' books (D1,D3)

• Explore symmetry using butterfly/bat wing art (D4,D7)

• Develop phonological awareness with /sh/ and /sp/ words (D3)

• Participate in community Halloween parade (D1,D6,D8)

INFANT CLASSROOM (6 wks–12 mo) — OCTOBER 4-WEEK CURRICULUM

Curriculum Approach: All infant learning is embedded in responsive caregiving routines. Ratios, safe sleep, and RIDOH licensing standards are maintained at all times. Outdoor time occurs daily in the buggy or on a supervised blanket.

Week	Theme	Objectives	Activities	Materials	Assessment
Wk 1 Senses	Sensory Rich Play	Multi-sensory exploration; language bath; motor development	Scented sensory bags (cinnamon, vanilla); crinkle fabric textures; bell-rattle tracking; taste-safe sensory bin	Scented bags, texture fabric, bells, taste-safe bin	Document sensory preferences; note motor responses
Wk 2 Shadows	Light & Dark	Visual tracking in light/dark; calm vs. alert states; sound localization	Flashlight shadow puppet play; black/white high-contrast cards; lantern gentle glow at nap transition	Flashlight, puppets, contrast cards, soft lantern	Observe visual orienting to light; note calm/alert states
Wk 3 Spooky Fun	Safe & Playful	Secure attachment; novelty tolerance; social engagement	Peek-a-boo with ghost cloth; orange/black sensory bin; soft spider puppet; 'Boo!' responsive game	Ghost cloth, spider puppet, sensory bin, picture books	Note tolerance of novelty; document social engagement
Wk 4 Community	Celebration & Calm	Routine security; sensory processing; language development	Soft costume exploration (no masks); familiar songs in festive setting; calm-down sensory bottle	Soft hats/capes, sensory bottles, familiar books	Observe routine comfort; note responses to new stimuli

TODDLER CLASSROOM (12–36 mo) — OCTOBER 4-WEEK CURRICULUM

Curriculum Approach: Movement, language, and sensory learning drive the toddler experience. Centers rotate weekly with the theme. Predictable routines support autonomy and emotional regulation.

Week	Theme	Objectives	Activities	Materials	Assessment
Wk 1 Senses	5 Senses Science	Sensory vocabulary; fine motor; language	Feely bag game; sound shaker matching; smell jars; taste test fall foods; 'What Am I?' sense riddles	Feely bags, shakers, smell jars, tasting trays	Document sense identification; note descriptive language
Wk 2 Shadows	Light & Dark Play	Cause-effect; prediction; gross motor	Shadow tracing outdoors; flashlight free play; light table exploration; 'My Shadow' book	Flashlights, light table, chalk for shadow tracing	Note prediction language; observe cause-effect understanding
Wk 3 Spooky Wonders	Brave & Silly	Emotional vocabulary; dramatic play; fine motor	Costume dramatic play corner; 'What's in the spooky box?' sensory; monster face playdough; brave/scared sorting	Costumes, spooky sensory box, playdough, emotion cards	Document emotion vocabulary; note dramatic play themes
Wk 4 Community	Kindness Parade	Community vocabulary; social skills; gross motor	Classroom costume parade; kindness card making; trick-or-treat role play; neighbor map	Costumes, card supplies, pretend candy, neighborhood map	Observe social interactions; note community vocabulary

PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM (3–5 yrs) — OCTOBER RIELDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM

Standards Note: All activities are mapped to the 9 Rhode Island ELDS domains. Domain codes (D1–D9) appear in each activity. See the RIELDS Domain Reference in the June Curriculum Guide.

Week 1 — Our Amazing Senses ■■■

Focus Area	Activities & Standards
Literacy	Read: 'My Five Senses' by Alike Senses journal: draw and label what you see/hear/smell/taste/touch (D2,D3)
Math	Sensory graphing: sort mystery objects by texture; make a chart (D4)
Science	Blindfold smell and sound identification — record predictions and results (D5,D9)
Art	Texture collage using only the sense of touch (closed eyes) (D7)
SEL	How do senses help us feel safe? Discuss sensory sensitivities with kindness (D1)

Week 2 — Shadow Science & Light ■

Focus Area	Activities & Standards
Literacy	Read: 'Nothing Sticks Like a Shadow' Write shadow observation journal entries (D2,D3,D5)
Math	Measure shadows at 9 AM, noon, and 3 PM — which is longest? (D4,D5)
Science	Shadow puppet theatre — experiment with distance and light angle (D5,D9)
Art	Shadow self-portrait: trace shadow on butcher paper; add details (D7)
STEM	Build a shadow screen from cardboard; put on a show for another class (D5,D7,D1)

Week 3 — Spooky Wonders ■■

Focus Area	Activities & Standards
Literacy	Read: 'Room on the Broom' / 'Go Away Big Green Monster' Write: 'I am brave because...' (D2,D3,D1)
Math	Pattern practice: bat, ghost, pumpkin — extend and create own patterns (D4)
Science	Investigate spiders: real anatomy, web building experiment with yarn (D5,D9)
Art	Symmetry butterflies/bats: fold-print painting (D7,D4)
SEL	Managing scary feelings: breathing strategy practice; brave book making (D1)

Week 4 — Costumes, Community & Kindness ■

Focus Area	Activities & Standards
Literacy	Read: 'It's Halloween, Dear Dragon' / 'The Biggest Pumpkin Ever' Write: 'My costume is a ____ because...' (D2,D3)

Focus Area	Activities & Standards
Math	Sort and count candy types; create a candy pictograph (D4)
Social Studies	Map the neighborhood trick-or-treat route; discuss community safety (D6,D1)
Art	Design kindness tags for costumes: 'Be kind. Be brave. Be you.' (D7,D1)
Movement	Classroom costume parade & community celebration (D8,D1,D6)

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — INFANT ROOM — OCTOBER

Week: Our Amazing Senses

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — INFANT ROOM | Our Amazing Senses

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Shadow Science & Light

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — INFANT ROOM | Shadow Science & Light

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — INFANT ROOM | Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Costumes, Community & Kindness

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — INFANT ROOM Costumes, Community & Kindness				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — TODDLER ROOM — OCTOBER

Week: Our Amazing Senses

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — TODDLER ROOM Our Amazing Senses				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Shadow Science & Light

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — TODDLER ROOM Shadow Science & Light				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — TODDLER ROOM Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Costumes, Community & Kindness

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — TODDLER ROOM Costumes, Community & Kindness				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:

Reflections / Notes:	
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TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — PRESCHOOL ROOM — OCTOBER

Week: Our Amazing Senses

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — PRESCHOOL ROOM | Our Amazing Senses

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:

Reflections / Notes:	
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Week: Shadow Science & Light

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — PRESCHOOL ROOM | Shadow Science & Light

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:

Reflections / Notes:	
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Week: Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — PRESCHOOL ROOM | Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

Week: Costumes, Community & Kindness

TEACHER WEEKLY PLANNING — PRESCHOOL ROOM Costumes, Community & Kindness				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:	Circle Time: Activity: Outdoor: Notes:
Reflections / Notes:				

■ Tiny Scholars Academy October Family Newsletter

Welcome to October at Tiny Scholars Academy!

This month our theme is **Senses, Shadows & Spooky Wonders**. October is a magical month of exploring our senses, understanding shadows, and celebrating the playful spirit of the season. Children investigate light and dark, explore spooky-fun themes, and deepen their scientific thinking through observation. Read on to see what's happening in each classroom and how to keep the learning going at home!

Infant Room: Our youngest learners explore the month's theme through all their senses! Ask your teacher about your baby's weekly sensory experiences.

Toddler Room: Toddlers dive into hands-on science, dramatic play, and language-rich activities. Send your child in clothes ready for messy, magical learning!

Preschool Room: Preschoolers engage with all 9 RIELDS domains through projects, investigation, writing, and creative expression. Portfolio updates go home at month's end.

Important Dates

- Oct 1 — Fall Senses Discovery Station Opens
- Oct 7 — Shadow Science Day (outdoor)
- Oct 14 — Columbus Day — Academy Closed
- Oct 21 — Pumpkin Decorating Day
- Oct 25 — Costume Parade & Harvest Party
- Oct 31 — Halloween — Dress-Up Day

Learning at Home

- Go on a neighborhood 'senses walk' — what do you hear, see, smell?
- Make shadow puppets with a flashlight at bedtime.
- Carve or decorate a pumpkin together.
- Read a not-too-scary Halloween book together.
- Practice: 'When I feel scared, I can...' and name 3 calming strategies.

NOTE: Costume Policy: No weapons, masks, or scary costumes. Fun and friendly costumes only!

This Month's Theme Weeks:

Week 1:	Our Amazing Senses
Week 2:	Shadow Science & Light
Week 3:	Spooky Wonders (Child-Safe)
Week 4:	Costumes, Community & Kindness

With warmth and gratitude,

The Tiny Scholars Academy Team ■