

# Cooking With Class

Learning can be delicious when your class cooks together

## Gardening Connection:

Cooking with ingredients fresh from the school garden is a great way to celebrate the harvest.

## Time Required:

Varies with recipe

## Grade Level:

Elementary to Middle School

## EDUCATOR NOTE:

Be aware of any food allergies when cooking in the classroom.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Identify how garden produce can be used in recipes.
2. Compare and contrast healthy (anytime) foods with not as healthy (sometime) foods.
3. Follow a recipe to prepare a snack or meal.

## BACKGROUND

Children are more likely to try new and healthier foods when they participate in preparing and cooking a meal. Cooking together can build a greater sense of community within the classroom, especially when using ingredients grown by students in the school garden.

Cooking provides many interdisciplinary learning opportunities for students and the benefits are diverse! Cooking in the classroom can enhance students' literacy, brain development, mathematical skills, food knowledge, healthy life skills, communication skills, and motor skills.

When cooking, carefully read the recipe from beginning to end; have all the equipment and tools needed for the recipe; and prepare the ingredients for the recipe (wash, measure, or chop).

Recommended introduction or easy recipes for tasting foods from the garden:

- Beans or sweet peas fresh from the garden
- Herb-infused oils served with bread
- Honey butter served with bread or graham crackers
- Melons, fruits, and berries fresh from the garden
- Yogurt and fruit parfaits
- Salsa
- Crudites (sliced raw vegetables) with yogurt dip
- Salad bar
- Vegie wraps

Recipes that require a stovetop or oven:

- Applesauce
- Vegetable and cheese quesadillas
- Roasted vegetables

## Subjects

Math  
Reading / Language Arts  
Health

## Vocabulary

Anytime Foods  
Sometime Foods

## Project Connections

WILD - Lobster in Your Lunchbox

PLT - A Few of My Favorite Things  
Pass the Plants Please

- Oven baked fries (potatoes and sweet potatoes)
- Quick breads
- Natural dyes

Fun garden-themed dessert idea: Dirt Cups (layer Oreos and chocolate pudding and serve with gummy worms)

## **MATERIALS**

Varies with the chosen recipe.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Engage**

Have all students wash their hands and review any safety guidelines for the (kitchen) tools being used. Set up a few of the activity stations from Touch, Taste, Smell, Hear, See and Do to introduce and build food knowledge and preparation.

### **Explore**

Provide students with the selected recipe. Read it as a group.

Review the ingredients in each recipe. Either introduce ingredients for students to see as the recipe is reviewed OR make a list of the recipe's ingredients that need to be harvested from the garden.

Have students work together in small groups with an adult helper. Allow them to prepare the recipes in small groups. Have a classroom feast with the prepared food; if there are leftovers, students can take them home or share with other classes or teachers.

### **Explain**

Introduce students to Sometimes Foods and Anytime Foods by brainstorming a list of favorite foods. Categorize the foods in the list as Sometimes Foods or Anytime Foods.

Remind students of the foods growing in the garden by preparing another list. Categorize these foods as Sometimes Foods or Anytime Foods. Fruits and vegetables are Anytime Foods, but they can become Sometime Foods when we use them in recipes with other ingredients.

### **Evaluate**

Provide students with another recipe. Allow them to review the recipe and discuss the steps that they would take to prepare that recipe.

In small groups, allow students to prepare the recipe and demonstrate each of the steps in the recipe.

Provide students with a variety of recipes that include foods from the garden (some that include all healthy ingredients and some that include non-healthy ingredients). Have students identify the garden

foods that are ingredients for the recipes, and categorize the recipes as Sometime Foods or Anytime Foods.

### **Extension Ideas**

Review activities from Home Connections Activity, including compiling a class cookbook.

Host a seasonal garden tasting. As fruits and vegetables are harvested, have students help prepare them and share with other students in the lunchroom, after school, at snack time, etc.

Grow a classroom herb garden to easily incorporate herbs into class cooking.

#### **Touch, Taste, Smell, Hear, See and Do!**

Engaging a child's five senses and adding movement are critical in expanding appreciation for the garden. Tasting mint, smelling lemon balm or lavender, feeling the warmth of the sun in a tomato, picking oregano leaves to dry and save...experiences only the garden can provide.

##### **Touch -**

Fill container gardens with herbs and vegetables. Identify the plants with stakes painted by students. A simple sign that says "Touch" gives permission to touch the leaves and flowers - even pick them. A small bowl or piece of paper at this station can collect the picked leaves. These herbs and vegetables can be smelled in addition to touched.

##### **Taste -**

Provide cubes of bread that can be dipped into herb-infused olive oil. (Students can add the herbs to the olive oil.) Herbed butters or cream cheese can also be tried. Mint and other edible herbs or vegetables can be tasted.

Provide small cherry tomatoes. Allow students to bite into them or pop the whole thing into their mouths. This can be duplicated with many vegetables from the garden that can be eaten raw.

##### **Smell -**

Using a mortar and pestle, muddle lavender. Zest a lemon. Pinch dill and "smell pickles."

##### **See -**

Arranging flowers: Have a large pitcher full of various flowers. Around the large pitcher place small vases and bottles and another smaller pitcher of water. Allow students to select flowers from the larger vase, use scissors to cut the stems, and arrange the flowers in the smaller vases.

Use hand lenses to take a closer look at flowers, seeds, leaves, or even the center star of an apple.

##### **Hear -**

Provide a vegetable or herb chopper (not a knife) and a cutting board to chop chives and carrots. Listen for the sound of the chopper hitting the cutting board. Bite into a crunchy apple and listen.

Place cornflakes in a big plastic baggie and crush with a rolling pin. Cornflakes can be used in many garden recipes.

##### **Do-**

Peel a carrot or crinkle cut a carrot (using the vegetable chopper) - depending on the skill set of the children in the group. Provide a cutting board and plate with a carrot, peeler, safe chopper, and a bowl.

Scrub a potato - place a few potatoes in a pan of water with scrubbers.

Roll the dough - roll dough into different shapes like a ball, a pretzel, a snake, a roll, etc. This is good practice for baking with herbs and vegetables from the garden. Herbed bread is a great class recipe!

Pick thyme or coriander - pick the leaves and seeds of these herbs and put them in a jar. This is a great fine motor activity.

**Readings:**

*All About Food Cereals, Nuts, & Spices* by Fitzsimons, Cecilia

*Salad People* by Katzen, Mollie (2005)

*No-Stove Nutrition* by Heffelfinger, Sandy (1997)

**Resources:**

Searchable Recipe Website

[www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com)

Tips for cooking in the classroom

<http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/CookingClassroom.pdf>

[www.californiahealthykids.org/Pages/articles/cooking.ppt](http://www.californiahealthykids.org/Pages/articles/cooking.ppt)

Taste Touch Smell Hear See and Do activity

<http://www.kansasgreenschools.org/files/Taste%20Touch%20Smell%20Hear%20See%20and%20Do.pdf>

Home Connections Ideas

<http://www.kansasgreenschools.org/files/Home%20Connections.pdf>