



Team Nutrition Fruits and Vegetables Lessons for Preschool Children

A Supplement to the
*Color Me Healthy - Preschoolers Moving &
Eating Healthy Curriculum Kit*



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Preface

The “Team Nutrition Fruits and Vegetables Lessons for Preschool Children” was written and developed for the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) as part of the USDA Team Nutrition Grant. The lessons were designed as a supplement to the North Carolina developed curriculum kit, “Color Me Healthy-Preschoolers Moving and Eating Healthy.” It was developed for use as a hands-on, stand-alone curriculum for anybody wanting to encourage preschool children to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits. The lessons were written by a consultant that has worked with Child Nutrition Programs at the state level and has 15 years experience at the sponsor level as a nutrition educator for Child and Adult Care Food Programs. She also attended a national training to be a certified “Color Me Healthy” trainer.

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A Colorful Cat

Children interact with the storyteller in this tale of a cat that changes from brown to more colorful exteriors. The story involves recognition of fruits and vegetables. Rather than looking at a book's pages as the story is read, the focus is on a silhouette of "Scat the Cat" on the front of a manila file folder. The storyteller reveals the colors as the story unfolds.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Storytelling file folder

- ◆ Materials needed: standard manila file folder, cat silhouette pattern, the word: "cat", story text, stapler or wide tape, glue stick, scissors



Picture cards from "Color Me Healthy" kit's *Color of Food* (8 cards coded with a black "Color Me Healthy" logo) or use construction paper as noted on page 3.



Poster of colorful fruits and vegetables from kit

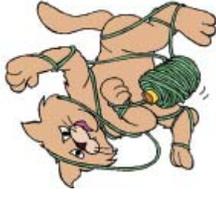
ACTION:

1. Construct one file folder storytelling prop (instructions on page 3).
2. Gather children in a style appropriate for storytelling so that all can easily see and participate.
3. Explain to the children that you will need their help in telling this story about Scat the Cat. They will need to imagine the colors of fruits and vegetables to help tell the story or refer to the poster from the kit.
4. Read the story on the back of the file folder; encourage excitement and participation.
5. Follow-up the story by discussing the rainbow of colors found in fruits and vegetables.
6. Ask children why fruits and vegetables are good for them. Expand on their answers in terms they can understand.
7. Optional: Taste and discuss a fruit or vegetable that was mentioned in the story of the colorful cat.



Scat The Cat

Read this story facing the children with the cat outline on the file folder front, in plain view for them. Raise the front colored card (placed in the order as they appear in the story) as you read, revealing the color underneath it. Place the removed card at the back of the colored sheets. Let the children respond with the name of the color. Also have the children join in reciting the chant said by Scat in the story. Feel free to embellish the story with more questions and responses from the children.



Once upon a time there was a little **BROWN** cat named Scat - Scat the Cat. Scat, like most other cats, liked to sleep. One day, as he was napping, he had a dream. In his dream he looked around and saw that so many other cats were brown, too. Scat decided he would like to be a different color, so he said:

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

All of a sudden he was (slowly raise the color card) **GREEN** like peas and lettuce. What other foods or things are green like Scat? He went out to play with his friends, but they couldn’t find him because he was the same color as the grass. Scat decided he didn’t want to be green in his dream, so he said:

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

Now he was the color of carrots and pumpkins. What color is this? (slowly reveal the color) He was now **ORANGE!** What are some other things that are orange? Some cats are kind-of an orange color. Scat’s cat cousins had orange and brown stripes. His cousin said to Scat: “Don’t copy me! You should be your own color.” Scat did not want to make his cousin unhappy, so he said:

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

Then Scat turned **BLUE**....the color of blueberries and the sky. What else is blue? He walked to the lake and looked at himself in the water. Oh no! He fell in the water and poor Scat could not swim! He called for help but his friends couldn’t see him because he was blue like the water. His friend, the turtle, found him and carried him safely to shore. Scat did not want to be blue anymore, so he said:

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

Then Scat turned....**YELLOW**. What foods are yellow? Yellow is a nice color but it made Scat feel hot like the sun, so he thought he should change his color again.

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

Scat turned the color of cauliflower and mashed potatoes. What color is that? **WHITE!** Oh dear, this is a crazy dream for a kitty cat! There are many white cats, just like there are many brown cats, and Scat wanted to

be a bright color so he said once again...

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

Wow, he turned....**PURPLE** like grapes or plums. Scat looked at himself in the mirror and blinked. And in his crazy dream he turned another color.....Scat turned **RED!** Red is the color of an apple or a strawberry. What else is the color red? He went out to play with his brothers and sisters and friends, but they all said “Who ever heard of a red cat? Why didn’t you like being a brown cat - that’s the color you were meant to be.”

Scat thought about what they said, “I guess I don’t want to be red like a cherry. I don’t want to be yellow like corn. I don’t want to be orange like cantaloupe or blue like berries. And I don’t want to be white like onions or green like pickles. I want to be brown again! So he said:

**“I’m Scat the Cat,
Change my color,
Just like that!”** (snap fingers or clap hands)

Scat changed back to **BROWN** and woke up from his colorful dream. After that he was happy just being himself.

The End

INSTRUCTIONS TO CONSTRUCT STORYTELLING FILE FOLDER:

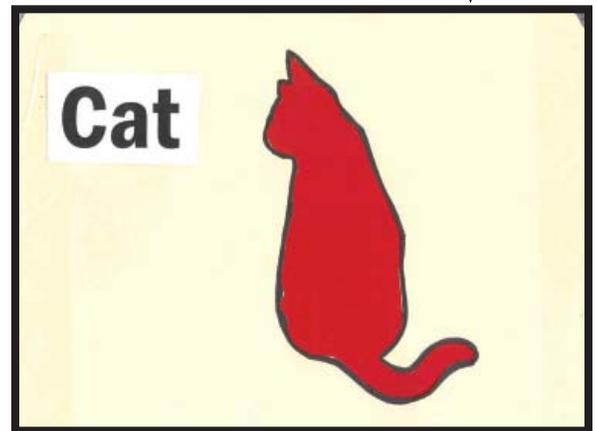
1. Using the cat pattern, trace the cat onto the back side of the outside of a manila file folder. Position pattern so the cat's ears point toward folder tabs.
2. Cut out the traced cat. Don't cut into other parts of the folder.
3. Tape or staple sides of the folder together. Leave the top open to form a pocket.
4. Glue the story text to uncut side of the folder. Glue the word cat to the front of the folder alongside the cat cutout.
5. Insert the 8 *Color of Food* cards with the solid color side showing through the cat cutout. Arrange the colored cards behind the brown card in the order that they appear in the story.

Note: If you do not have access to the Color of Food cards, one sheet each of construction paper in the following colors may be substituted: brown, orange, blue, green, yellow, purple, white, red.

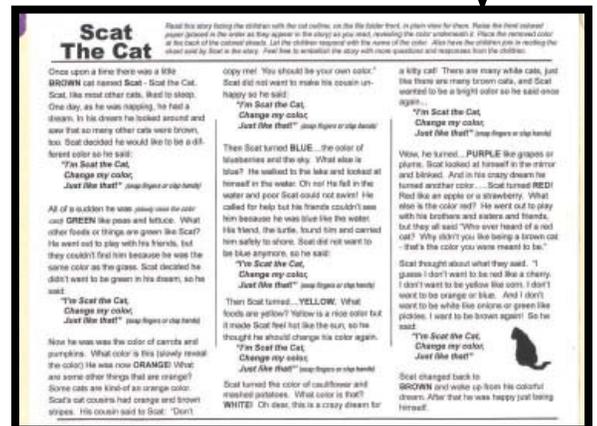


CAT

Front of completed file folder ↓



Back of completed file folder ↓



Salad For One, Please

The process of making an individual portion of fruit salad creates interest in the salad's contents. This lesson incorporates math and physical movement in addition to nutrition.

CODE:

Mix-A-Salad game: High activity level



Preparation of a real salad: Low activity level



PROPS:

For Mix-A-Salad game



Fruit or vegetable pictures for children (pages 15-18)



Active verb list for adult (page 5)

For preparation of individual fruit salads



Picture cards of the recipe steps (pages 6-8)



Bowls of prepared ingredients as designated in the recipe



Serving utensils for group bowls, such as tongs, spoons, etc.



Individual cups or small bowl for each child



Spoon for each child

ACTION:

For Mix-A-Salad Game

1. Children stand in a large circle to form a pretend "bowl."
2. Each child is given a picture of a fruit or vegetable. The pictures may be from the kit or fruit/vegetable stickers. It's okay if several children receive a picture of the same fruit.
3. The leader says "I'm going to make a fruit salad and in my fruit salad I am going to have _____ (name a fruit) that is _____ (say an action). For example, "bananas that are jumping!" or "cantaloupe that is clapping!" All those with that picture enter the center of the circle and perform that action. Play continues with more fruits and actions called to enter the center of the bowl to be the "salad."
4. After 3 or 4 fruits are called, the leader says, "Let's stir up the fruit salad!" Then, all those in the center scramble around, and all those forming the bowl make stirring motions until leader says, "Stop! Let's eat."

5. All the children fall down, rub their tummies, and say “Yum, that was a good salad!” Play it again with other fruits called on to be in the salad “bowl.”

Suggested action verbs to use with the Mix-A-Salad game:

- ◆ twirling
- ◆ jumping
- ◆ running
- ◆ hopping
- ◆ waving
- ◆ flying
- ◆ dancing
- ◆ clapping
- ◆ kicking
- ◆ rolling their arms
- ◆ walking on tip-toes
- ◆ splashing

For Making Fruit Salad

1. Prepare ingredients that are to go into the salad prior to doing this activity. Canned, frozen, or fresh fruits may be used. For example, the orange segments could be fresh peeled sections or canned mandarin orange sections.
2. Tell the children that they will each make their own snack today!
3. Review and discuss the ingredients in the recipe. You may draw your own card(s) if substitutions are to be used.
4. On a table or counter, set out pictorial recipe steps in the order you prefer. Lay the cards next to the ingredient or set the cards upright using a prop.
5. Have children wash their hands.
6. Instruct the children to assemble their individual salad by following the directions at each step of the process. It would be a good idea to demonstrate each step, especially the stirring.
7. Taking turns, have each child assemble their salad. Then celebrate their accomplishment!

To credit for a CACFP snack: a total of at least ½ cup fruit is required for a fruit serving.

VARIATIONS:

Mini Taco Salad

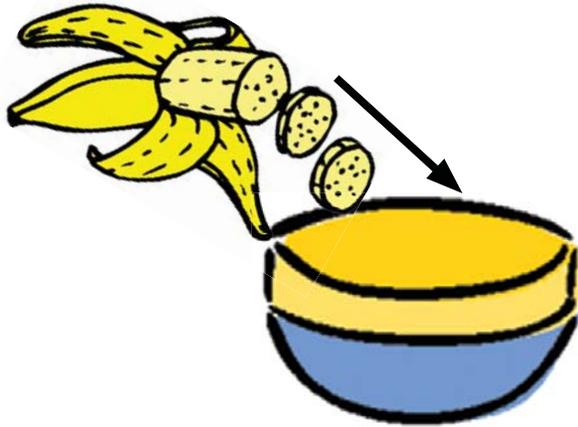
Follow similar actions using the mini taco salad recipe cards on page 8. The dressing may be plain ranch dressing or ranch dressing mixed with a smooth taco sauce.

Fruit Pizza

Follow similar actions using the fruit pizza recipe cards on page 7. The spread may be yogurt, whipped topping, or whipped cream cheese (consider using low-fat versions of these dairy products).

Fruit Salad

2 Banana Slices

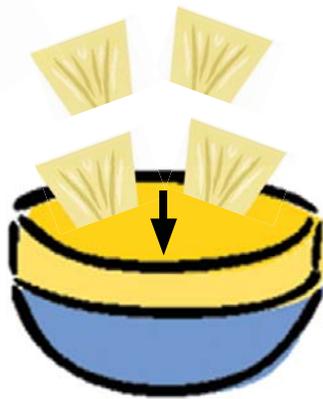


3 Orange Slices



Cut

4 Pineapple Chunks



Stir



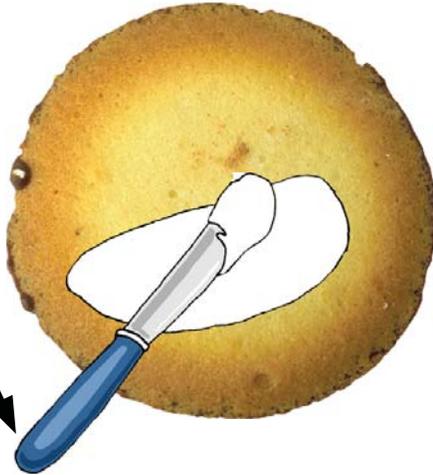
YUM!

Fruit Pizza

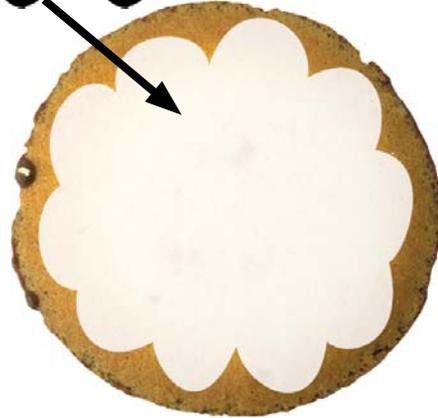
Spread



Sugar Cookie

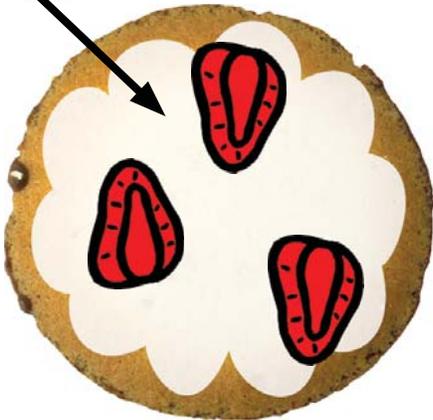


3 Strawberry Slices

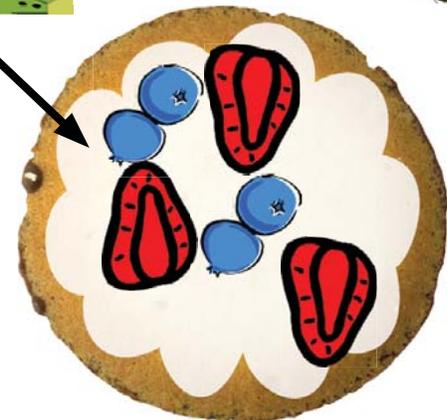


Cut

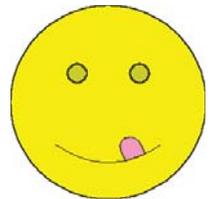
4 Blueberries



2 Kiwi Chunks



Finished Product



YUM!

Taco Salad

1 Pinch Lettuce



Cut

1 Spoonful Black Beans

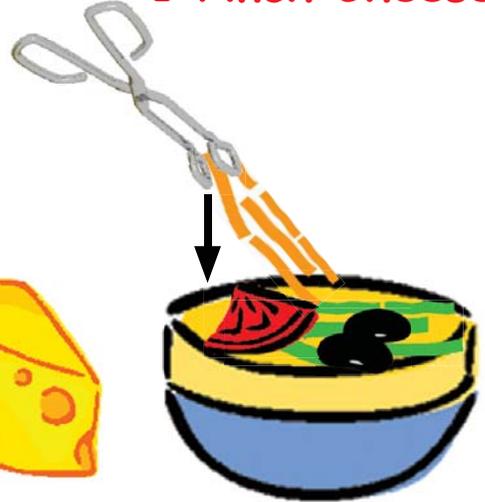
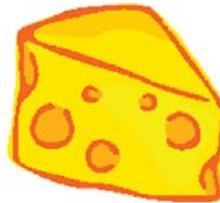


3 Tomato Pieces



Cut

1 Pinch Cheese



1 Squirt Salad Dressing



Stir



YUM!

Everybody Wins Bingo!

Children focus on identifying fruits and vegetables in playing this simplified Bingo game featuring pictures instead of numbers.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Bingo Cards for children (pages 10-12)



Call cards for leader – use the 15 *Where Does It Grow?* cards (food picture side) in the “Color Me Healthy” kit , or the fruit and vegetable cards provided (pages 15-18)



Items to cover the called items on Bingo card such as squares of paper, legos, etc.



Optional: Small prizes for “winners” (all will eventually be winners) such as fruit and/or vegetable stickers, a small toy or piece of fruit, etc.

ACTION:

1. Instruct the children on how Bingo is played. Show them that the cards are not alike. The provided cards are laid out in a tic-tac-toe fashion rather than a five row, five column traditional Bingo style.
2. Choose a child to be the “caller” with your help. Place the call cards face down and have the caller pick one card and hold the picture of the fruit or vegetable for all players to see.
3. Have the children verbally identify the picture and place a token over the picture if it appears on their card. Per your instruction, you may have Bingo being declared if three pictures in a row are covered or Bingo when the entire card is covered.
4. Depending on the attention level and desired playing time, the game can continue after the first Bingo is called until a second, third, etc. Bingo. Or the game may be restarted after each Bingo. Several children may “Bingo” at the same time.

COLOR ME HEALTHY



apple



blueberries



cabbage



cantaloupe



corn



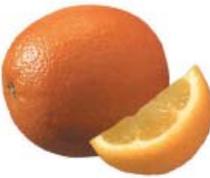
cucumber



grapes



lettuce



orange

COLOR ME HEALTHY



blueberries



cabbage



cantaloupe



corn



cucumber



grapes



lettuce



orange



peach

COLOR ME HEALTHY



cabbage



cantaloupe



corn



cucumber



grapes



lettuce



orange



peach



pumpkin

COLOR ME HEALTHY



cantaloupe



corn



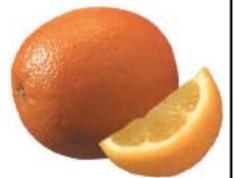
cucumber



grapes



lettuce



orange



peach



pumpkin



squash

COLOR ME HEALTHY



corn



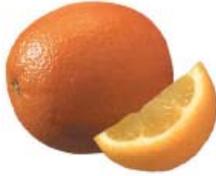
cucumber



grapes



lettuce



orange



peach



pumpkin



squash



strawberries

COLOR ME HEALTHY



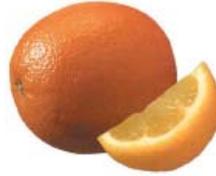
cucumber



grapes



lettuce



orange



peach



pumpkin



squash



strawberries



sweet potatoes

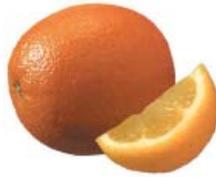
COLOR ME HEALTHY



grapes



lettuce



orange



peach



pumpkin



squash



strawberries



sweet potatoes



tomato

COLOR ME HEALTHY



lettuce



orange



peach



pumpkin



squash



strawberries



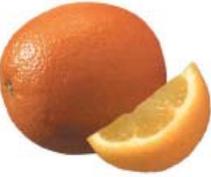
sweet potatoes



tomato



apple

COLOR ME HEALTHY		
		
orange	peach	pumpkin
		
squash	strawberries	sweet potatoes
		
tomato	apple	blueberries

COLOR ME HEALTHY		
		
peach	pumpkin	squash
		
strawberries	sweet potatoes	tomato
		
apple	blueberries	cabbage

COLOR ME HEALTHY		
		
pumpkin	squash	strawberries
		
sweet potatoes	tomato	apple
		
blueberries	cabbage	cantaloupe

COLOR ME HEALTHY		
		
squash	strawberries	sweet potatoes
		
tomato	apple	blueberries
		
cabbage	cantaloupe	corn

COLOR ME HEALTHY

COLOR ME HEALTHY

		
strawberries	sweet potatoes	tomato
		
apple	blueberries	cabbage
		
cantaloupe	corn	cucumber

		
sweet potatoes	tomato	apple
		
blueberries	cabbage	cantaloupe
		
corn	cucumber	grapes

COLOR ME HEALTHY

COLOR ME HEALTHY

		
tomato	apple	blueberries
		
cabbage	cantaloupe	corn
		
cucumber	grapes	lettuce

		
apple	cabbage	corn
		
cucumber	lettuce	orange
		
pumpkin	squash	strawberries

COLOR ME HEALTHY

COLOR ME HEALTHY



cabbage



corn



cucumber



apple



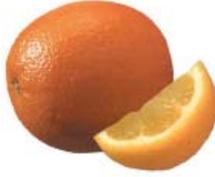
blueberries



cantaloupe



lettuce



orange



pumpkin



corn



grapes



lettuce



squash



strawberries



tomato



peach



pumpkin



strawberries

COLOR ME HEALTHY

COLOR ME HEALTHY



blueberries



cabbage



corn



cabbage



corn



cucumber



cucumber



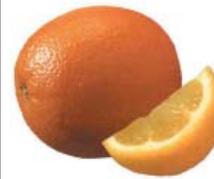
lettuce



orange



lettuce



orange



peach



peach



squash



strawberries



squash



strawberries



tomato



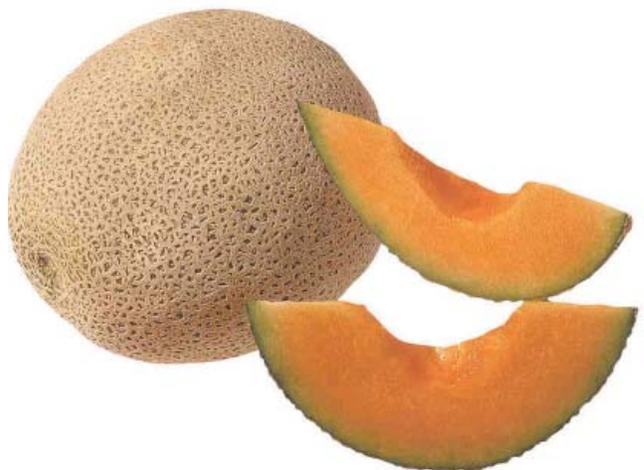
apple



blueberries



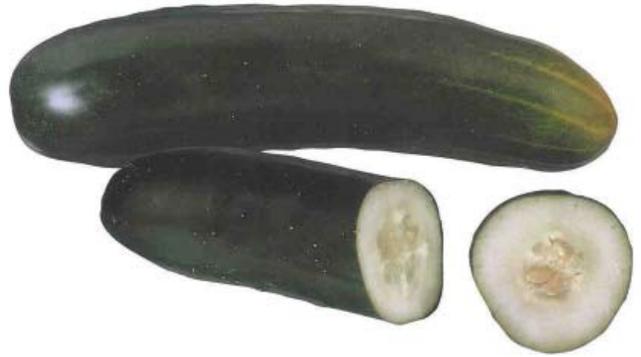
cabbage



cantaloupe



corn



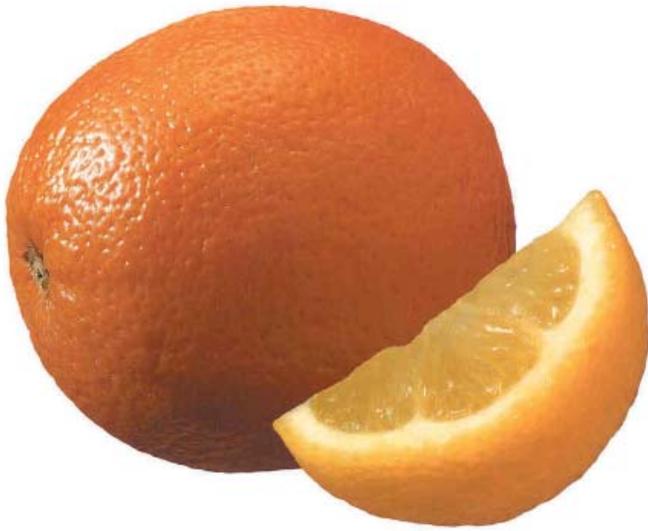
cucumber



grapes



lettuce



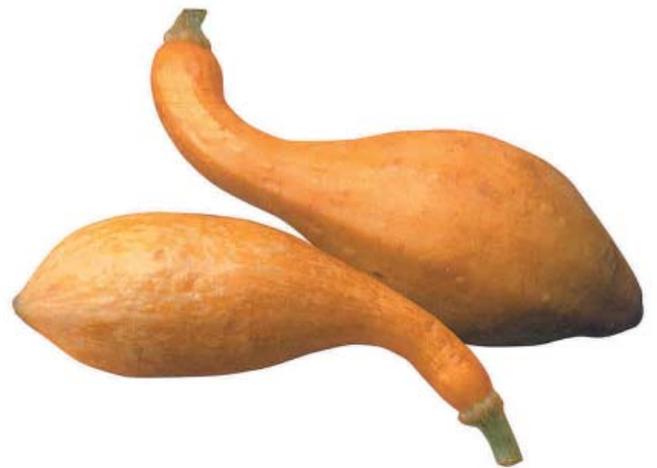
orange



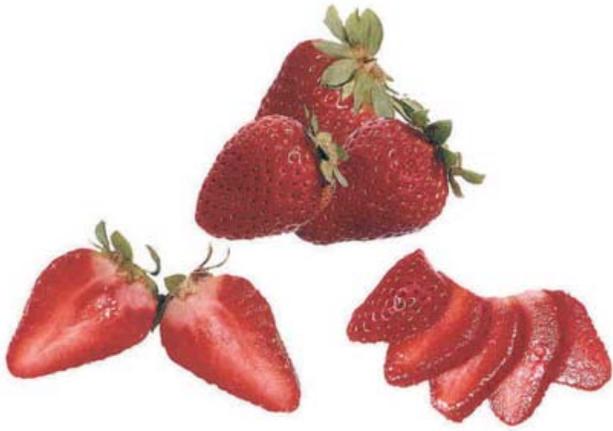
peach



pumpkin



squash



strawberries



sweet potatoes



tomato

Say 'Wow' To A Purple Cow

The traditional Purple Cow drink recipe is modified to use blueberries instead of grape juice in this small group activity. Prior to tasting Purple Cows, the traditional Purple Cow rhyme is read. A template for a silly purple cow headband adds to the fun of this lesson.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Purple Cow headband (page 21)



Blender



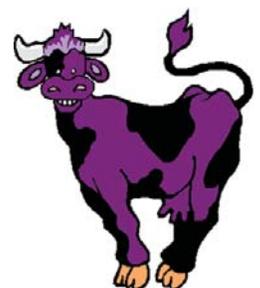
Cups



Recipe ingredients

ACTION:

1. Make copies or trace the cow head figure (provided) on white or purple paper, one per child. Have children color the cow purple if printed on white. Cut out the cow's head with words and attach to a paper strip that will fit around the child's head. Position the purple cow on their forehead; or, instead of a headband, the purple cow could be placed on the child's shirt with double stick tape.
2. Share the rhyme "Purple Cow." Ask the children if there is such a thing as a real purple cow. Ask what drink comes from cows. Do they think milk could somehow get to be a purple color? How?
3. Show the smoothie ingredients to the children. Which of the ingredients are fruits? If all these ingredients are mixed together in a blender, what do they think will happen? Do they think they will like the taste of the Purple Cow smoothie?
4. Allow the children to help you put the ingredients into the blender. If five children each help add one of the ingredients, the sixth child can push the blender's button to start and stop. Discuss the ingredients as they are put in the blender.
5. Divide the smoothie into six cups.





I never saw a purple cow
I never hope to see one
But I can tell you anyhow
I'd rather see, than be one.

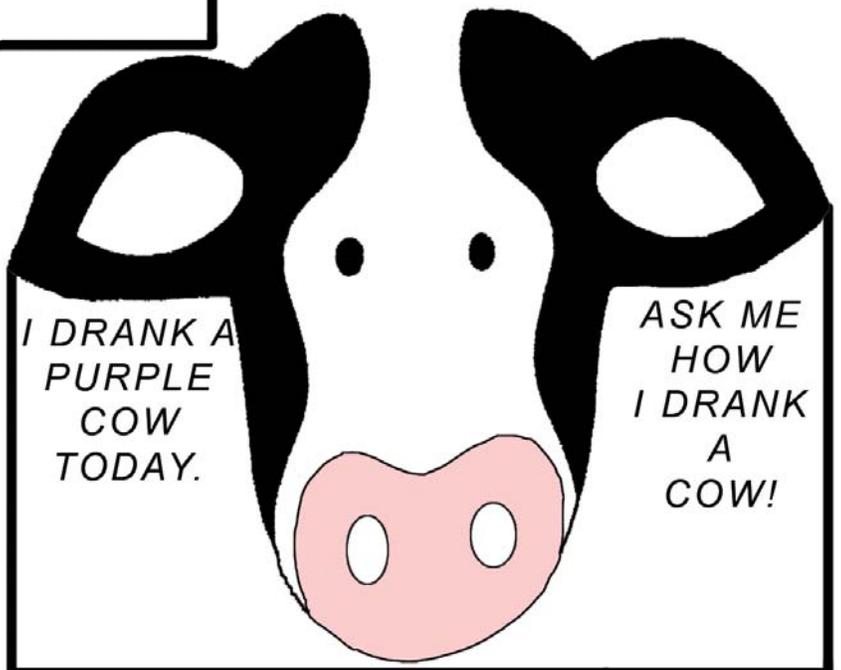
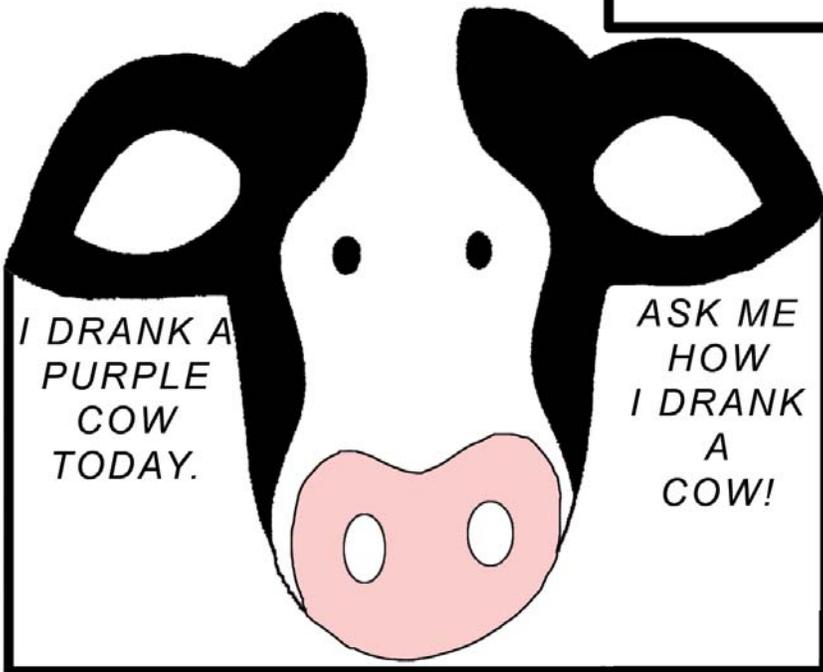
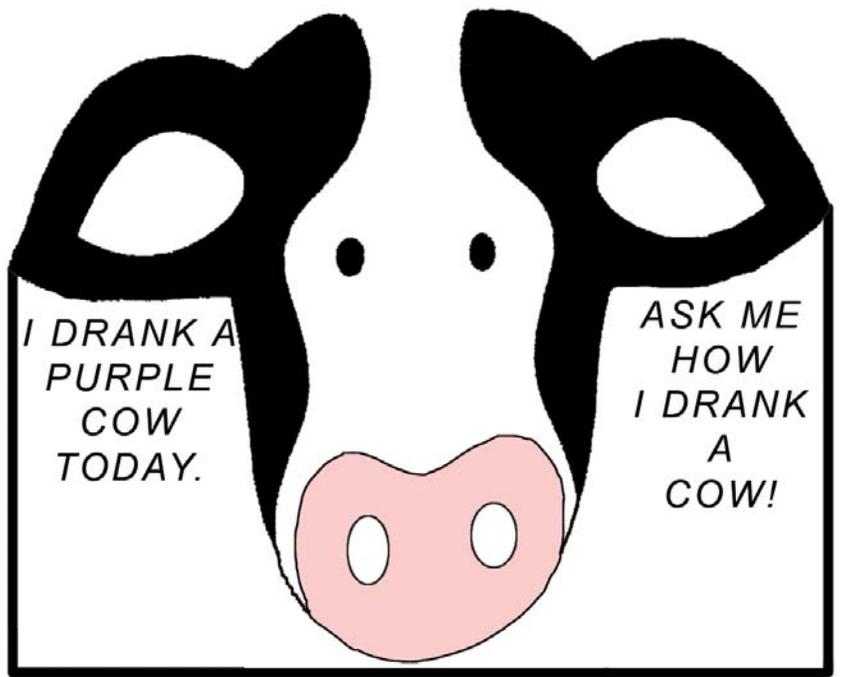


PURPLE COW SMOOTHIE FOR 6

- 2 cups whole milk
- 4 Tbsp. (1/4 cup) sugar
- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 2 bananas
- 6 ice cubes

Place ingredients listed in a blender in the order listed. (You may leave out the sugar if the blueberries are already sweetened.) Whirl in blender until smooth. Yield: 6 servings. Credit for the CACFP as: 1 serving = 1/2 cup fruit. There is not enough milk per serving to credit as an entire snack portion.

Note: The above directions specify six children so the recipe fulfills a snack component for the CACFP. If not counting this Purple Cow smoothie as a menu component, then the recipe can supply “tasting portions” to more than six children.



Once Upon A Vegetable

Your bookshelf may already hold some of these popular children's books that feature a fruit or vegetable.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Children's books which feature vegetables and/or fruits.

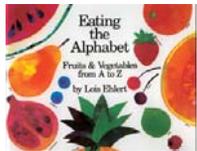
ACTION:

1. Read a book to children as a springboard, support or summary for a discussion about nutritious food.

TO IDENTIFY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:

The books listed are in categories in which they could be used, but are not limited to these suggested activities.

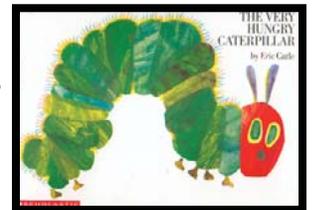
Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert



This appetizing alphabet book shows bright drawings of fruits and vegetables. You'll wish they could jump off the page and into your mouth.

The Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

Follows the progress of a hungry little caterpillar as he eats his way through a varied and large quantity of food until, full at last, he forms a cocoon around himself and goes to sleep. Die-cut pages illustrate what the caterpillar ate on successive days.



Potluck by Anne Shelby

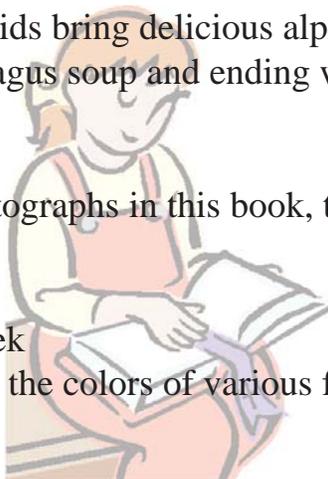
From Acton to Zelda, all the kids bring delicious alphabetical appropriate foods to the potluck, beginning with asparagus soup and ending with zucchini casserole.

I Eat Vegetables by Hannah Tofts

By lifting the flaps on the photographs in this book, the reader sees the insides of various vegetables.

Strawberries are Red by Petr Horacek

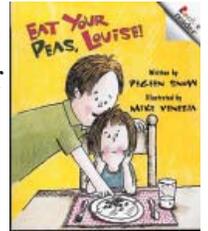
A simple board book in which the colors of various fruits make a beautiful fruit salad.



TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO TRY A FRUIT OR VEGETABLE (OR ANY NEW FOOD):

Eat Your Peas, Louise by Pegeen Snow

The rhyming text of this book describes what it takes to get Louise to eat her peas. This book would be an excellent springboard to a discussion about tasting new foods – including peas.



Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban

Frances loves nothing better than jam and bread, and turns up her nose at other kinds of food. Then her mother starts giving Frances jam and bread for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Frances becomes sick of jam-only days and discovers that variety at mealtime really is good.

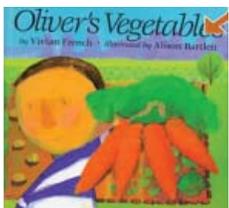
Seven Silly Eaters by Mary Ann Hoberman

Poor Mrs. Peters is the mother of seven very picky eaters. There's the oldest, Peter, who will only drink warm milk, Lucy who drinks only homemade pink lemonade, and little Jack who eats only bowls and bowls of applesauce. A very tired and frazzled Mrs. Peters can barely keep up until her children come up with a solution to all their future eating problems.

I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child

Lola is a very fussy eater. One day, after rattling off her long list of despised foods, she ends with, "And I absolutely will never not ever eat a tomato." Not convinced, Lola's older sister tells Lola that the orange things on the table are not carrots, but "orange twiglets from Jupiter" and peas are in fact "green drops from Greenland." Other vegetables with silly names suddenly seem appealing to Lola.

Oliver's Vegetables by Vivian French



French fries fan Oliver is spending a week with his grandparents. After declaring, "I don't eat vegetables," he strikes a bargain with Grandpa. If he finds the potatoes in Grandpa's vegetable garden, he can have fries. But if he finds something else, he must eat it with no complaints. The streamlined text has an appealing rhythm.

Little Pea by Amy Rosenthal

If Little Pea doesn't eat all of his sweets, there will be no vegetables for dessert! What's a young pea to do? Children who have trouble swallowing their veggies will love the way this pea-size picture book serves up a playful story they can relate to.



D.W. the Picky Eater by Marc Brown

In another funny picture book about Arthur the aardvark's little sister, D. W., is a fussy eater. She won't touch vegetables. More than anything else in the world, she hates spinach, or so she thinks. Like the badger in Russell Hoban's classic "Bread and Jam for Frances", the picky eater has to discover for herself what she's missing.

Rabbit Food by Susanna Gretz

In this entertaining twist on the fussy-eater theme, children will discover that adults can also be picky about food. It encourages all to try a taste of a vegetable before you say you don't care for it.

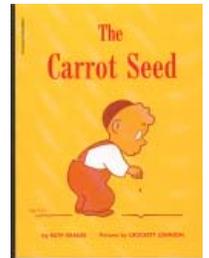
TO LEARN HOW VEGETABLES AND FRUITS GROW:

Farmers' Market by Paul Brett Johnson

In the story, a girl helps her parents take their vegetables to the farmers' market and spends the day selling them. The short text is enhanced by richly colored paintings depicting the story.

The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krause

Even though people tell him it won't grow, a boy remains confident in this carrot seed's potential. This old story with simple drawings has remained popular for years.



The Garden In Our Yard by Greg Quinn

The cycle of a garden from season to season is described with large detailed drawings.

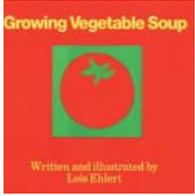
One Bean by Anne Rockwell

In a childlike text, a young narrator describes what happens as a bean sprouts on a wet paper towel and grows in a paper cup until it is transplanted into a large flower pot. Completing the life cycle, the child picks the bean and eats it.



TO MAKE A VEGETABLE OR FRUIT RECIPE TOGETHER:

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert



Vivid colors and large, bold print are key to this simple picture book that takes children through the steps of growing, harvesting, and preparing vegetables for soup.

Stone Soup by Marcia Bown (various versions by other authors)

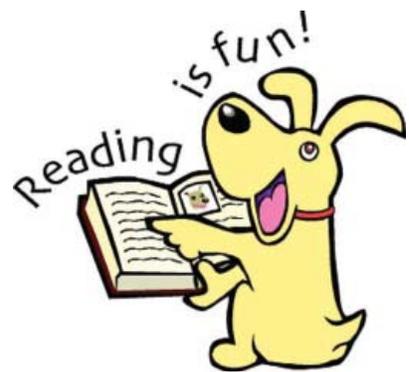
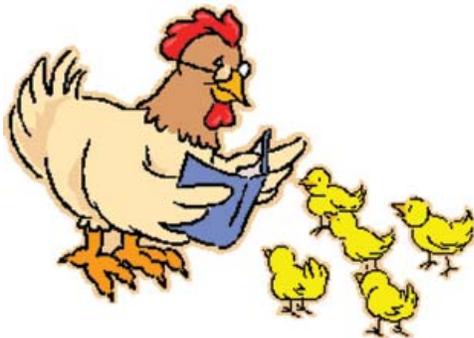
A classic tale of three hungry soldiers who come into a town where all the food has been hidden. They set out to make soup of water and stones, only to have the curious town's people contribute various "hidden" vegetables to the soup.

The Little Red Hen Makes Soup by Rozanne Williams

In this twist on the traditional story, the Little Red Hen gets her friends to help her make vegetable soup instead of bread.

Oliver's Fruit Salad by Vivian French

Oliver enjoys helping his grandfather grow and pick fruit from the garden, but even though he sings the praises of the bountiful produce, he won't eat any of it. That is until Grandpa comes to visit and enlists Oliver's aid in making a big, colorful fruit salad. It is so irresistible that the boy consumes three bowls full.



TO EXPLORE SEASONAL PRODUCE:

Picking Apples and Pumpkins by Amy Hutchins



Spend the day with Kristy and friends as they pick apples and pumpkins at Battleview Orchards in New Jersey.

Pumpkin, Pumpkin by Jeanne Titherington

Softly colored pencil illustrations in a realistic style effectively communicate Jamie's pride as a very young gardener. He plants a seed, then grows and harvests a pumpkin from which he saves seeds for next year.

The Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall

Follow the apple tree from winter to fall with two sisters. It teaches about the seasons as well as the process of growing something and the pride in having a hand in creating something.

Autumn is for Apples by Michelle Knudson

Apples are my favorite snack—all juicy, red, and round.

I love how every tasty bite comes with a crunchy sound.

Sparse rhyming text details a child's impressions of a trip to go apple-picking, from the morning flapjacks to the last juicy bite of apple.

The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree by Gail Gibbons



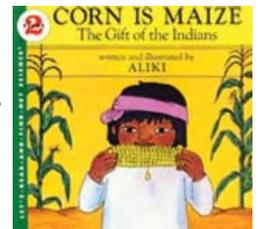
As the seasons pass, Arnold enjoys a variety of activities as a result of his apple tree. Includes a recipe for apple pie and a description of how an apple cider press works.

The Little Mouse, The Red Ripe Strawberry, and The Big Hungry Bear by Audrey Wood

What's a little, strawberry loving mouse going to do to keep a big, hungry, strawberry loving bear from eating his fruit? Especially when the bear can smell a red, ripe strawberry a mile away. The problem is solved with a little clever help from the reader.

Corn is Maize: The Gift of the Indians by Aliko

The story is told of how corn was discovered and used by the Indians, and how it came to be an important food throughout the world. (for older preschoolers)



A Tisket, A Tasket, A Fruit and Vegetable Basket

Because fruits and vegetables are so beautiful, they are often the subject of art. A cooperative art project, using supplied black-line pictures and an easy-to-make glossy “paint,” will result in a gorgeous basket of produce for a wall or bulletin board display.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Copies of colorbook style fruits and vegetables on card stock paper (pages 28-31)



Clear corn syrup



Food coloring



Paint brushes



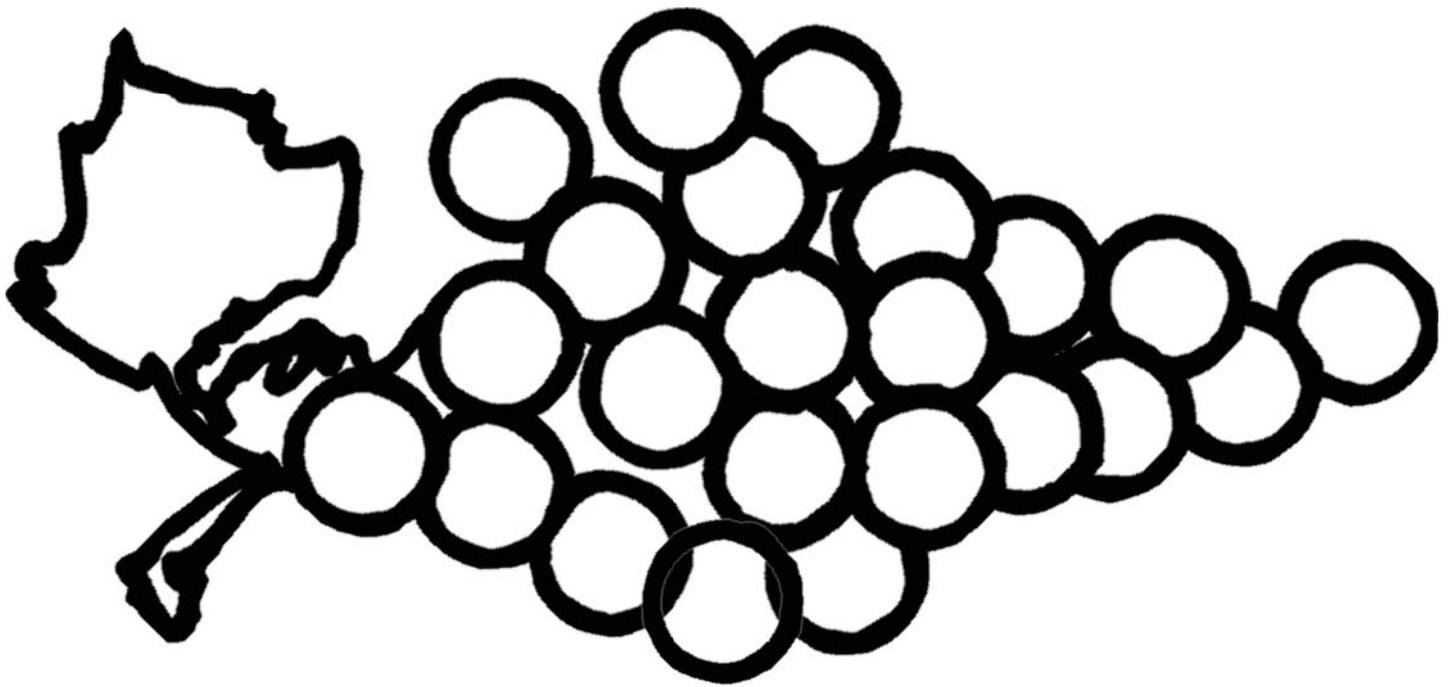
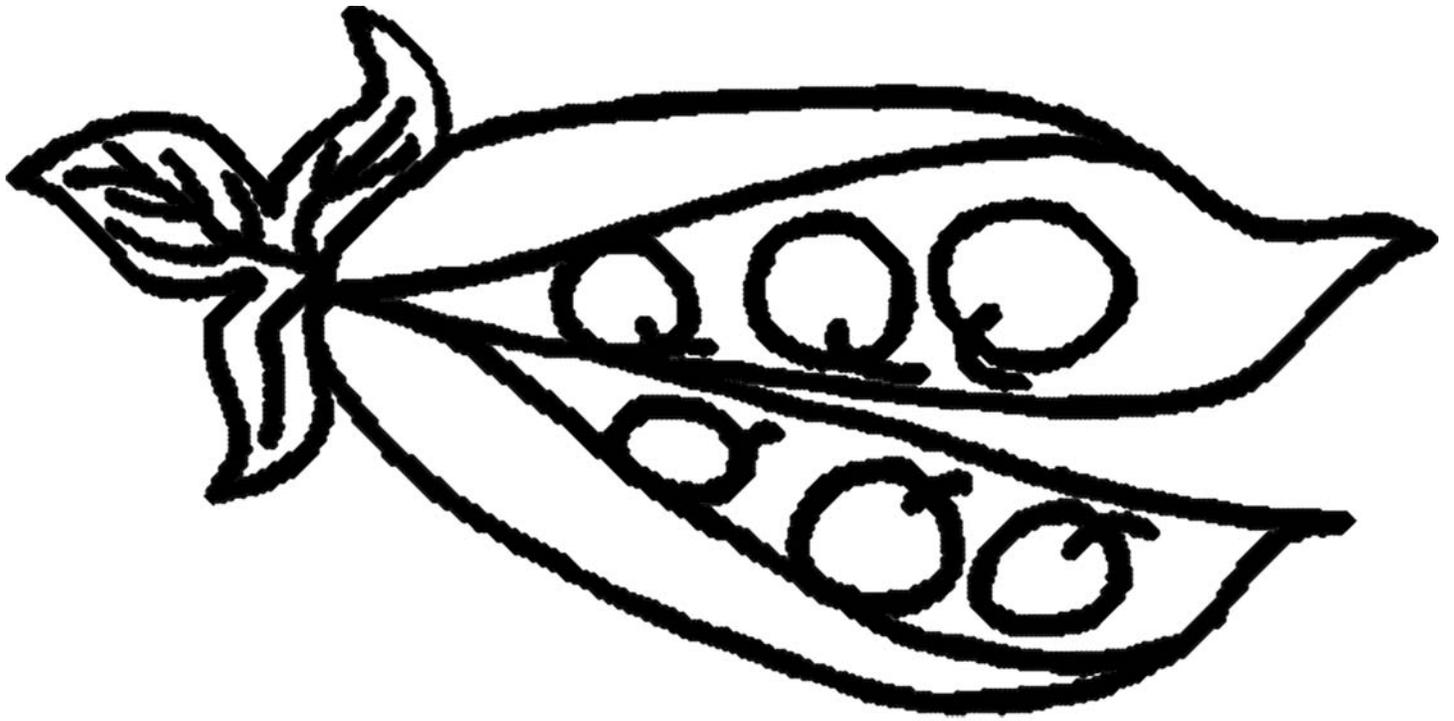
Small containers for corn syrup paint

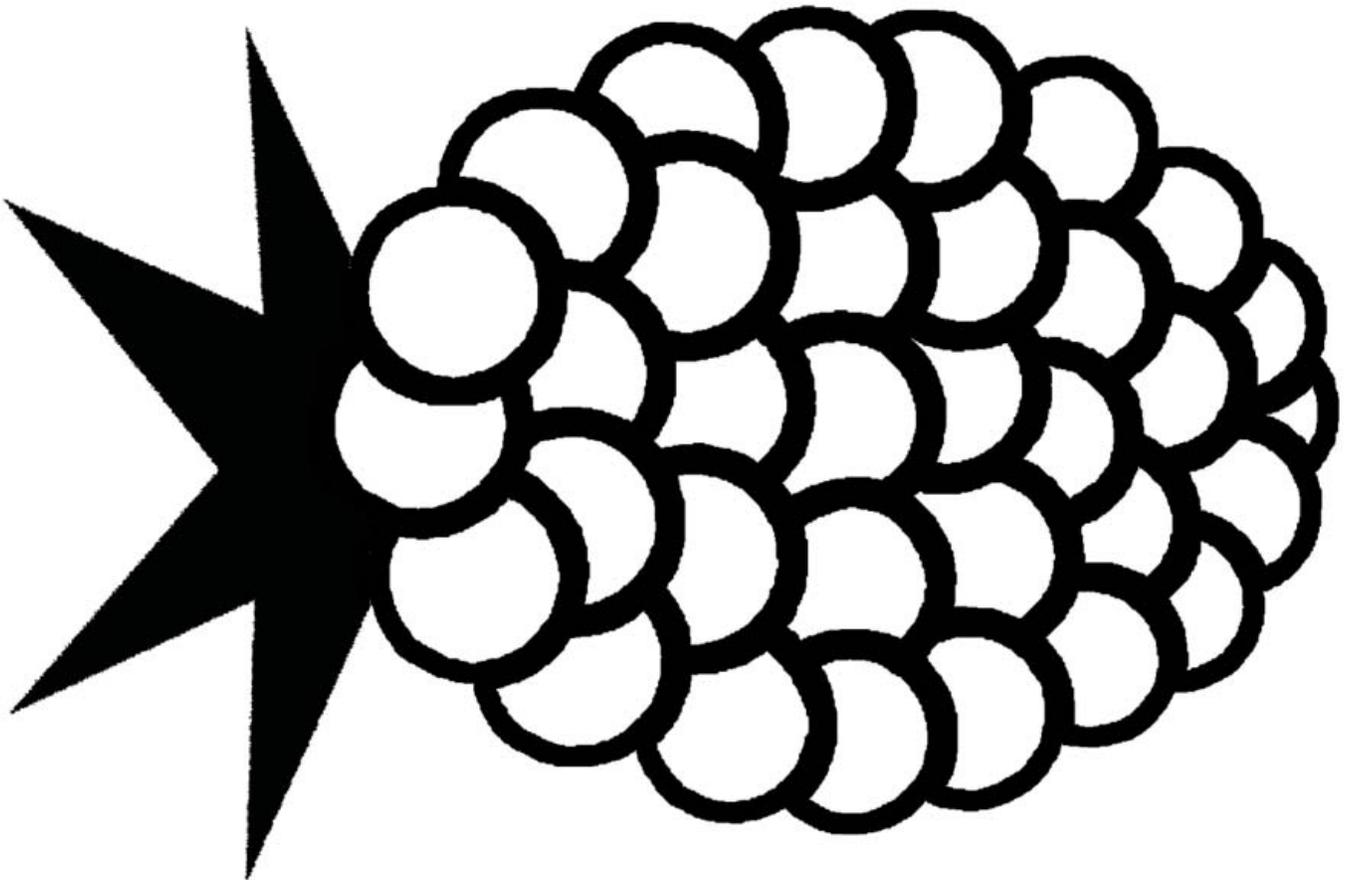


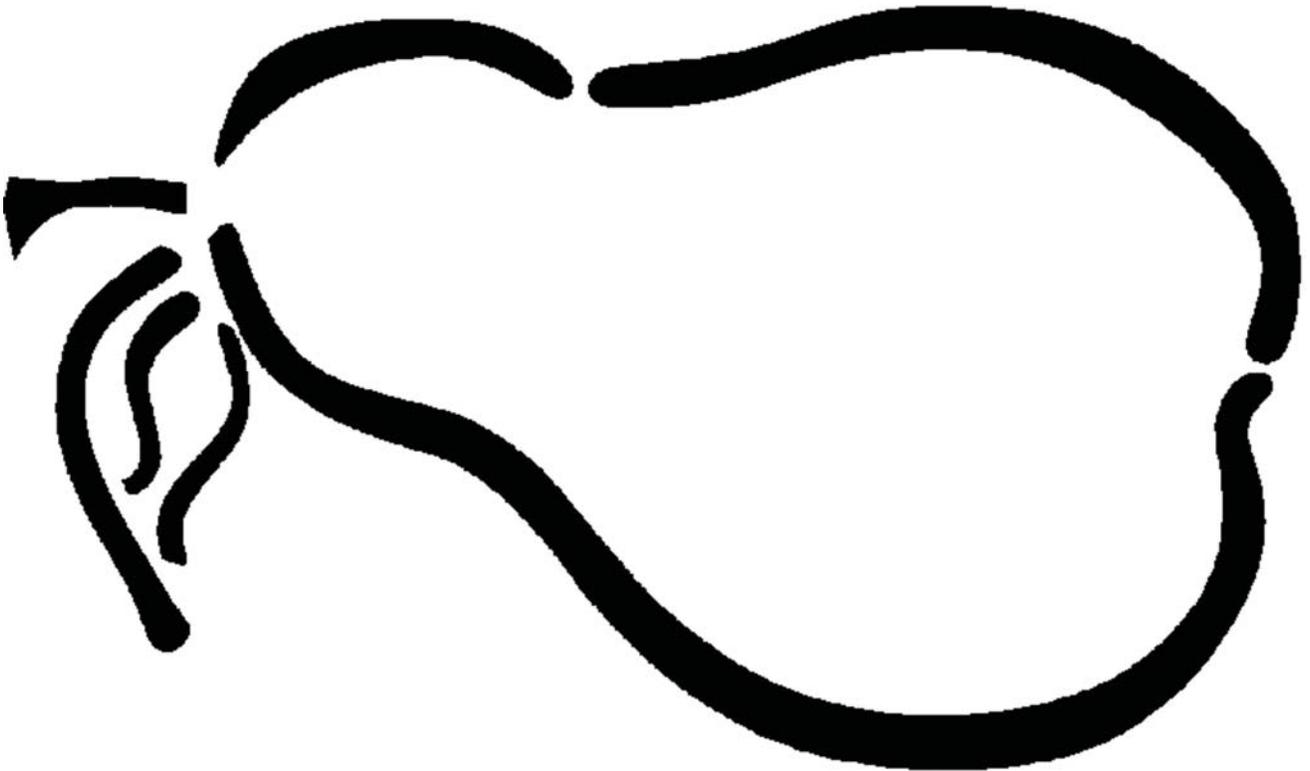
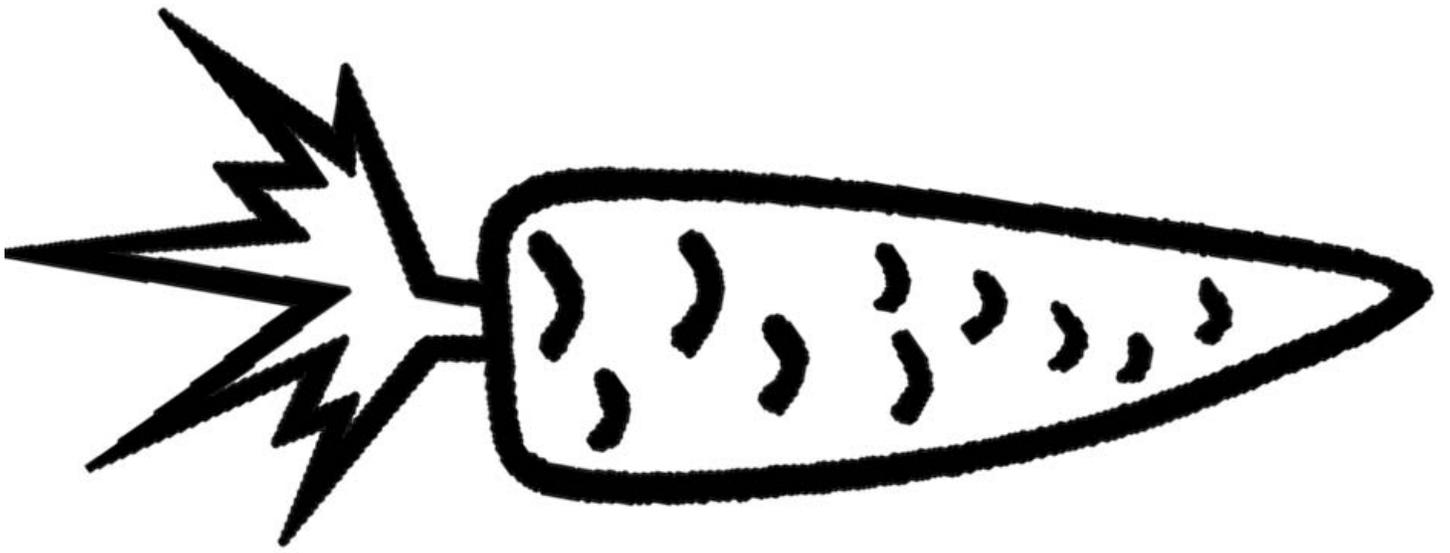
Background to place finished art (see suggestions below)

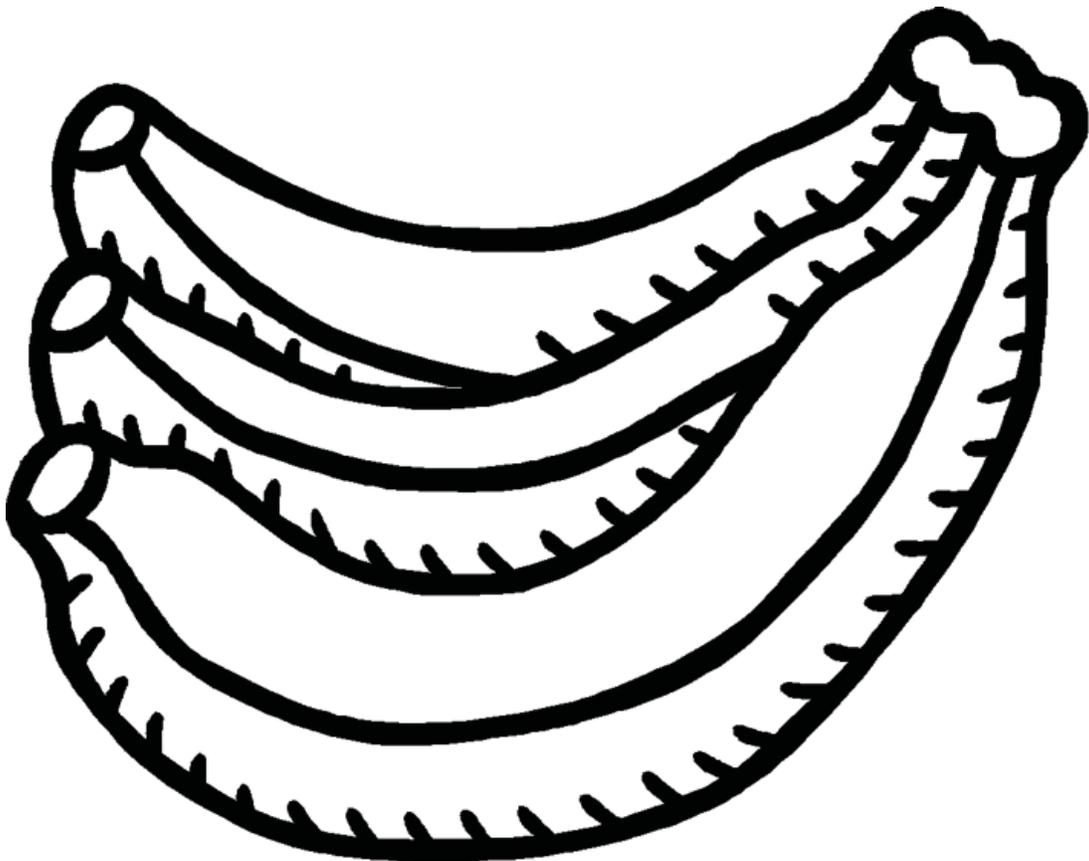
ACTION:

1. Place several tablespoons of clear corn syrup (not the dark type) in four containers. Using food coloring, tint one container of corn syrup red; one green; one yellow/orange; one purple/blue. Use enough food coloring to make the corn syrup a substantial color rather than a light pastel. The tinted corn syrups are the paints to color the food pictures.
2. Copy or mount the pictures on the following pages onto card stock paper. Cut the picture pages into fourths with a fruit or vegetable in each rectangle.
3. Provide one or more of the fruit/vegetable pictures to each child. Discuss the pictures. Have they tasted any of them?
4. Have children paint their pictures using the tinted corn syrup. There is no need to “stay in the lines.” Option: Instead of the provided pictures, have children draw their own version of different fruits or vegetables on heavy paper. Then paint the drawings.
5. Allow projects to dry overnight or longer. When dry, the surface will be glossy. Cut out the painted fruits and vegetables along the image lines.
6. Place the painted fruits and/or vegetables in a cutout picture of a basket attached to a bulletin board or poster. Or provide another type of background/theme on which to attach the painted fruits/vegetables.









Old McDonald Had A Farm

Animals aren't the only things raised on farms. Most of our fruits and vegetables are grown on farms. This simple lesson uses the "Where Does It Grow?" set of cards from the "Color Me Healthy" kit, along with a variation of the well-known children's song to remind children that farms are the source of many of our best loved foods.

CODE: Low activity level

PROPS:



Where Does It Grow? card set from the "Color Me Healthy" kit (or any other set of food pictures or models)

ACTION:

1. Sing "Old McDonald" with a small group of children but substitute fruits and vegetables for the animal names that are usually sung in the song. The words "yum, yum" are used instead of the animal sounds.
2. Option A: Have children think of foods they want to sing about.

Option B: Using play fruits and vegetables, have children take turns picking and holding up a fruit or vegetable at the beginning of each verse. Sing the name of the chosen food in that verse. Optional: Using the *Where Does It Grow?* cards

3. As children say each "yum, yum" in the song, add a tummy rubbing hand movement to show that they like eating the healthful food.



*Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on his farm he had some beans, E-I-E-I-O.*

*With a yum-yum here, and a yum-yum there,
Here a yum, there a yum, everywhere a yum-
yum.*

Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.

A Bundle of Berry Days

Spend a small segment of each day during one week to explore beautiful berries - specifically strawberries, cranberries, blueberries and raspberries.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Make-your-own Berry Book (page 35) (Copy one per child). Cut pages apart on lines.



Optional children's book: *Jamberry* by Bruce Degen. The story is about a little boy that meets a big lovable bear, while walking in the forest, which takes him on a delicious berry-picking adventure in the magical world of Berryland.



Strawberry card and blueberry card from the *Where Does It Grow?* set of cards in the "Color Me Healthy" kit (A cranberry and raspberry card are not included, but if you have a picture of these two berries you could use them.)

SUPPLIES FOR DAILY ACTIVITIES:



Monday: Fresh strawberries for tasting. (Strawberries may be served as a plain berry or within a snack that the children helped to make, such as a sweetened yogurt with strawberries stirred in.)



Tuesday: Cranberry 100% juice or raisins. Optional: fresh, frozen, or canned cranberries. It is suggested that children taste cranberries in the form of juice or raisins. (Raisins are dried cranberries that can be found in supermarkets with the raisins.)



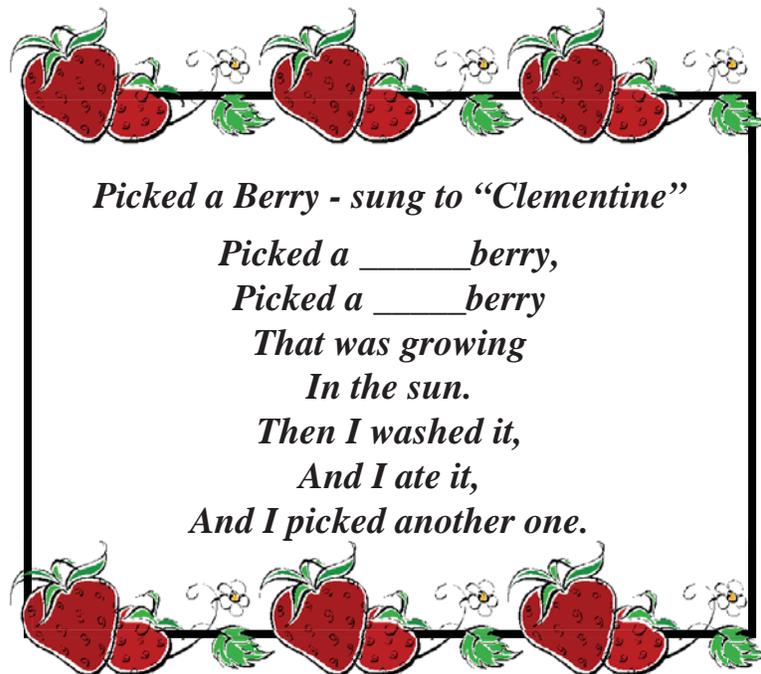
Wednesday: Fresh or frozen blueberries to taste plain or in a food such as pancakes.



Thursday: Fresh or frozen raspberries (if raspberries are cost prohibitive, consider sampling raspberry jam on toast or bread.)

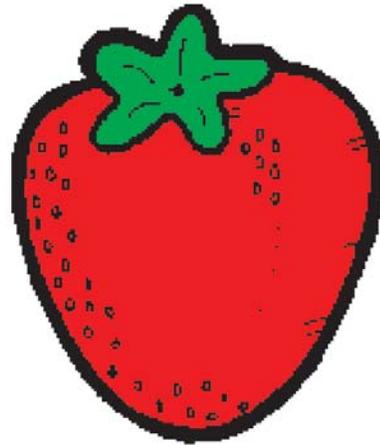
ACTION:

1. Optional: Read the *Jamberry* book to the children to introduce the topic of berries.
2. Give each child a strawberry to investigate with a magnifying glass. They will be interested in checking out the leaves and seeds when they can see them enlarged.
3. Children may help wash the berries.
4. Discuss when and in what foods the children may have tasted strawberries before.
5. Show and discuss the strawberry pictures from the *Where Does It Grow?* set of cards.
6. Have children taste the strawberries. (To credit as a snack serving for the CACFP, at least ½ cup fruit needs to be offered to children 3-5 years old.)
7. Have similar discussions and activities with blueberries, cranberries, and raspberries as was done with strawberries.
8. The make-your-own Berry Book may be completed page by page as the days of the week progress, or it may be completed in it's entirety on Friday as a review of the week.

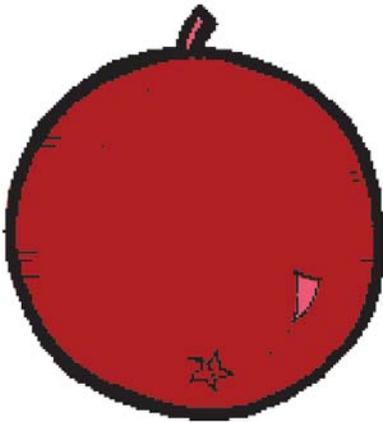


A Berry Good Week

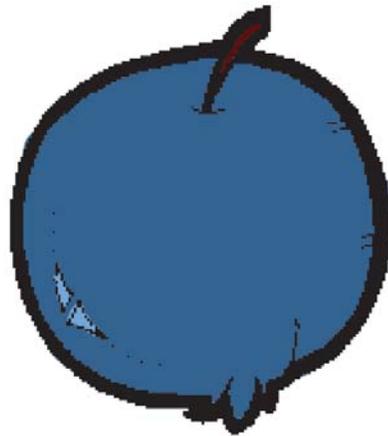
On Monday I ate strawberries.



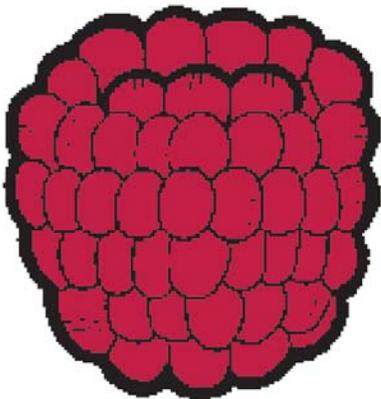
On Tuesday I tasted cranberries.



On Wednesday I tried blueberries.



On Thursday I tasted raspberries.



On Friday I was happy to say, I liked every berry day!



Little Sprouts (Vegetable Gardening)

Researchers at Texas A&M University discovered that when 4 and 5 year olds spent around 30 minutes per week planting and tending a garden, they became less likely to refuse vegetables when offered to them. The children also increased their preference for green beans over other vegetables after spending time in a garden that included green beans. If you have the children in your care involved in a simple garden, you may also see a shift in their attitudes toward vegetables!

This sprouting project can be done in addition to planting seeds in outdoor soil. The sprouting seeds in a jar will demonstrate to the child what is also happening underground. It also shows why patience is needed to wait for seeds to poke their sprouts above the ground.

CODE: Low activity level 

PROPS:



Bean or squash seeds



Plastic jar with cover (ie: peanut butter jar)



One piece construction paper



Paper towels

ACTION:

1. Place a piece of rolled construction paper in a clear plastic jar so that the paper touches all sides of the jar.
2. Stuff crumpled paper towels into the center so that the paper is firm against the sides of the jar.
3. Place several seeds in between the jar and the construction paper. Moisten the paper towels. Put lid on jar. Place on an indoor window sill. The seeds should sprout in about five days.

Variation for using a plastic bag: Wet a paper towel with water. Fold the towel to the size of a small zip-lock bag and insert into the bag. Place several seeds, such as bean seeds, into the bag in between the bag and the towel. Tape to a sunny window and watch the seeds sprout.



Three Sister's Garden Project

This gardening project may be better suited to elementary-age children. It would be an interesting project for school-age children's summer program. The caretakers of the Three Sister's garden could show the preschool children their project as it grew. It would also be an interesting project to show parents at a fall open house at your facility or childcare home.

Native peoples from different parts of North America have been known to use a technique of interplanting corn, beans, and squash together in a garden – a trio often referred to as the “three sisters.” The seeds are planted together in a mound or a small hill. In a three sister's planting, the three partners benefit one another. The three sisters also complement each other nutritionally.

Corn is the oldest sister. She stands tall in the center and will provide support for beans.

Squash is the next sister. She grows over the mound, protecting her sisters from weeds and shades the soil from the sun with her leaves, keeping it cool and moist.

Beans are the third sister. She climbs through squash and then up corn to bind all together as she reaches for the sun. Beans help keep the soil fertile by converting the sun's energy into nitrogen filled nodules that grow on its roots. As beans grow they use the stored nitrogen as food. (Corn, which requires a lot of nitrogen to grow, benefits most.)



Cultivating these companions in your child care center's garden or family child care garden plot, even if it is just a small patch near a building, can inspire studies of Native American customs, nutrition, and folklore. As students dig in, investigations of plant growth and relationships will also flourish.

CODE: Medium activity level



PROPS:



Garden tools



Seeds: Corn (may be sweet corn or field corn that is fed to squirrels, classroom gerbils, etc.), acorn squash, climbing vine (pole) beans. Choose seed varieties that mature quickly. Consider choosing “heirloom” seeds as opposed to the newer hybrid varieties.

ACTION:

The method described below for planting the Three Sister's Garden is based on the directions given by Buffalo Bird Woman, an expert gardener of the Hidatsa tribe in the mid-to-late 1800s. Buffalo Bird Woman created and tended gardens on the Fort Berthold Reservation near the



Missouri River in North Dakota. More about her - and the gardening methods of the Hidatsa, Arikara and Mandan Native Americans - is chronicled in the book, "Buffalo Bird Woman's Garden," as told to Gilbert Wilson, Minnesota Historical Society, 1987.

1. In mid-spring, clear a sunny garden area, roundish in shape, at least six feet across. Cover the area with a few inches of compost or well rotted manure. Turn the compost in to loosen the ground. Water it well. Check the growing area frequently over the next few weeks to remove any sprouted weeds.
2. In late-spring, guide the children in planting 7-8 corn seeds in the center of the growing circle, in a ring pattern, spaced out several inches from each other. Plant the corn seeds according to package directions, patting the soil down with the palm of your hand. Water the area. The corn will sprout and begin to grow in about two weeks. (Note: You may sprout the corn, squash, or bean seeds indoors before planting to reduce germination time.)
3. After the corn has grown to a height of one finger-length, instruct your young gardeners to thin out the weaker stalks leaving four strong stalks. Then, using a hoe or hand trowel, help them pull/push some soil from around the corn and mound it around the base of the corn stalks covering part of the stalks. The corn should not be buried entirely; its upper half should be above the soil that has been mounded around its stems. The corn will send roots into the mounded soil to hold it steady and upright in the wind.
4. After mounding soil around the base of the corn stalks have the children sow about 10 pole bean seeds in a semi-circle pattern about six inches outside the corn stalks. Place the semi-circle on the south side of the corn. Push the bean seeds about an inch under the soil and firm the ground above them by patting it down with your hand. Water the growing mound well. The beans will usually begin to sprout in about 7-14 days.
5. About a week after planting the beans, plant 6-7 squash seeds in a ring about 12" outside the beans. Push the squash seeds about an inch under the soil and firm the ground above them. The squash seeds will sprout in about a week.
6. As the squash and beans grow, pull out the smaller plants, leaving about 4-5 of the strongest plants.
7. The bean vines will begin to climb the corn stalks. Show your gardeners how to help the new vines by wrapping the bean vines around the corn stalks. On occasion help the squash continue to cover the mound by turning the ends of its vines towards the center of the mound. The squash vines should not climb the corn stalks as they will be too heavy for the corn to support.
8. In a large Hidatsa garden, these mounds or groupings of the three plants would be repeated throughout the garden plot.

