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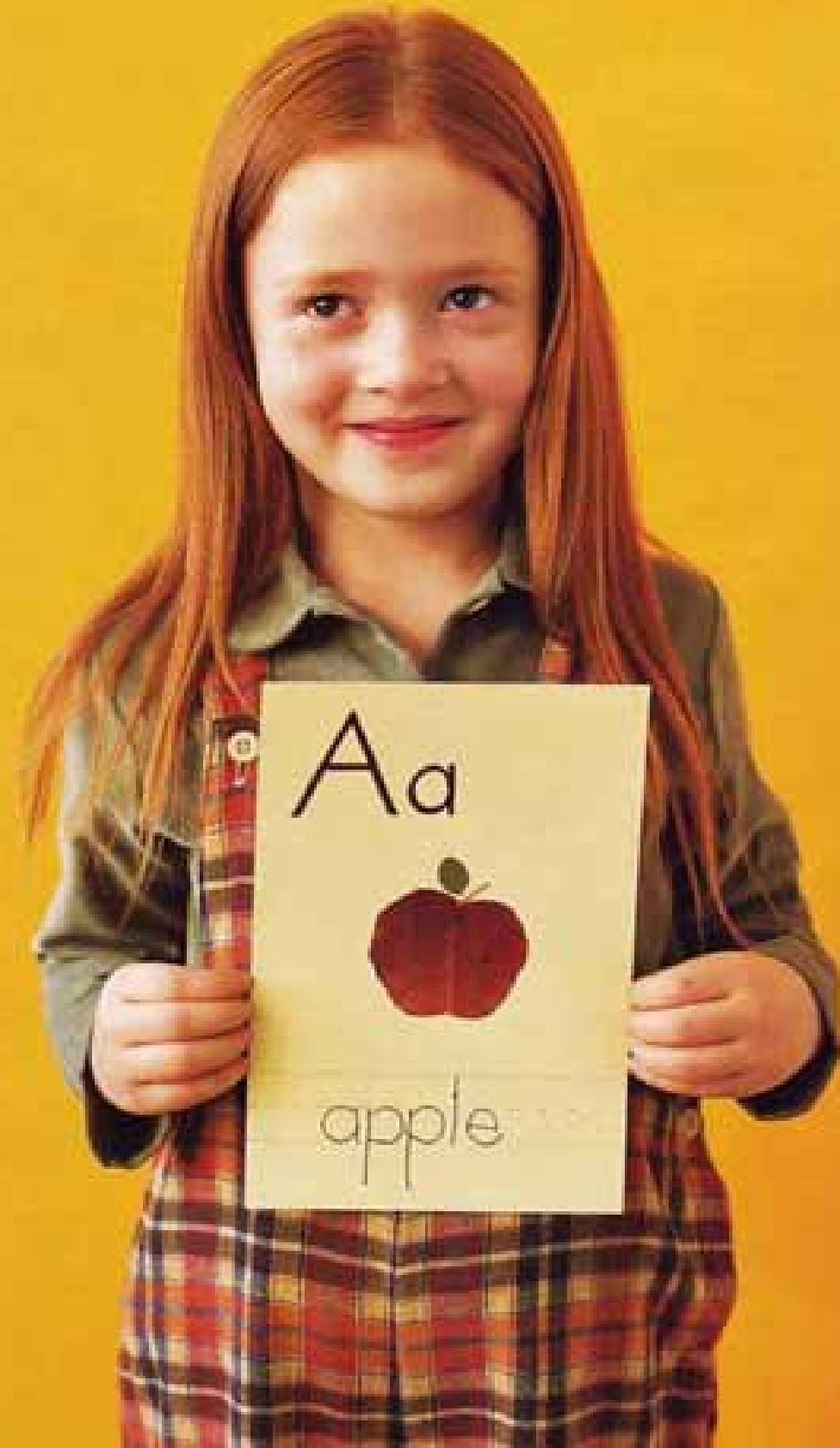
TULSA, 1941. *This sumptuous feast is pure Italian, yet feels just right next to an American cornfield. The table is covered with a simple cloth, made from inexpensive linen, topped with a runner, then dressed with garlands of Roman olive branches held up with decorative bread loaves. The branches of an old maple tree shade the table from sunlight. Later, as evening settles, pillar candles in old and new ceramic jars, hung from the branches, will cast a warm glow.*





LEAF ALPHABET

WOULDN'T IT BE WONDERFUL IF ART SUPPLIES
FELL FROM THE SKY? IN AUTUMN, THEY DO!



letter perfect Q through O are illustrated with simple designs that younger kids can tackle with ease. A few clever details bring the images to life. Leaf stems (called petioles, if you want to impress friends and botanists) are good to use for grasshopper parts and other straight lines. And there is no rule against drawing details like smiles or juggling hands. P through S: Tweet! Four leaf show how sophisticated leaf collages can be. Featherlike leaves are artfully layered to form the birds. This colorful duck was hatched entirely from sweet leaves—except for the perfectly round eyes made with a hole punch.



leaf key: These are the leaves we used for each letter, but you and your kids can choose any you like: A: ornamental pear, black locust; B: sumac, rain tree; C: amur maple; D: sallow; E: tulip tree; F: ginkgo, Japanese maple; G: weeping willow; H: larch; I: aspen; J: variety of leaves; K: cockspur hawthorn; L: ornamental pear; M: Japanese maple, cockspur hawthorn, sumac, maple; N: black locust; O: maple; P: holly, forsythia, sophora; Q: witch hazel, horehound, clover, ginkgo, amur maple, wild cherry; R: maple, barberry; S: hickory, hawthorn, white oak; T: maple; U: black locust, tulip tree; V: wild cherry; W: tulip tree; X: variety of leaves; Y: ginkgo, cockspur hawthorn; Z: witch hazel. SEE THE GUIDE FOR SOURCES.

CREATED BY ANNA HECKMAN, HELEN QUINN, AND JENNIFER WAGNER



it's elementary Lovely leaf collages help smooth the transition from layman's days outdoors to life among the ABCs. Step outside, and you'll find a palette of greens, reds, purples, and golds at your feet. Pick up a leaf and try to imagine what it could become—a butterfly wing, a flickering deer tail? Or think of leaves as nature's tissue paper, and cut them into appealing shapes before arranging them on a card or poster. Alphabet leaf collages make excellent classroom projects; the letters drive up nicely so that each student can have one (or six) to illustrate. We chose butterflies, a Christmas tree, a deer, and an elephant for B, C, D, and E. Opposite: Lola, age 6, gets an A for her apple.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES BAHRIS. TEXT BY JESSICA VITRUS

TOY BOATS



In a hurry? A rubber-band paddlewheel makes an excellent motor. To make it go, point the nose of the boat away from you, and wind the paddle toward you. Experiment with a tight windup for a burst of speed, a looser twist for a steady cruise. Opposite: The sea is a demanding mistress, but patient mariners may reap the bounty of her waves. The crew of the Starfish can eat a crab dinner as soon as they haul in their trap (a mesh sink strainer). A rubber doorstop is the smokestack.

CREATED BY JENNIFER DAHL AND HELEN QUINN

