



Apples

We cut an apple the wrong way on purpose, find the star that has been hiding in the middle of every apple the child has ever eaten, and end with a pot of applesauce on the stove.

How to use this

There are five gentle days here, but no rigid timetable. Read when you sit down together. Do the science when the apples are ready. Keep written work brief. Make the applesauce near the end, when everyone is hungry and the week feels nearly complete.

Go outside anyway

Cold, damp, short on time—go anyway. Ten minutes outdoors is the lesson; these pages only help you notice what you saw.

Read living books aloud

Your voice, not a screen. Read the good ones twice. If a book falls flat, close it and choose another; the particular title is not the point.

Keep lessons short

Ten to fifteen minutes at this age, then stop while attention is still alive. Stopping early is a skill, not a failure.

Follow the child's attention

If seed-counting holds them for forty minutes, let it. Curiosity may lengthen a lesson; fatigue should end it.

Invite narration

After a reading, ask simply, “What would you like to tell me about that?” Listen without correcting the telling. Narration begins with attention, not interrogation.

Let their work remain theirs

Never tidy a drawing or draw it for them. A crooked drawing is a record of a child looking closely.

Printing. Print the cream parent pages once. Print the white activity pages once for each child. Choose one copywork option and either coloring page; not every page must be completed.

Five gentle days

This is a path through the unit, not a checklist. Exchange days, omit pages, and reread favorites.

Day One · Meet the apple

Read a living book. Look closely at a whole apple. Invite narration. Begin the short poem.

Day Two · Find the star

Cut apples lengthwise and crosswise. Float one. Draw or color what you noticed.

Day Three · Taste and compare

Taste three varieties. Use one good word for each. Tally the household vote.

Day Four · Go to the tree

Look for bark, buds, leaves, fruit, insects, or fallen signs of the season. Try apple printing.

Day Five · Bring it to the table

Recite the poem if it comes naturally. Make applesauce. Reread the week's favorite book.

Gather

6–10 apples, including three varieties
bowl of water
knife and cutting board
paper and pencil
washable thick paint and a paper strip
heavy pot, lemon peel, cinnamon stick
optional apple peeler

Adapt

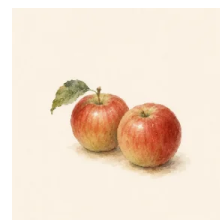
Pre-writers: narrate while an adult records a few words.

New writers: copy one excellent word or one short sentence.

Older children: add a nature-journal entry, cultivar research, or a measured recipe conversion.

Adult supervision: An adult handles the knife, hot pot, and stove. Check allergies and choking needs. Wash produce and hands before tasting.

The books



Read them aloud, more than once, in no particular order. Use what your library has; four books are suggested, but four is not the goal.

How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World

MARJORIE PRICEMAN

The market is closed, so a girl travels for the ingredients. Read it for its lively sweep and the map at the end.

Apples

GAIL GIBBONS

Clear nonfiction about blossom, bud, fruit, grafting, and harvest. Keep it near the science lesson.

The Apple Pie Tree

ZOE HALL

One tree through a whole year, watched by two sisters while a robin nests among its branches.

Ten Apples Up On Top!

DR. SEUSS

Nonsense, rhythm, and playful counting. Let children join in when they are ready.

NARRATION INVITATION

After one reading, close the book and ask, “What would you like to tell me about that?” Accept a word, a detail, a long telling, or a drawing. Do not turn it into a quiz.

Poems



Say the first verse aloud once a day in the same voice you would use to say anything true. By week's end, some children will know it without having been asked to memorize it. Let the poem stand without requiring an explanation.

TO LEARN BY HEART · TRADITIONAL ENGLISH ORCHARD RHYME

Here's to thee, old apple tree,
Whence thou mayst bud,
And whence thou mayst blow,
And whence thou mayst bear
Apples enow.

TO READ ALOUD ON THE LAST DAY · FROM "AFTER APPLE-PICKING," ROBERT FROST

*My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still,
And there's a barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough.*

Read the lines, close the book, and go outside. Children can receive language before they can explain it.

The science lesson

FOR THE PARENT TO KNOW

An apple has skin, flesh, a core, and seeds. The core contains five seed chambers arranged around the center. A crosswise cut can reveal a five-pointed star. Tiny air spaces in the fruit help an apple float and contribute to its crisp texture.

THE DEMONSTRATION

1. Cut one apple from stem to blossom end. Name only what the child notices or asks about.
2. Cut a second apple crosswise through the middle. Hand over both halves without announcing the star.
3. Fill a bowl with water. Invite a prediction, then place a whole apple in the water.
4. Press it beneath the surface and let go. Watch together.



ONE QUESTION TO ASK

Where do you think the star was before we cut the apple?

Ask once. Wait. Let the answer arrive in its own time.

Activity and craft

ACTIVITY

The taste test

You need: three apple varieties · knife · page 8 · pencil

1. Slice all three and keep the pieces separate. Keep the names hidden at first.
2. Taste one variety at a time. Say one honest word about each.
3. Record what the child notices. There is no required “best” word.
4. Reveal the names. Everyone votes for a favorite and adds a tally mark.



CRAFT

Apple printing

You need: one apple · washable thick paint · plate · long strip of paper

1. Halve the apple crosswise so the star shows.
2. Press the cut face into the paint, then straight down onto paper. Do not rock it.
3. Stamp a border along the strip. Let uneven prints remain part of the pattern.



THE TASTE TEST

Three apples, tasted



Write each apple’s name at the top. Taste slowly. Color one box in each row when the word fits. An adult may write the child’s spoken words.

Apple	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3
Sweet	☐	☐	☐
Tart	☐	☐	☐
Crisp	☐	☐	☐
Juicy	☐	☐	☐
Fragrant	☐	☐	☐

THE HOUSEHOLD VOTE

No. 1 _____
No. 2 _____
No. 3 _____

One tally mark for each person.

MY FAVORITE

ONE WORD FOR WHY

A small amount, done well



Choose only one line. Read it together. Let the child look carefully, copy a little, and stop before attention fades. One beautifully formed word is enough for a beginning writer.

BEGINNING WRITER

apple

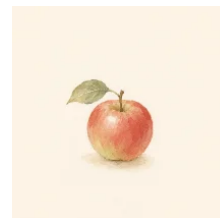
GROWING WRITER

An apple has a star.

OPTIONAL WORD STUDY

Look closely at the letter **a** in *apple*. Say its sound once. Find the same letter in a book title.

Make ten with apples



Use ten apple slices, seeds, buttons, or drawn circles. Move the objects before writing a number.

PART THE WHOLE

Put ten objects in two groups. Record what you made.

$$10 = \mathbf{6} + \boxed{} \quad \text{or} \quad 10 = \boxed{} + \mathbf{4}$$

$$10 = \mathbf{7} + \boxed{} \quad \text{or} \quad 10 = \boxed{} + \mathbf{3}$$

$$10 = \mathbf{5} + \boxed{} \quad \text{or} \quad 10 = \boxed{} + \mathbf{5}$$

$$10 = \mathbf{8} + \boxed{} \quad \text{or} \quad 10 = \boxed{} + \mathbf{2}$$

TELL THE STORY

Choose one equation. Tell a tiny apple story that matches it. An adult may write the story.

LOOK AGAIN

Which pair has equal groups? Which pair is closest to equal?

Seeds, tallies, and comparison



Cut three apples. Count the seeds in each. Make one tally for every seed, then write the total.

Apple	Tally marks	How many?
No. 1		☐
No. 2		☐
No. 3		☐

COMPARE THE REAL GROUPS

Which apple had **more** seeds? _____ Which had **fewer**? _____

How many more? Move or pair the seeds to find out. _____

READ ALOUD; SOLVE WITH OBJECTS

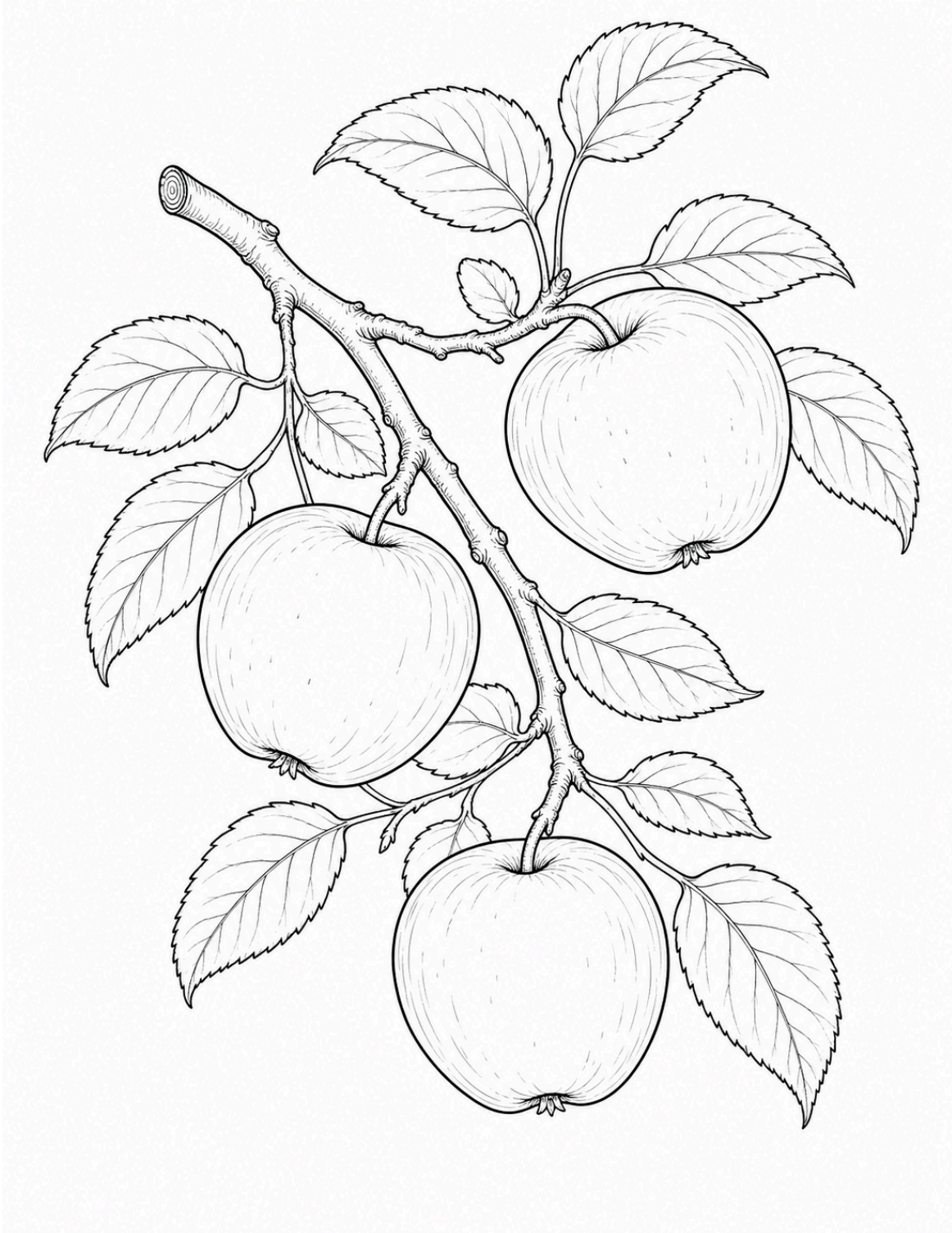
Six apples were on the table. Two were eaten. How many remain? ☐

You picked four apples and I picked five. How many did we pick together? ☐

Ten apples went into a pot and became three bowls of sauce. Can we know how many whole apples remain? Explain.

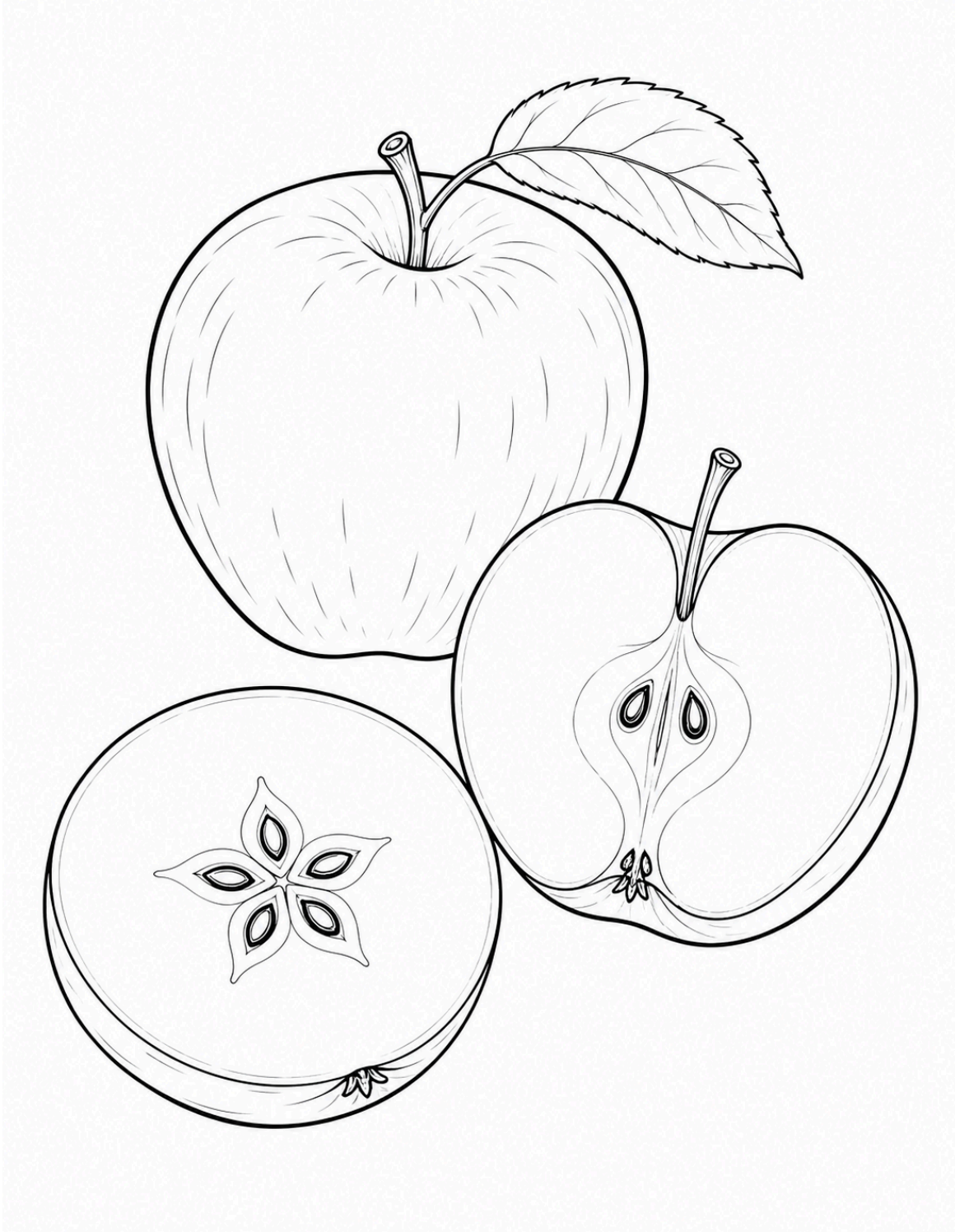
An autumn apple branch

Look at a real apple or fruiting branch first if you can. Color only what you notice; red is never only red, and green is never only green.



The apple and its hidden star

Compare the whole apple with the two cut faces. Add color from a real apple, or leave the drawing as a careful line study.



A devotion for the week



Two minutes at the table, before the lesson or meal. Read the passage from your family Bible, say the sentence, and pray the line together. References are provided so families may use their preferred translation.

Day One · Genesis 1:11

Every apple we cut open has seeds, and every seed holds the possibility of a tree.

Pray: Thank you, God, for seeds.

Day Two · Psalm 1:3

Trees do not hurry and do not skip a season. Neither do children.

Pray: Help me grow in your time, not fast.

Day Three · Proverbs 25:11

A kind word at the right moment is precious. What might a golden word be today?

Pray: Give me one good word to say today.

Day Four · Galatians 5:22–23

A tree is known by what grows on it. Our lives bear fruit, too.

Pray: Grow good things in me.

Day Five · James 1:17

Say this one over the applesauce, warm, before anyone has a spoon.

Pray: Thank you for this food and for the hands that made it.

Stovetop applesauce

MAKES ABOUT THREE CUPS · 30 MINUTES



WHAT YOU NEED

Six apples

½ cup water

A strip of lemon peel

One cinnamon stick

Sugar, only if needed

HOW

1. Adult: peel, core, and quarter the apples.
2. Put apples, water, lemon peel, and cinnamon in a heavy pot. Cover; cook on low.
3. Cook 20–25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the apples fall apart when pressed.
4. Remove lemon peel and cinnamon. Mash for a rough sauce or leave chunky.
5. Taste warm. Sweeten only if the apples need it.

THE CHILD'S JOB

Turning the peeler crank, counting ingredients, and stirring away from the heat while an adult stands beside them.

THE ADULT'S JOB

The knife, stove, hot pot, and final temperature check.

If they want more



Nothing here is required. This page is for a child who will not let the subject go.

FOUR MORE BOOKS

The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree · Gail Gibbons

One tree, four seasons, and a boy who lives alongside it.

Apples to Oregon · Deborah Hopkinson

A tall tale about hauling fruit trees across a continent.

Johnny Appleseed · Reeve Lindbergh

The Vachel Lindsay poem, illustrated. Read it for the sound of it.

Apple Farmer Annie · Monica Wellington

What happens between orchard and market stall.

SOMEWHERE TO GO

A pick-your-own orchard. Ask which varieties are ready and which are still weeks away.

ONE THREAD TO PULL

Grafting. Named apple varieties are usually reproduced from living wood rather than seed, so a new tree keeps the cultivar's traits. Climate, soil, care, and ripeness still affect each apple.

FOR NEXT YEAR

Choose one tree you can walk to. Visit when it blossoms, when its fruit is small and green, and again at harvest.

WORDS WORTH KNOWING

variety · core · blossom · graft · orchard

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