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★ INDICATES A FULL LESSON PLAN
Circle Time

Use circle time activities to explore fruits and vegetables through read-aloud books and other activities. Read and discuss books, pass around and talk about the featured fruit or vegetable, show and discuss Harvest for Healthy Kids picture cards, play a paper bag guessing game, and more!

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INDICATES A FULL LESSON PLAN
**READ ALOUD BOOK AND DISCUSSION**

*Bear and Bunny Grow Tomatoes*

**OBJECTIVES:**
1. Children learn about how tomatoes grow.
2. Children learn that tomatoes grow in the summer.
3. Children learn that tomatoes grow on a vine above ground.

**WHAT YOU MIGHT NEED:**
Book: *Bear and Bunny Grow Tomatoes*
A bag of mixed tomatoes: yellow tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, roma tomatoes, heirloom tomatoes, etc.
Cups or bowls

**WHAT YOU MIGHT DO:**
- Show the children all of the tomatoes and have them pass around the different tomatoes. Ask the children what they are.
- Ask the children what the tomatoes feel and smell like. Are they heavy? Light?
- Read *Bear and Bunny Grow Tomatoes*. Make connections between the tomatoes in the story and the tomatoes the children passed around.
- While you are reading, ask children questions, like:
  - Has anyone tasted a tomato? What do tomatoes taste like?
  - Does your family eat tomatoes? What kinds?
  - How do tomatoes grow? (on a vine)
  - Does anyone grow tomatoes at home?
- Talk about the different ways you can eat tomatoes. Ask the children when they eat tomatoes. Explain you can eat tomatoes in pizza sauce, pasta sauce, ketchup, or whole in salads! Ask children if they like pasta sauce, pizza sauce, or ketchup.

**VOCABULARY**

- tomato
BOOK LIST

Move beyond the featured book! Here are some ideas for books to read during the tomatoes month:

**GROWING VEGETABLE SOUP**
By: Lois Ehlert

**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:** green beans, peas, corn, zucchini, carrots, peppers, cabbage, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, broccoli

Learn about how we can grow the ingredients in vegetable soup with this fun book!

**TOMATOES TO KETCHUP**
By: Inez Snyder

**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:** tomatoes

In this book, children learn that ketchup comes from tomatoes.

**EATING THE ALPHABET**
By: Lois Ehlert

**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:** apricot, artichoke, avocado, apple, asparagus, blueberry, brussel sprouts, bean, beet, broccoli, banana, currant, cucumber, corn, celery, cabbage, cherry, carrot, cauliflower, date, endive, eggplant, fig, gooseberry, grapefruit, grapes, huckleberry, Indian corn, jalapeno, jicama, kumquat, kiwi, kohlrabi, lemon, leek, lettuce, lime, melon, mango, nectarine, okra, orange, onion, pineapple, peach, pear, papaya, persimmon, pomegranate, plum, parsnip, potato, pea, pepper, pumpkin, quince, raspberry, radish, rutabaga, rhubarb, radicchio, swiss chard, spinach, star fruit, strawberry, tangerine, turnip, tomato, ugli fruit, vegetable marrow, watermelon, watercress, xigua, yam, zucchini

An alphabet board book full of fruits and vegetables from A to Z.

**FROM THE GARDEN: A COUNTING BOOK ABOUT GROWING FOOD**
By: Michael Dahl
Illustrator: Todd Ouren

**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:** tomatoes, carrots, cabbage, lettuce, broccoli, strawberries, onions, peas, cucumbers, radishes, peppers

Discover the numbers from one to twelve as family members pick a variety of vegetables from the garden. Includes counting activities and fun facts about growing vegetables.
MORE IDEAS

“T” IS FOR TOMATOES
Talk with children about how Tomatoes start with the letter “T.” There are many kinds of tomatoes: cherry, yellow, heirloom, roma, and more! Many people think that tomatoes are a vegetable, when in fact they are a fruit! All tomatoes grow on vine. Ask children to come up with other words that start with “T,” and record their ideas on a large piece of butcher paper or construction paper. Hang the chart in the classroom for the month.

TASTE AND TELL
Gather children in circle time and offer tastes of tomatoes. Ask questions like: What do tomatoes taste like? How do tomatoes taste the same or different when they are fresh or cooked? How do they feel the same or different? Do the children like the taste? Record children’s responses on a chart, and hang it in the classroom.

PAPER BAG GUESSING GAME
Use a modification of the paper bag guessing game this month. Buy a variety of tomatoes. Place the tomatoes in a bowl. Have the children describe how the tomatoes are the same or different. What are their colors? What are their shapes? Do they feel the same or different? Offer tastes of the tomatoes, and have children describe how they taste. Ask the children to guess the names of the different tomatoes.

PICTURE CARDS
The Harvest for Healthy Kids picture cards can be used any time during the month in which the fruit/vegetable is featured. Picture cards come in three categories: Fruit and Veggie Photo Cards, How does it Grow? (botanical illustrations of fruit and vegetables), and Same but Different (vegetables/fruits in different colors, or different varieties of a vegetable/fruit). Find ideas for how to use these cards in the Harvest for Healthy Kids Teacher Bites, and on the back of each picture card.
Meal Time

Meal time is a great time to talk about fruits and vegetables, especially when a Harvest for Healthy Kids fruit or vegetable is being served! Use meal time to review something the children learned (e.g. that many kinds of tomatoes grow on vines). You can also use the hand stamps during meal time to congratulate children who “tried something new today!”

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MEAL TIME IDEAS

PLEASE PASS THE VEGGIES (AND FRUIT)!
Children may be more likely to try new fruits and vegetables if they can touch and see the fruit or vegetable before it is cooked. When tomatoes are served, try to have a few bowls of a variety of tomatoes to pass around the tables. Talk with children about how tomatoes grow on the vine and can be eaten in different ways; raw, in sauce, soup, cooked, roasted, sun dried, etc.

TABLE TALK
When children are trying tomatoes during meal time, ask them questions, like:

• What do they taste like? Are they soft? Sweet? Juicy?
• Does anyone have a garden? What do you grow in your garden?
• Does anyone grow tomatoes at home?
• How do tomatoes grow (on a vine)?
• What part of a tomato plant do we eat (the fruit)?

“T” IS FOR TOMATOES
Talk with children about how Tomatoes start with the letter “T.” There are many kinds of Tomatoes; small, large, red, green, yellow, mixed colors, etc. There are over 50 different types of tomatoes that are commonly grown. Tomatoes grow on a vine and can be eaten raw, cooked, roasted, sun dried or in soup!
Activity Time

Activity Time (e.g. “free choice,” or small group activities) is a perfect time to introduce more activities like cooking projects and explorations of fruits and vegetables.

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* INDICATES A FULL LESSON PLAN
**SENSORY EXPLORATION**
Squishy Tomatoes (can be combined with cooking activity)

**OBJECTIVES:**
1. Children compare the smell, look, feel, and taste of a variety of tomatoes
2. Children learn that fresh tomatoes can look, feel and taste different.
3. Children learn that tomatoes are fruit and have seeds.

**WHAT YOU MIGHT NEED:**
Fresh ripe tomatoes in various colors and shapes; cherry tomatoes, yellow tomatoes, green tomatoes, heirloom varieties, etc.
Frozen and dried tomatoes (optional)
Plastic or paper tablecloths
Chart paper, markers
Bowls and spoons

**WHAT YOU MIGHT DO:**
- Place tomatoes in bowls.
- Tell children that tomatoes grow in the summertime. Ask children if anyone has eaten fresh tomatoes in the summertime. We can also sun-dry tomatoes or cook tomatoes to make sauces or soup. Fresh tomatoes can also be canned and preserved for use in the winter time.
- Invite children to explore the feel, smell, and look at the tomatoes. If you have a tablecloth, children can explore the tomatoes right on the table.
- Ask children to describe how the tomatoes are the same or different. How do frozen and dried tomatoes feel differently? How do they look differently? What do they smell like? Record answers on chart paper.
- Offer tastes of the tomatoes for those children who would like to try. Remind children to wash their hands after tasting and before continuing to explore the tomatoes.
- Offer children a hand stamp for exploring a new vegetable!
COOKING ACTIVITY AND TASTING
Pasta with Fresh Tomato Sauce

OBJECTIVES:
1. Children participate in cooking activity and learn how to make fresh tomato sauce.
2. Children review the different ways that tomatoes can be eaten (fresh, ketchup, pizza sauce, salsa, in salads, in pasta sauce).
3. Children taste and describe pasta with fresh tomato sauce.

WHAT YOU MIGHT NEED:
Ingredients for recipe (next page)
- Plastic knives for children
- Measuring spoons and cups
- Cutting boards
- Medium bowl
- Large serving spoon
- Hot plate
- Large pot
- Large bowl for mixing together pasta and sauce
- Small serving bowls for children
- Spoons

WHAT YOU MIGHT DO:
• Children wash their hands and sit or stand around the activity table.
  Announce, “Today we are going to make a recipe called Fresh Tomato Sauce.” Ask if anyone has ever eaten pasta with fresh tomato sauce before. Explain that the red sauce we often see on spaghetti is made from tomatoes! Ask the children if they know of other foods that are made from tomatoes.
• Introduce each ingredient as you place it on the activity table.
• Children can help by washing and chopping tomatoes with plastic knives and scooping the seeds out. Tell the children that each tomato seed has the potential to grow a new plant!
• Children can also help by measuring out the oregano, basil, salt, pepper, and olive oil.
• After the tomato sauce is done, have children try it over pasta! Ask children to describe what they are tasting. How does the tomato taste differently when it is cooked? Do the different ingredients change the flavor of tomatoes?
• Offer children a hand stamp for trying something new
COOKING ACTIVITY AND TASTING
Pasta with Fresh Tomato Sauce

FRESH TOMATO SAUCE

INGREDIENTS
1 clove Garlic (minced or pressed through a garlic press)
1 tablespoon Olive Oil
6 - 10 large Tomatoes (diced or roughly chopped)
1½ teaspoons Oregano (optional)
1 teaspoon Basil (optional)
½ teaspoon Salt
1 teaspoon Pepper
1 – 2 pounds pasta of your choice
Grated Cheese (optional)

DIRECTIONS
1. Wash/rinse whole tomatoes.
2. Mince garlic or press garlic through a garlic press
3. In a medium bowl chop or squish ripe tomatoes.
4. Add olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper to tomatoes. Cover with towel and let sit for 30 – 60 minutes.
5. Cook pasta of your choice.
6. Pour fresh sauce over pasta. Add basil and oregano (optional). Serve and Enjoy!
Have children decorate and put together a recipe book throughout the year, including each month’s cooking activity recipe!

**OBJECTIVES:**
1. Children create a drawing to accompany the Fresh Tomato Sauce recipe, and use crayons, markers or paint to create art.
2. Children share their artwork.
3. Children will remember and connect experiences with tomatoes, and recall what they have learned during the month.

**WHAT YOU MIGHT NEED:**
Printed copies of family versions of recipes for each child; recipe on ½ of page (8 ½ x 11)
Crayons, markers, paint, magazines with fruits and vegetables, crayons, scissors, glue
A bowl of mixed tomatoes for display, and tastings

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**HARVEST FOR HEALTHY KIDS RECIPE BOOK:**
Start this activity in the beginning of the year. Have each child decorate a cover for his or her fruit & veggie recipe book. Bind each child’s book with enough pages for a recipe and picture for each month (8 months). Have children take the recipe book home with the welcome newsletter. Then, each month, use the recipe decorating activity to add recipes to the books! Children can take home their decorated recipe with a monthly newsletter, or just pinned to their bags or clothing!
FRESH TOMATO SAUCE

INGREDIENTS
1 clove Garlic (minced or pressed through a garlic press)
1 tablespoon Olive Oil
6 large Tomatoes (diced or roughly chopped)
1½ teaspoons Oregano (optional)
1 teaspoon Basil (optional)
½ teaspoon Salt
1 teaspoon Pepper
1 pound pasta of your choice
Grated Cheese (optional)

DIRECTIONS
1. Wash/rinse whole tomatoes.
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3. In a medium bowl chop or squish ripe tomatoes.
4. Add olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper to tomatoes.
5. Cover with towel and let sit for 30–60 minutes. Cook pasta of your choice.
6. Pour fresh sauce over pasta. Add basil and oregano (optional). Serve and Enjoy!
CREATIVE ARTS
Watch our Garden Grow

OBJECTIVES:
1. Children learn that we can grow tomatoes in a garden.
2. Children review how tomatoes grow.
3. Children make their own tomatoes to display in the classroom “garden.”

WHAT YOU MIGHT NEED:
Newspaper
Colored paper, yarn, string, or other art supplies
Paint
Tape
Glue

WHAT YOU MIGHT DO:
• Tell children: We can grow tomatoes in a garden. Ask children if anyone has ever grown a tomato plant in a garden.
• Ask children to remember how tomatoes grow (on a vine).
• Show children pictures or an example of a tomato that you have made. Tell children: today we will make tomatoes to place on a vine in our garden.
• Provide children with newspaper and tape.
• Create a variety of tomatoes with colored paper or crumpled newspaper.
• Invite children to make their tomatoes for vine in the “class garden.” Help children crumple newspaper into a round shape, place tape on it to hold it together. Then children can use a variety of paint to paint their tomato. Once tomatoes have dried (next day), glue green stems to the tomatoes and a string with can be tied to the vine.
• Designate a space on a wall in the classroom for the “class garden.” Add to the wall each month with children’s colorful creations of the featured fruits and vegetables in the Harvest for Healthy Kids program.
Beyond circle time, meal time, and activity time, there are other simple ways to highlight the Harvest for Healthy Kids program, and teach children about fruits and vegetables. Take a look at the ideas below for easy ways to have fun with Harvest for Healthy Kids throughout the day.

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FAST AND FUN

PUPPETS
If you have puppets in the classroom, bring them into your Harvest for Healthy Kids activities! Try having a puppet introduce the featured fruit or vegetable at the beginning of the month. Puppets might also be used to introduce ingredients for a cooking activity, or during other activities.

HAND STAMPS
Use your favorite hand stamps or stickers to acknowledge children’ participation in Harvest for Healthy Kids activities (e.g. cooking, sensory exploration, planting, reading) throughout the month.

DISCOVERY TABLE
Use the “discovery table” or another area of the classroom to explore different activities on a garden. Put out soil and various garden tools, such as rakes, hoes, and small shovels and spades. Include seeds and a small watering can. Allow children to explore the soil and use the tools, while practicing different jobs on a garden. This can be a great activity for children if you plan to have (or already have) a school garden at your center.

TASTING CHART
Create a chart with children’s names on the left side in rows and the featured fruit and vegetable names on the top in columns. Each month, give children a stamp or sticker in the fruit/vegetable box next to their name if they tasted the fruit or vegetable anytime during the month. Hang the tasting chart in the classroom.

SING-A-LONG
Sing a song together about tomatoes!

i’m a big red tomato
i’m a big red tomato
growing on a vine,
a big red tomato
looking oh, so fine.
now you can make good things with me-
soup, juice, pizza, to name just three.
i’m a big red tomato
growing on a vine.
grow, grow, grow.

ABOUT HARVEST FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Harvest for Healthy Kids is a nutrition program designed to introduce children in early care and education settings to a wide variety of locally grown fruits and vegetables through their meals and snacks and classroom activities. Monthly family engagement activities support parents in promoting healthy eating habits at home. Harvest for Healthy Kids is a partnership between Mt. Hood Community College Head Start and Early Head Start and the School of Community Health at Portland State University.