
HARVEST OF THE MONTH

A Farm to Early Care
and Education Activity
Toolkit for Georgia
Early Care Providers



Prepared by Diana Myers, MS, RD



Harvest of the Month Kits

INTRODUCTION

Research tells us that a young child's food preferences develop within the first few years of life as an infant transitions from eating one food to a multitude of foods with varying flavor profiles. Many young children spend significant time in early care centers and family homes. These providers have the ability to influence the dietary preferences of young children in a healthy, engaging, and positive way. These four Harvest of the Month (HOTM) Kits were created to be used in early care and education settings with three to five-year olds.

Each Kit focuses on a locally grown Georgia fruit or vegetable and includes:

- Fun facts and information about the fruit or vegetable.
- A kid friendly recipe
- Nutrition activity linked to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)
- Children's literature connections

The kits are aligned with the Georgia Department of Education's K-12 Harvest of the Month calendar and Quality Care for Children's Harvest of the Month calendar for early care providers. The purpose of these kits is to provide a GELDS aligned, hands-on learning experience that enhances children's knowledge of fruits and vegetables through activities, literature connections, taste testing, and recipe creation.

These HOTM kits were created by Diana Myers, MS, RD as part of a Master's capstone project. Each kit was tested at Atlanta area early care and education centers under the guidance of Georgia Organics and Quality Care for Children.

Capstone Advisory Committee

Abbie King Chaddick,MS,RD

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Photography by Linden Tree Photography and Diana Myers, MS,RD





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CRAVIN' CARROTS

Prepared by Diana Myers, MS, RD

Cravin' Carrots

DID YOU KNOW?

- Carrots were first grown in Afghanistan in 900 AD.

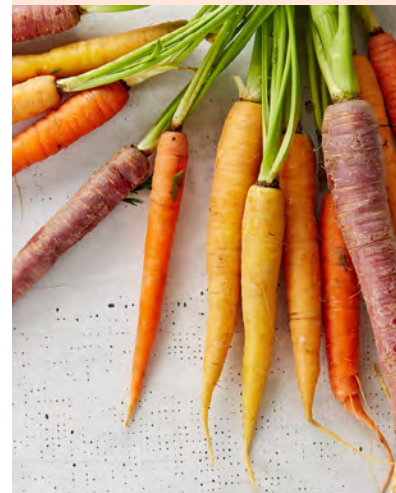
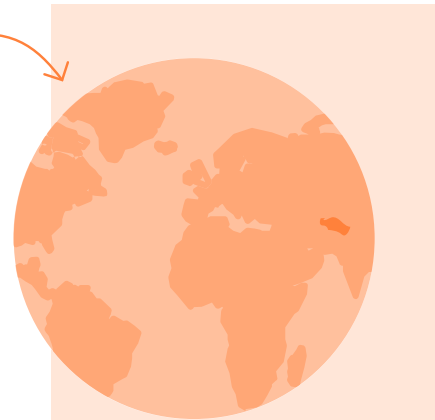
Fun tip:
Show children where Afghanistan is on a map.

- Carrots are one of the best sources of Vitamin A which keeps our eyes, skin, teeth, and bones happy and healthy.
- Baby carrots are cut small from large carrots that grow in the ground.
- You can eat all parts of a carrot including the carrot itself and the greens! The actual carrot is the root that grows underground.
- Carrots come in a variety of colors including orange, yellow, white, and purple.

Fun tip:
Show each of these colors to the children so they can visualize them

- Raw carrots contain 88% water and help you stay hydrated.
- Americans eat an average of 10.6 pounds of fresh carrots per a year. ^[2]

Fun tip:
Have children stand up and practice the motion of harvesting carrots by reaching down to the ground, grabbing the greens, and pulling the carrot out of the ground.



References:

1. <https://www.ars.usda.gov/midwest-area/madison-wi/vegetable-crops-research/docs/simon-carrot-facts/>
2. <http://www.wafarmtoschool.org/toolkit/16/carrots/facts>

Cravin' Carrots

CARROT-THEMED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

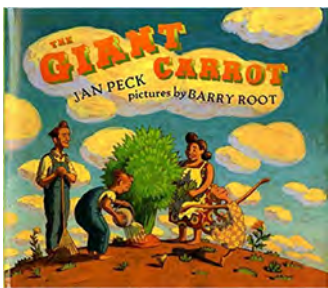
Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CLL2 – The child will acquire vocabulary introduced in conversations, activities, stories, and/or books.

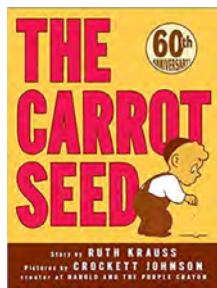
CLL5 – The child will acquire meaning from a variety of materials read to him/her.



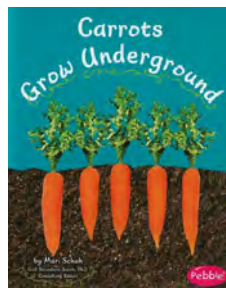
Book Options



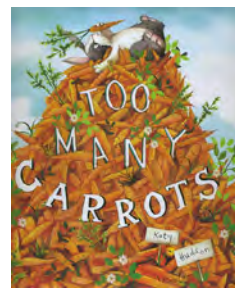
The Giant Carrot
by Jan Peck



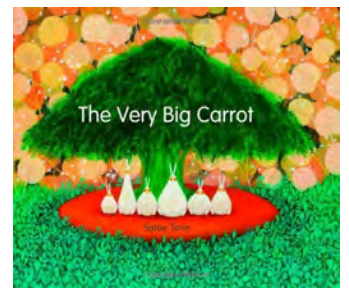
The Carrot Seed
by Ruth Krauss



Carrots Grow
Underground by
Mari Schuh



Too Many Carrots
by Katy Hudson



The Very Big Carrot
by Satoe Tone



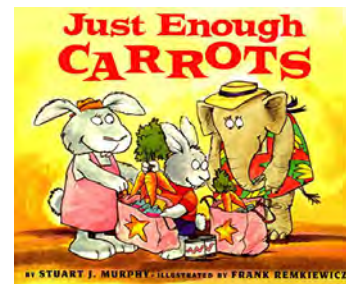
Going for Carrots
by Sherri Cook



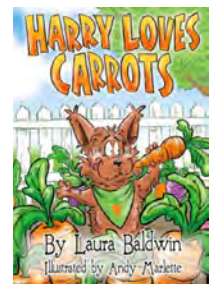
Carrot Soup by
John Segal



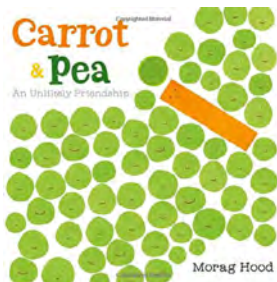
Curious George:
The Perfect Carrot
by H. A. Rey



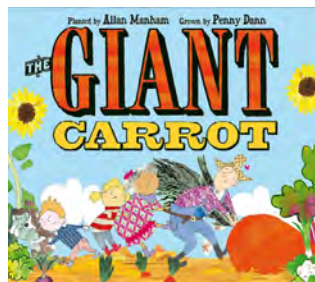
Just Enough Carrots
by Stuart J. Murphy



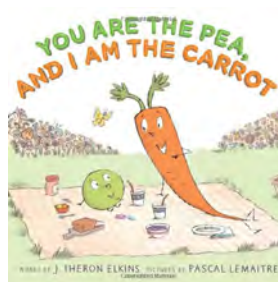
Harry Loves Carrots
by Laura Baldwin



Carrot and Pea: An
Unlikely Friendship
by Morag Hood



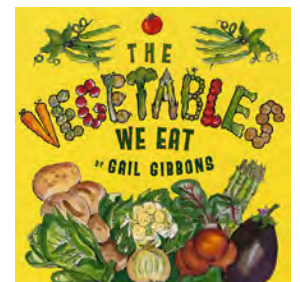
Giant Carrot by
Allan Manham



You Are the Pea, And
I Am the Carrot by
J. Theron Elkins



Caillou: The
Carrot Patch
by Anne Paradis



The Vegetables We
Eat by Gail Gibbons

Cravin' Carrots

CARROT TOP GROWTH SPURT ACTIVITY

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CD-SC3 – The child will demonstrate knowledge related to living things and their environments.

Supplies

- Water
- Carrot tops (\$1/pound)
- Cotton balls (\$1.50)
- Clear plastic tupperware (\$4)
- Sunny windowsill

Instructions

1. Line the clear plastic tupperware with cotton balls.
2. Pour water over the cotton balls until they are soaked through.
3. Place the carrot tops on top of the wet cotton balls.
4. Set the carrot top trays in a sunny windowsill.
5. Water the carrot tops each day until the cotton swabs are soaked through.
6. Observe the growth of the carrots each day with the children.



Tips

- When watering the carrot tops, make sure the cotton balls are soaked through with no excess water in the bottom of the tupperware. Adding too much water can cause the carrot tops to grow mold.
- After setting the carrot tops in a sunny windowsill, ask the children what they think will happen to them.
- On a daily basis, engage the children through discussion of their observations of the carrot growth.
- This activity visually teaches children about the growth of carrots, it does not actually grow full carrots. This is a great opportunity to educate the children on the need for water, sunshine, and soil for plant growth.



Cravin' Carrots

REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE CARROT ACTIVITY

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CD-SC3 – The child will demonstrate knowledge related to living things and their environments.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

Supplies

- Knife
- Recycled two-liter plastic bottles
- Soil (\$8)
- Carrot seeds (\$3)
- Water
- Sunny windowsill
- Aluminum pan (\$4/2-count)

Instructions

1. Use a knife to cut the top half of the two-liter bottles so that the bottles are open
2. Pour soil into the two-liter bottle and leave three inches of space at the top.
3. Have children help place the carrot seeds in the soil and press a half inch down into the soil.
4. Have a child volunteer water the soil and place the bottle in a sunny windowsill.
5. Observe the growth and water each day with the children.
6. After about three months, the carrots will be ready to harvest.
7. Gently dump the soil and carrots into an aluminum tray.
8. Spread out the carrots for the children to see the root system.
9. Count the carrots with the children to see how many have grown.
10. Have the children touch the roots and the leaves.
11. Wash the carrots thoroughly before tasting them.
12. Enjoy the harvest!

Tips

- After harvesting the carrots, discuss each of the plant parts including the root, stem, and leaves. Discuss how the carrot is a root and carries all of the food for the carrot up from the soil and into the carrot stem. Discuss how the leaves are edible and how they help to increase the amount of sunlight available to the carrot. Sunlight is what makes the leaves of the carrots green.
- Have the children describe how the different plant parts feel.

Examples of questions include:

Are the carrots rough or smooth?

Which parts of the carrot are hard and which parts are soft?

- Lay out the carrots to compare the different shapes and sizes. This is a great opportunity to talk about the uniqueness of each carrot, just like humans.
- Take this opportunity to discuss the concept of above and below. The carrot greens are above the soil and the carrots grow below the soil.

Cravin' Carrots

HONEY MUSTARD HUMMUS

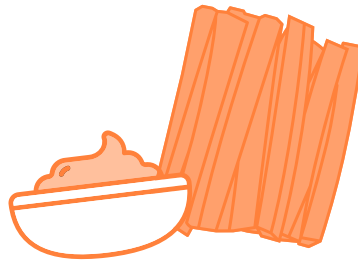
Adapted from Super Healthy Kids
Recipe makes about 1 and 1/2 cups
Taste testing serving size: 1 Tbsp.
Servings per recipe: About 24 servings

Ingredients

- One 15 oz. can white cannellini beans, drained and rinsed (\$1)
- 1/4 cup yellow mustard (\$1)
- 1/4 cup honey (\$4)
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder (\$1.50)
- Salt & pepper, to taste (\$3)
- Variety of carrot types (\$1/pound)

Supplies

- Measuring cups & spoons (\$10)
- Can opener (\$8)
- Colander (\$6)
- Knife (\$15)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Blender (\$35)
- Paper plates (\$2/100-count)



Preparation

Cut the carrots into matchsticks for children to taste test.

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before cooking and taste testing.
2. Combine all hummus ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
3. Place a paper plate on the table in front of each child.
4. Place a slice of each color of carrot on the plate in front of the child.
5. Add a dollop of dip to each plate, if using.
6. As a class, begin tasting each of the carrots together.
7. Go through the entirety of the carrot taste test together.
8. Enjoy!

Tips for Tasting

- This dip is not necessary in the taste testing of carrots. Get creative! Is there another nutritious dip recipe that you think the children would enjoy dipping their carrots into?

Examples of questions include:

What sound does the carrot make when you chew?

What color is the carrot?

Have you tried carrots before?

Would you try carrots again?

- Teach children how to give respectful responses, even if they don't like what they tried. "Don't yuck my yum!" is a great way of teaching children that they may not like it, but their friends might. Remember, it can take a child multiple times of exposure before they like a new food.

Cravin' Carrots

SUPERPOWERED VEGETABLE SOUP

Adapted from Chowhound

Recipe makes about 6 cups

Taste testing serving size: 1/4 cup

Servings per recipe: About 24 servings

Ingredients

- 4 tsp. olive oil (\$3/8-oz.)
- One medium onion, chopped (\$0.50)
- Salt & pepper, to taste (\$3)
- Four medium carrots, chopped (\$1/pound)
- Two medium garlic cloves, chopped (\$2)
- One celery stalk, chopped (\$1.50)
- One cup peas (\$1)
- One bay leaf (optional) (\$3)
- 1 tsp. dried thyme (optional) (\$4)
- Four cups low-sodium vegetable broth (\$2)
- One-pound Yukon Gold potatoes, chopped (\$1/pound)

Supplies

- Induction burner (\$50)
- Large spoon (\$6)
- Four-quart saucepan & lid (\$20)
- Knife (\$15)
- Fork (\$2)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Measuring cups & spoons (\$10)
- Paper bowls (\$2.50/42-count)
- Plastic spoons (\$2/100-count)

Preparation

- Chop the onion, carrots, celery, and potatoes.
- Mince the garlic.
- Measure out the ingredients.



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Tips for Tasting

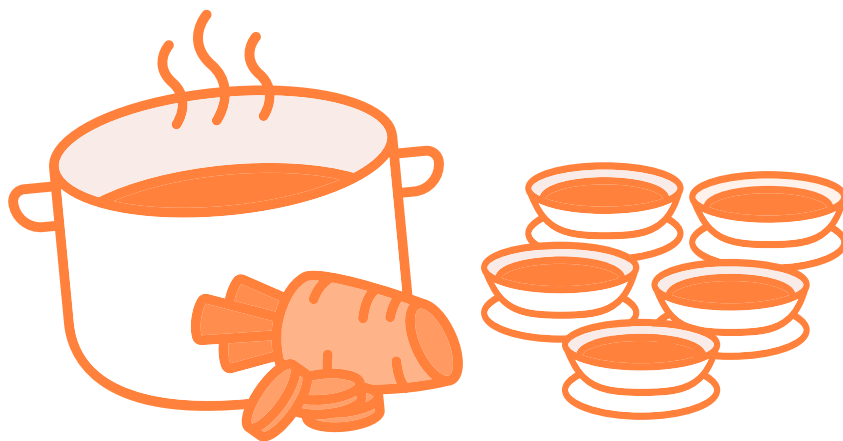
- Consider making the soup ahead of time and cooking a smaller batch with the children.
- Place the induction burner in an area where children are not close to it and ensure that the cord cannot be tripped over.
- Have one child at a time help with measurements and pouring; this helps with classroom management.
- Teach children how to give respectful responses, even if they don't like what they tried. "Don't yuck my yum!" is a great way of teaching children that they may not like it, but their friends might. Remember, it can take a child multiple times of exposure before they like a new food.

Cravin' Carrots

SUPERPOWERED VEGETABLE SOUP

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before cooking and taste testing.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.
3. Once heated, add the onion and cook until translucent, stirring occasionally. This will take about five minutes.
4. Add the carrots and garlic, and stirring for two minutes or until the garlic is fragrant.
5. Add the celery and bay leaf and thyme if using.
6. Add the broth, potatoes, and peas.
7. Let the soup come to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and gently simmer, uncovered, until the potatoes can be easily pierced with a fork, about 15-25 minutes.
8. Season with salt and ground pepper and let cool.
9. While cooling, read one of the recommended carrot themed children's books.
10. Place a spoonful of vegetable soup into each child's tasting bowl.
11. Try the soup together as a class.
12. Enjoy!



Examples of questions include:

Do they have any other ideas of items to add to the soup?

Have they tried vegetable soup before?

Would they try this soup again?

What are other ways that they have eaten carrots?





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ALL HAIL KALE

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All Hail Kale!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Kale is high in Vitamins A, C, and K.
 - Vitamin A keeps our eyes, skin, teeth, and bones happy and healthy.
 - Vitamin C helps to keep germs away, keep us from getting sick and heal our bumps and scratches.
 - Vitamin K keeps our blood flowing through our bodies.
- There are over 50 varieties of kale. That's a lot of kale!^[1]
- People have been cooking and cultivating kale for more than 6,000 years - that's older than your great-great-great-grandparents!^[1]
- In Kenya, kale is traditionally sautéed to create a dish called sukuma wiki. Kenyans use this as a nutritious staple in their diet.^[2]

Fun tip:
Show children where Kenya is on a map.

- Kale has several other nutritious and delicious cousins including cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower.^[3]

Fun tip:
Show children pictures of these vegetables. Ask the children if they know any of these types of vegetables and if they have tried them before.



References:

1. <http://www.americankaleassociation.com/learn.html>
2. <http://www.foodbycountry.com/Kazakhstan-to-South-Africa/Kenya.html>
3. <https://www.vox.com/xpress/2014/8/6/5974989/kale-cauliflower-cabbage-broccoli-same-plant>

All Hail Kale!

KALE-THEMED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

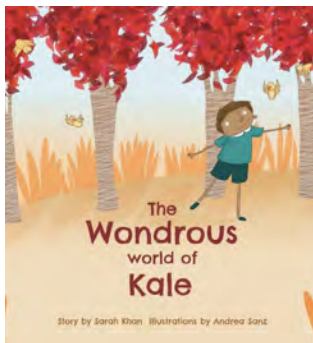
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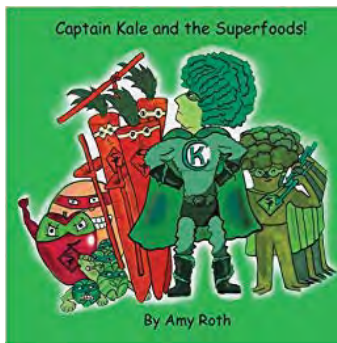
CLL5 –The child will acquire meaning from a variety of materials read to him/her.



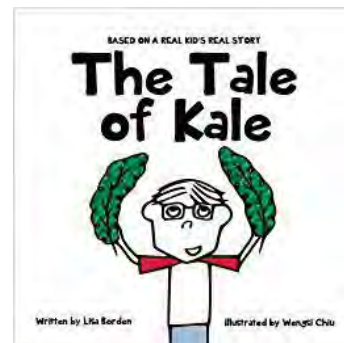
Book Options



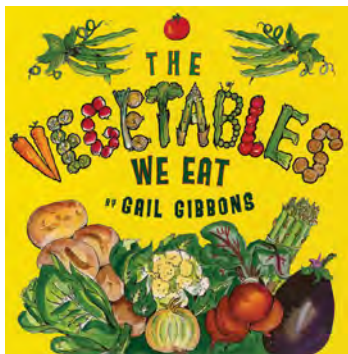
The Wondrous World of Kale
by Sarah Khan



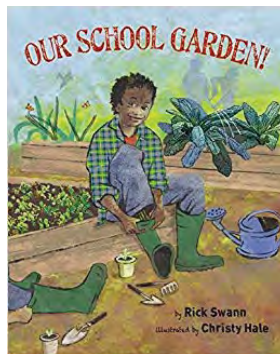
Captain Kale and the Superfoods
by Amy Roth



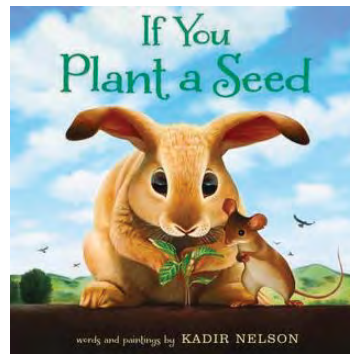
The Tale of Kale: Based on a Real Kid's Real Story
by Lisa Borden



The Vegetables We Eat
by Gail Gibbons



Our School Garden!
by Rick Swann



If You Plant a Seed
by Kadir Nelson

All Hail Kale!

KALE CONFETTI ACTIVITY

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CD-CR2 – The child will create and explore visual art forms to develop artistic expression.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

PDM6 – The child will demonstrate fine motor skills.

Supplies

- Glue (\$0.50)
- Marker (\$2.50)
- Paper bowls (\$2.50/42-count)
- Construction paper (\$8)
- Kale leaf print-outs

Preparation

Rip up construction paper into tiny pieces.

Instructions

1. Give a kale leaf print-out to each child.
2. Write the child's name on their print-out using a marker.
3. Give each child a bowl of ripped up construction paper.
4. Demonstrate the activity to the children by putting a dot of glue on your kale print-out and putting a piece of torn construction paper on top of the glue.
5. Put glue on top of each child's kale leaf print-out.
6. Have the children pick up a torn piece of construction paper and put it on top of the glue.
7. Continue adding construction paper until the colorful kale design is complete.
8. Decorate the classroom with the final creations!



Tips

- Looking for extra help? Have the children help rip up the construction paper with you prior to the activity.
- Consider having older children use glue sticks rather than having the teachers add the glue.
- Prior to beginning this activity, make a kale leaf as an example to show the children.
- Bring in real kale leaves to show the children prior to starting the kale confetti activity. Open up a discussion with the children to talk about the kale.

Examples of questions include:

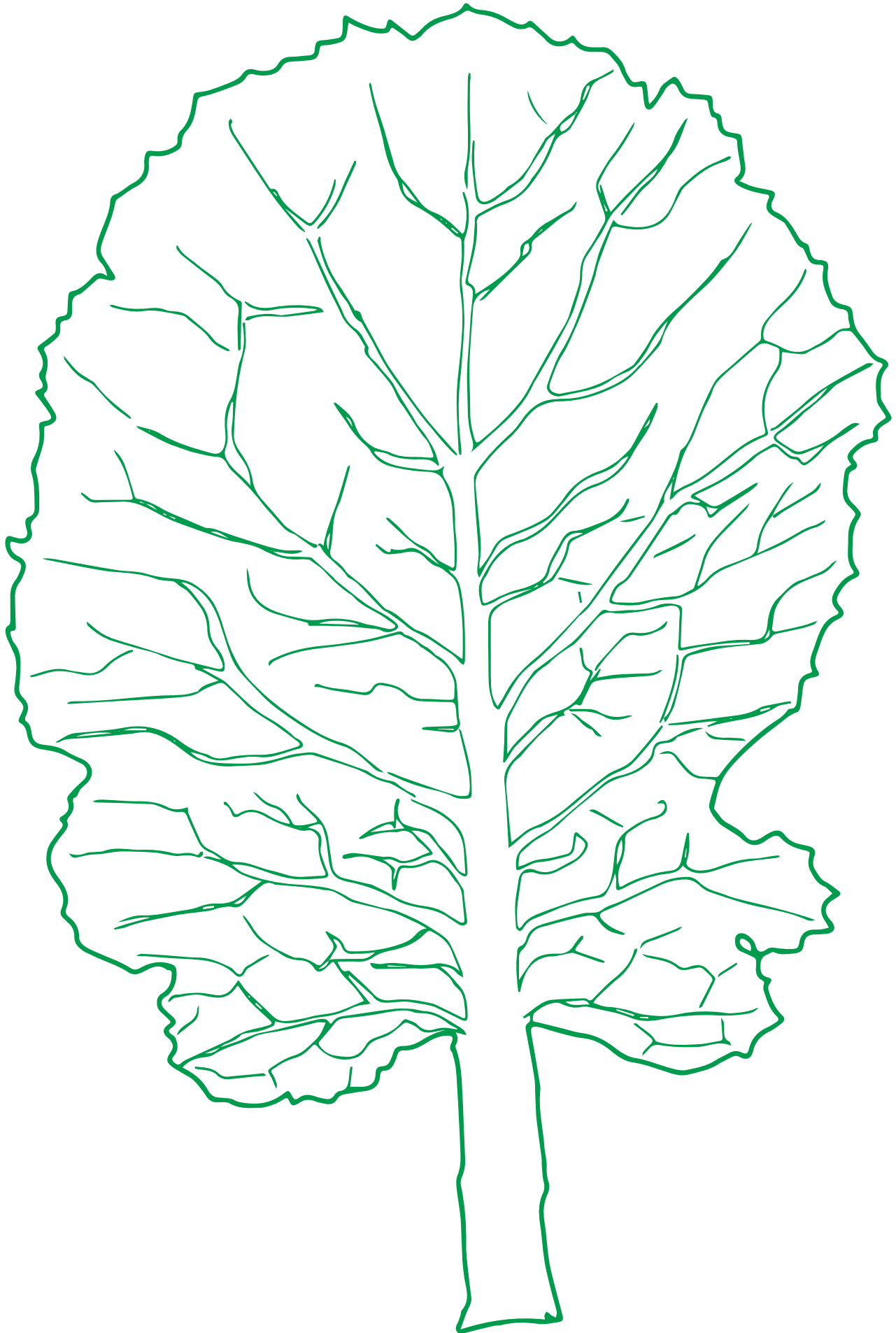
What does the kale look like?

What colors do you see on the kale leaves?

What does the kale smell like?

What does the kale feel like?

Does the kale make a sound when you pull it apart?



All Hail Kale!

SWEET BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

PDM2 – The child will participate in activities related to nutrition.

PDM4 – The child will use senses (sight, touch, hear, smell, taste) to explore the environment and process information.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

PDM6 – The child will demonstrate fine motor skills.

The simplest way to introduce kale to children is in its most basic form, as a plain kale leaf. Kale is a beautiful leaf with vibrant colors and healthful nutrition. Taste testing in this way will teach children that you don't have to cook everything to eat it. Try taste testing with a simple vinaigrette. A recipe is provided for you, however, get creative! A vinaigrette can be made using three parts oil, one part vinegar, and seasonings to taste. Refer to the Buying Local Guide for tips on buying local kale.

Adapted from Super Healthy Kids

Recipe makes about one and a 1/2 cups

Taste testing serving size: One Tbsp.

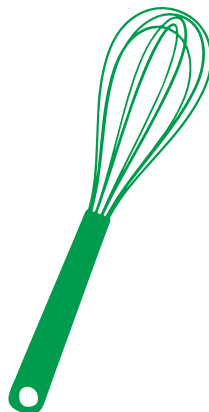
Servings per recipe: About 24 servings

Ingredients

- Kale (\$1/bunch)
- One small garlic clove, minced (\$2)
- Pepper (\$1)
- Five Tbsp. balsamic vinegar (\$2.50)
- One Tbsp. maple syrup (\$5)
- Two Tbsp. Dijon mustard (\$1)
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil (\$3/8-oz.)

Supplies

- Small bowl (\$5)
- Measuring cups & spoons (\$10)
- Knife (\$15)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Paper plates (\$5/100-count)
- Whisk (\$7)



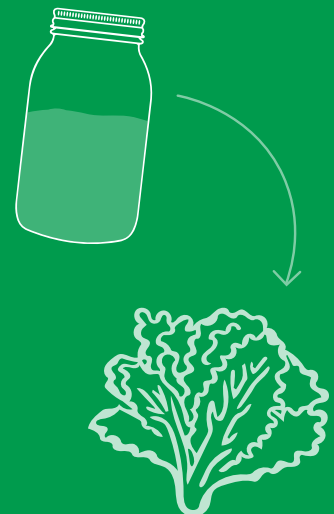
Tips

- Depending on the amount of kids, this recipe may need to be doubled.
- Taste testing the kale with the children will help to encourage them to try it themselves.
- Rather than using a bowl and a whisk, consider making the dressing in a plastic jar. Allow each child an opportunity to shake the dressing and mix it.
- Ask children about their opinion of the kale.

Examples of questions include:

Have they tried it before?

Would they try it again?



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All Hail Kale!

SWEET BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before cooking and taste testing.
2. Mix together all of the dressing ingredients in the bowl or mason jar.
3. Give each child an opportunity to whisk the dressing.
4. Pass around a kale leaf on a plate for each child.
5. Have them touch it and ask them what it feels like.
Does it make a sound? What does the texture remind you of?
6. While conversing with the children about the kale, pour a small amount of dressing on each plate for the children to dip their kale in.
7. If they want seconds and there is enough, encourage them to try more if they like it.



Tips for Tasting

- Teach children how to give respectful responses, even if they don't like what they tried. "Don't yuck my yum!" is a great way of teaching children that they may not like it, but their friends might. Remember, it can take a child multiple times of exposure before they like a new food.

All Hail Kale!

KALE SALSA

Adapted from FoodCorps

Recipe makes about three cups

Taste testing serving size: two Tbsp.

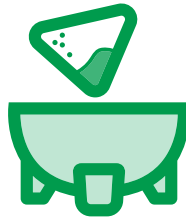
Servings per recipe: About 24 servings

Ingredients

- Five tomatoes (\$1.50/pound)
- Two large kale leaves (\$1/bunch)
- 1/3 cup cilantro (\$1/bunch)
- 1/2 medium white onion (\$0.50)
- One clove garlic (\$2)
- Two Tbsp. lime juice (\$0.60)
- Two Tbsp. lemon juice (\$1)
- 1/2 tsp. cumin (\$3.50)
- Whole-wheat tortilla chips (\$3)

Supplies

- Measuring cups & spoons (\$10)
- Blender (\$35)
- Knife (\$15)
- Juicer (\$8)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Paper plates (\$2/100-count)



Preparation

- Remove hard stems of kale.
- Peel garlic clove

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before cooking and taste testing.
2. Have children help pull the leaves off of the cilantro stalk and juice the lime and lemon.
3. Have individual children help put each of ingredients into the blender.
4. Pulse until the salsa is fully processed. *Note: If the salsa doesn't pulse upon starting the blender, add 1/4 cup of water.*
5. Serve with chips and enjoy!

Tips

- Giving children small responsibilities such as tearing off cilantro leaves helps empower them through being part of the recipe creation process.
- If additional adults are present for supervision, consider creating stations for each responsibility in the preparation and instructional process. This may be helpful in maintaining classroom management.
- Place the blender in an area where children cannot trip on the cord but can still see the blending process.
- Stimulate conversation by asking children questions.

Examples of questions include:

Have you tried kale before?

Did you like the kale salsa?

What did you like about it?

Would you try it again?



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SENSATIONAL SWEET POTATOES

Prepared by Diana Myers, MS, RD

Sensational Sweet Potatoes

DID YOU KNOW?

- Sweet potatoes were grown in Peru as early as 750 BC.^[1]

Fun tip:
Show children where Peru is on a map.

- Sweet potatoes are packed with nutrition! They are high sources of fiber, potassium, and vitamins A and C.
 - Fiber keeps you full and going to the bathroom regularly.
 - Potassium is important in keeping us alive! It helps to keep your heart, muscles, and kidneys strong and healthy.
 - Vitamin A keeps our eyes, skin, teeth, and bones happy and healthy.
 - Vitamin C helps to keep germs away, keeps us from getting sick and heals our bumps and scratches.

Fun tip:
Show children where the heart, muscles, and kidneys are on/in the body.

- Sweet potatoes are the official state vegetable of North Carolina and Louisiana.

Fun tip:
Show children where North Carolina and Louisiana are on a map.

- It takes about 90 to 120 days to grow sweet potatoes.

Fun tip:
Show children the amount of days on a calendar to help put this length of time from beginning to harvest into perspective.

- In February, we celebrate National Sweet Potato Month!

Fun tip:
Show the children February on the calendar.



References:

1. https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2010/11/a-sweet-potato-history/

Sensational Sweet Potatoes

SWEET POTATO-THEMED CHILDREN’S BOOKS

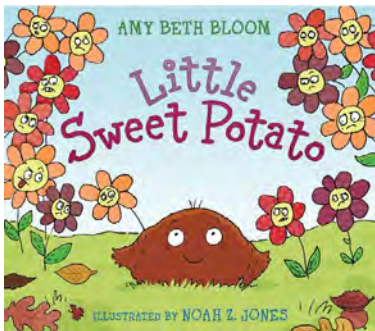
Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CLL2 – The child will acquire vocabulary introduced in conversations, activities, stories, and/or books.

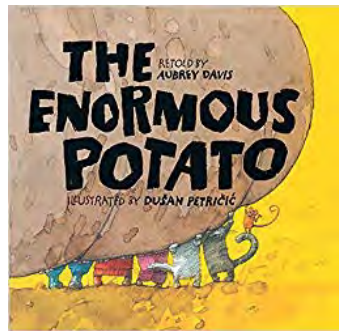
CLL5 –The child will acquire meaning from a variety of materials read to him/her.



Book Options



Little Sweet Potato
by Amy Beth Bloom



The Enormous Potato
by Aubrey Davis



From Eye to Potato
by Ellen Weiss



Jamie O'Rourke and
the Big Potato by
Tomie dePaola



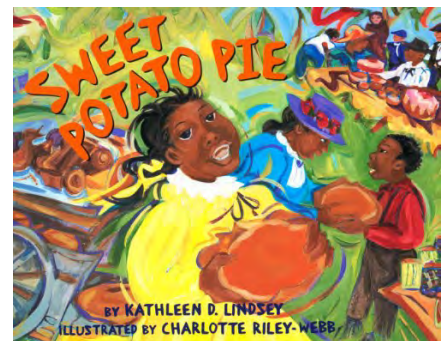
The Vegetables We
Eat by Gail Gibbons



The Gigantic Sweet
Potato by Dianne De
Las Casas



Rhino, Rhino Sweet
Potato by Francine
Prose



Sweet Potato Pie by
Kathleen D. Lindsey

Sensational Sweet Potatoes

SWEET POTATO PLAY DOUGH ACTIVITY

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CD-CR2 – The child will create and explore visual art forms to develop artistic expression.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

Adapted from Healthy Mama Info

Ingredients

- Two and a 1/2 cups flour (\$3)
- 1/2 cup salt (\$1)
- One Tbsp. cream of tartar (\$4)
- Two Tbsps. canola oil (\$2)
- 3/4 cup water
- One medium sweet potato (\$1.50/pound)

Supplies

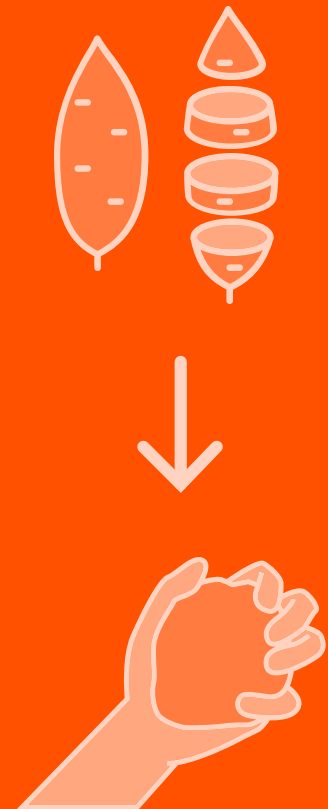
- Three-quart saucepan (\$17)
- Large spoon (\$6)
- Induction burner (\$50)
- Medium bowl (\$12/two-count)
- Paper bowls (\$2.50/42-count)
- Plastic forks (\$2/100-count)

Instructions

1. Pierce the sweet potato with a fork five times and microwave for five to seven minutes while rotating it halfway through.
2. Combine two cups of flour, salt, cream of tartar, oil and water in a pot on the stovetop or induction burner.
3. Mix well and put on medium-high heat, stirring continuously.
4. When the dough forms a ball in the middle of the pot, turn the heat off and take the dough ball out of the pot and into a medium bowl to let cool.
5. Once cooled, knead the dough ball.
6. Scoop out the insides of the sweet potato into a small bowl and mash with a fork.
7. Add a 1/2 cup of flour slowly to the sweet potato and mix well.
8. Combine the mashed sweet potato with the dough ball and knead again.
9. Once combined and kneaded, the play dough is ready to enjoy with the children!

Tips

- If the dough ball becomes too sticky when adding the sweet potato, add extra flour.
- Include children in the process of making the play dough by having them each help knead the dough ball and mash the sweet potato.
- Draw or print out outlines of sweet potatoes for children to form a sweet potato shaped play dough on top of the design.



Sensational Sweet Potatoes

SPROUTING SWEET POTATOES ACTIVITY

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CD-SC3 – The child will demonstrate knowledge related to living things and their environments.

Adapted from Pre-K Pages: Science for Kids

Supplies

- Knife (\$15)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Sweet potato (\$1.50/pound)
- Clear cup (\$1)
- Water
- Toothpicks (\$2)
- Sunny windowsill



Instructions

1. Use a knife to cut the sweet potato in half width wise on a cutting board.
2. Fill the clear cup with water.
3. Insert four toothpicks into the middle of the sweet potato half. There should be enough room for two inches of the sweet potato to be immersed in water.
4. Set the sweet potato in the cup. The toothpicks should hold the sweet potato at the top of the cup while the bottom part is submerged in the water.
5. Set the sweet potato in a sunny windowsill.
6. Monitor water amounts in the cup to ensure that the sweet potato is always partly submerged in the water.
7. On a daily basis, observe the changes of the sweet potato with the children. You will begin to see roots growing down into the water over time from the bottom cut of the sweet potato. You will also see shoots with leaves growing from the top; these shoots are called slips.

Fun tip:

Show students this growth by sitting on the ground and slowly rising up with your arms in the air to reach the sunlight. Ask the children what they need to grow big and strong like a sweet potato.

Tips

- After putting the sweet potato in the windowsill on day one, ask the children their thoughts on what they think will happen.
- Create a daily log and spend time with the children each day to observe and discuss the changes.
- Explore what is happening with the children. The sweet potato stays hydrated by being in the water on the bottom half and the top half soaks in the air and sunlight needed for growth.
- If you have a school garden, you can plant the slips from the sweet potatoes! To do this, carefully twist each of the slips off of the sweet potato. Place the bottom of the slips in water with the leaves above the water; watch closely as roots begin to form off of the bottom of the slips within a couple of days. Once the roots grow to about one inch, you may plant them in loose, well-drained soil. Plant each slip in a hole about four inches down and one foot apart from each other. Water them and watch them grow! In doing this type of farm to early care experience, the children will begin to form a connection between how their food grows and where it comes from.

Sensational Sweet Potatoes

RAW AND BAKED SWEET POTATO FRIES

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

PDM2 – The child will participate in activities related to nutrition.

PDM4 – The child will use senses (sight, touch, hear, smell, taste) to explore the environment and process information.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

PDM6 – The child will demonstrate fine motor skills.

Below, you will find three ways of taste testing sweet potatoes. If you have all of the supplies, consider making all of these recipes and introducing children to raw sweet potatoes and cooked sweet potatoes in a variety of ways. This is an opportunity to teach children that fruits and vegetables taste and feel differently when they are cooked versus raw. Encourage them to keep an open mind as each recipe tastes different and unique!

The simplest way to taste test sweet potatoes is raw. Sweet potatoes cut into thin slices are an opportunity to share them in their most basic way. It is just as important to teach children to eat fruits and vegetables raw as it is to teach them to eat them cooked. Sweet potato fries are another great way to provide a healthier alternative and connect children to something they recognize. Lastly, savory mashed sweet potatoes will teach the children a unique spin on traditional mashed potatoes. They may even ask their parents to make this for the holidays! Refer to the Buying Local Guide for tips on buying local sweet potatoes.

Raw Sweet Potato Fries:

Taste testing serving size: one sweet potato strip

Servings per sweet potato: About 30 servings

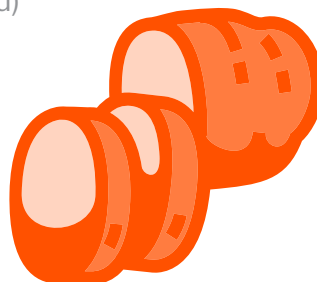
Baked Sweet Potato Fries:

Taste testing serving size: two sweet potato fries

Servings per recipe: About 30 servings

Ingredients

- Three sweet potatoes (\$1.50/pound)
- Two Tbsp. canola oil (\$2)
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder (\$1.50)
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- 1/8 tsp. salt (\$1)



Tips for Tasting

- Stimulate conversation during taste tests by asking the children about the sweet potatoes.
- Ask children their opinion of each of the sweet potatoes.

Examples of questions include:

What color are the sweet potatoes?

Do they make a sound when you bite into them?

What do they smell like?

Do they remind you of anything that you've tried before?

Have they tried sweet potatoes before?

Would they try them again?



Continued on next page →

Sensational Sweet Potatoes

RAW AND BAKED SWEET POTATO FRIES

Supplies

- Knife (\$15)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Paper plates (\$2/100-count)

Preparation

- Slice one sweet potato into 1/4 inch thick strips for the raw sweet potato taste test.
- Slice two sweet potatoes into 1/2 inch thick strips for the sweet potato fries taste test.
- Measure out the oil, garlic powder, paprika, and salt.

Instructions

1. Pre-heat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit or the toaster oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before cooking and taste testing.
3. Pass out one 1/4 inch thick raw sweet potato strip to each child to taste test prior to preparing the sweet potato fries.
Note: Raw sweet potatoes may serve as a choking hazard if not cut thin enough. If you are unsure if your raw sweet potato strips are small enough, please skip the raw sweet potato taste test.
4. After taste testing the sweet potatoes raw, have five child volunteers help with pouring ingredients into the bowl, including sweet potatoes, oil, garlic powder, paprika, and salt.
5. Mix the seasonings with the sweet potatoes so that they are combined evenly.
6. Place sweet potato strips on a baking sheet for the oven or toaster oven.
7. Bake the sweet potato fries for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, take the baking sheet out, flip the fries and put back in the oven or toaster oven.
8. Bake for another 10 minutes or until crispy.
9. Take the baking sheet of sweet potato strips out of the oven or toaster oven and let cool. Make sure the baking sheet is not able to be reached by the children.
10. As a class, taste the sweet potato fries together.



Tips for Tasting

- Teach children how to give respectful responses, even if they don't like what they tried. "Don't yuck my yum!" is a great way of teaching children that they may not like it, but their friends might. Remember, it can take a child multiple times of exposure before they like a new food.
- If you have an herb garden at the school or are feeling creative, try making different seasonings to put on the fries using different herbs.

Sensational Sweet Potatoes

SAVORY MASHED POTATOES

Adapted from Cookie + Kate

Recipe makes about two cups

Taste testing serving size: two Tbsp.

Servings per recipe: About 16 servings.

Ingredients

- Two sweet potatoes (\$1.50/pound)
- Two Tbsp. melted butter (\$4)
- Two Tbsp. plain Greek yogurt (\$1)
- 1/3 cup fresh parsley, torn (\$1)
- 1/3 cup green onions, minced (\$1)
- Salt & pepper, to taste (\$3)
- One clove garlic, minced (\$2)

Supplies

- Cutting board (\$7)
- Knife (\$15)
- Medium bowl (\$12/two-count)
- Potato masher (\$5)
- Large spoon (\$6)
- Measuring cups & spoons (\$10)
- Wavy cutters (\$6/*can be purchased on Amazon*)
- Paper plates (\$5/100-count)
- Plastic forks (\$2/100-count)

Preparation

- Wash, dry and poke holes with a fork into the sweet potatoes.
- Microwave sweet potatoes for 10-15 minutes, until tender.
- Let the sweet potatoes cool for one hour before continuing with the recipe.
- Mince the garlic.
- Measure out the butter, Greek yogurt, salt, pepper, and garlic.



Continued on next page

Tips

- Have one child at a time help with measurements and pouring; this helps with classroom management.
- Stimulate conversation by asking the children questions about senses, past experiences, and thoughts.

Examples of questions include:

Have you ever mashed sweet potatoes?

Have you ever eaten sweet potatoes?

If so, when have you eaten sweet potatoes?

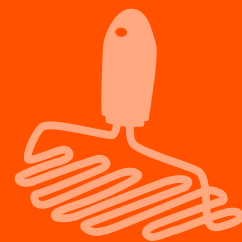
Do they taste sweet or salty?

Would you try them again?

What do they feel like in your mouth?

What do they smell like?

What do they look like?

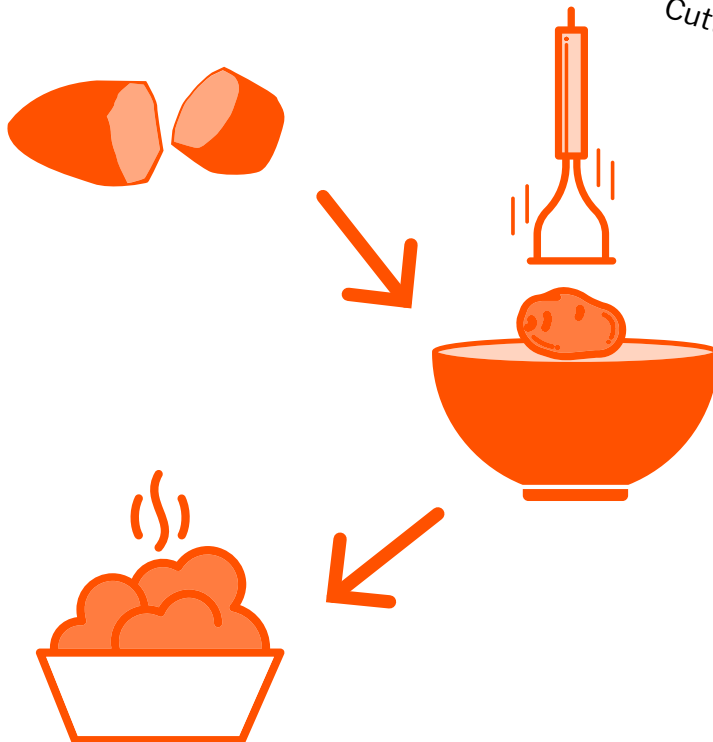


Sensational Sweet Potatoes

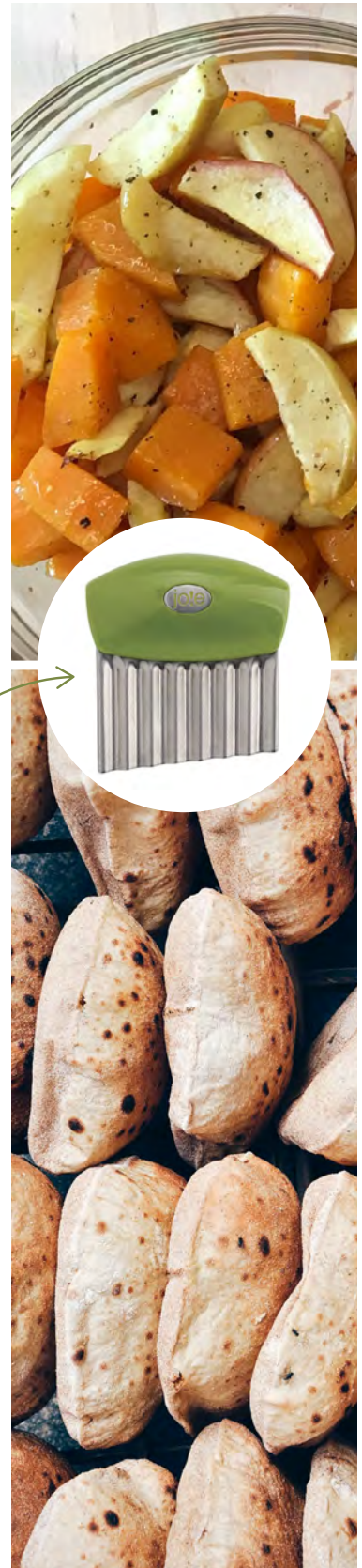
SAVORY MASHED POTATOES

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before cooking and taste testing.
2. Scoop out the insides of the cooked and cooled sweet potatoes into a medium bowl.
3. Pass out parsley and have the children tear it into little pieces.
4. Pass out the wavy cutters and the green onions.
5. Have the children cut the green onions into small pieces using the wavy cutters. Note: Pre-chop if wavy cutters are not available.
6. Have seven child volunteers individually come up and add the butter, Greek yogurt, parsley, green onion, garlic, salt and pepper to the bowl.
7. Give each child a chance to use the potato masher to mash the potatoes until smooth.
8. Serve and enjoy!



Wavy
Cutter





HARVEST OF THE MONTH

A Farm to Early Care
and Education Activity
Toolkit for Georgia
Early Care Providers



AN APPLE A DAY

Prepared by Diana Myers, MS, RD

An Apple a Day

DID YOU KNOW?

- Apples grow on trees! To pick apples, you firmly grasp it and twist it until it detaches from the tree. Let's try this together!

Fun tip:

Have children stand up together and try picking their "apples" from an invisible tree.

- Apples are one of the most widely grown tree fruit.^[1]
- Apples come in a variety of colors including red, yellow, green, and pink. What is your favorite apple color?

Fun tip:

Open up a conversation with the children about their favorite apple colors.

- The first apple trees came from Central Asia.^[2]

Fun tip:

Show children where Central Asia is on a map.

- Apple trees blossom in the spring and apples are picked and eaten in the fall.

Fun tip:

Discuss the order of the seasons with the children.

- Apples are high in Vitamin C! This helps to keep germs away, keeps us from getting sick and heals our bumps and scratches.
- The skin of apples contain high amounts of fiber. Fiber keeps you full and going to the bathroom regularly.



References:

1. <https://www.britannica.com/plant/apple-fruit-and-tree>
2. <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/apples-of-eden-saving-the-wild-ancestor-of-modern-apples/>

An Apple a Day

APPLE-THEMED CHILDREN'S BOOKS

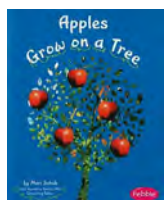
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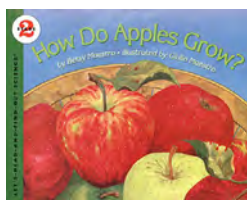
CLL5 –The child will acquire meaning from a variety of materials read to him/her.



Book Options



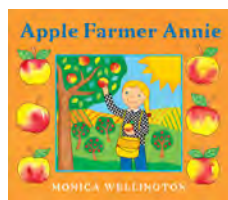
Apples Go On a Tree by Mari Schuh



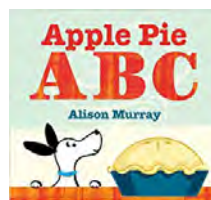
How Do Apples Grow? by Betsy Maestro



5 Little Apples by Yusuke Yonezu



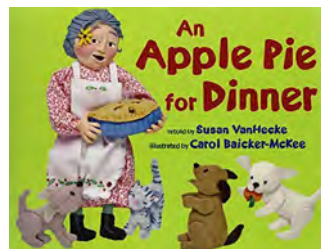
Apple Farmer Annie by Monica Wellington



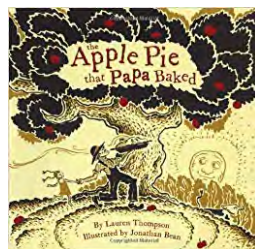
Apple Pie ABC by Alison Murray



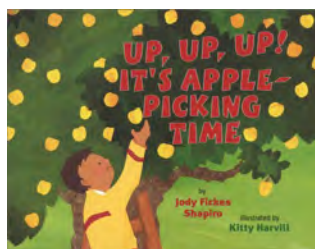
Apple Cider Making Days by Ann Purmell



An Apple Pie for Dinner by Susan Vanhecke



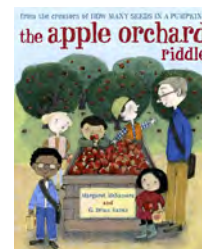
The Apple Pie that Papa Baked by Lauren Thompson



Up, Up, Up! It's Apple-Picking Time by Jody Fickes Shapiro



The Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall



The Apple Orchard Riddle by Margaret McNamara



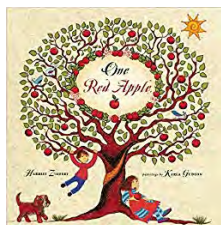
Ten Apples Up On Top! by Dr. Seuss



Little Mouse and the Big Red Apple by A. H. Benjamin



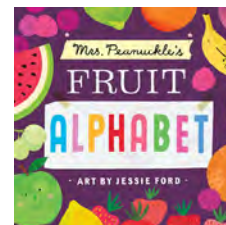
I Am An Apple by Jean Marzollo



One Red Apple by Harriet Ziefert



The Fruits We Eat by Gail Gibbons



Mrs. Peanuckle's Fruit Alphabet by Mrs. Peanuckle

An Apple a Day

APPLE PRINTING ACTIVITY

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

CD-CR2 – The child will create and explore visual art forms to develop artistic expression.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

Supplies

- Knife (\$15)
- Paint (\$12)
- Marker (\$2.50)
- Apples (\$1.50/each)
- Paper towels (\$1/roll)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Construction paper (\$8)
- Aluminum pans (\$4/two-count)

Instructions

1. Cut apples in half using a knife and cutting board; get creative and try a variety of different cutting methods to add new patterns to the apple stamps.
2. Place a paper towel at the bottom of the shallow paint dish and pour paint on top to create a stamp pad.
3. Write each child's name on a sheet of construction paper and hand it to them.
4. Show children an example of an apple print. Dip the cut side of the apple in the paint, wipe excess paint onto the paper towel in the shallow dish, and stamp the construction paper with the painted side of the apple.
5. With adult supervision, have children stamp their own apples into the paint, wipe off excess paint, and stamp their paper.



Tips

- Creating stations with different paint colors and adult supervision will help with classroom management. If you need another activity for children to do while they are waiting to apple print, pass out sheets of construction paper and crayons and ask the children to draw an apple on their paper.
- Have wet paper towels ready at each paint station and line the tables with a plastic tablecloth to help with easy clean up.
- Paint brushes can also be used instead of stamping. Have an adult help each child paint onto their apple and then hand the apple to the child to stamp.



An Apple a Day

RAW APPLES

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

PDM2 – The child will participate in activities related to nutrition.

PDM4 – The child will use senses (sight, touch, hear, smell, taste) to explore the environment and process information.

PDM5 – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

PDM6 – The child will demonstrate fine motor skills.

Below, you will find two different ways of taste testing apples. If you have all of the supplies, consider making both of these recipes and introducing children to raw apples and cooked apples. In doing this, children will have an opportunity to learn that fruits and vegetables taste and feel differently when they are cooked versus raw.

The simplest way to taste test apples is to slice them and eat them raw. In doing this, children are introduced to apples in their most basic state. They are able to hear the crunch of the first apple bite and taste the natural apple sweetness. There are many varieties of apples which lend to diverse colors and flavors (i.e. sweet versus tart). Refer to the Buying Local Guide for tips on buying local apples.

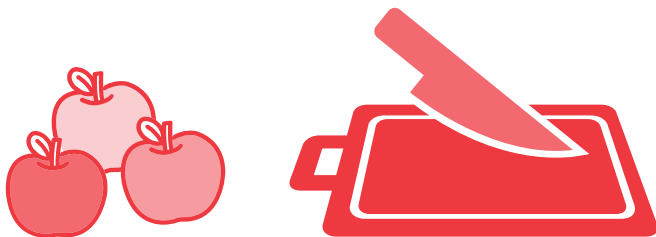
Taste testing serving size: One slice of an apple
Servings per apple: About 10 servings

Ingredients

- Variety of apple types (i.e. Pink Lady, Granny Smith, Golden Delicious)

Supplies

- Knife (\$15)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Paper plates (\$5/100-count)



Continued on next page →

Tips

- Stimulate conversation by asking the children sensory questions.

Examples of questions include:

What sound does the apple make when you bite into it and chew?

What color is the apple?

Is the apple sweet or is it sour?

- Ask children their opinion of each of the apples.

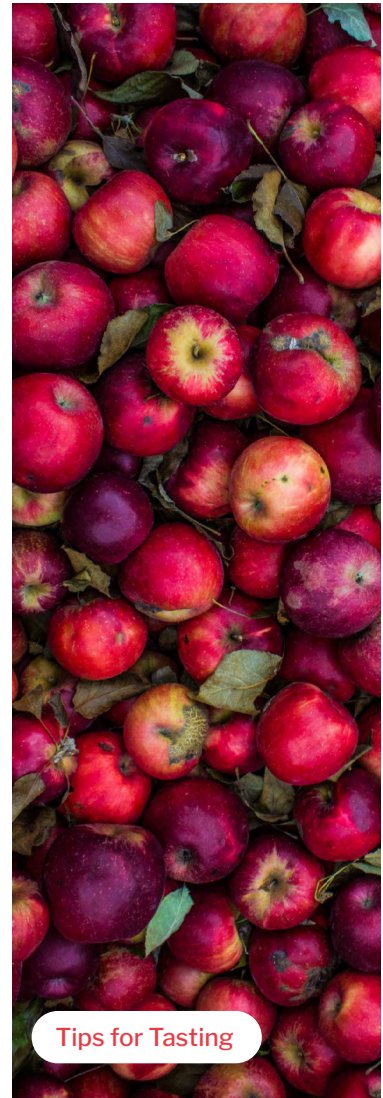


An Apple a Day

RAW APPLES

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before preparation and taste testing.
2. Have an adult cut each of the apples into slices so that each child has a variety of slices to try.
3. Place a paper plate on the table in front of each child.
4. Place a slice of each type of apple on the plate in front of the child.
5. As a class, begin tasting each of the apple types together.
6. Go through the entirety of the apple taste test together while engaging in conversation about what the children think.



Tips for Tasting

- Teach children how to give respectful responses, even if they don't like what they tried. "Don't yuck my yum!" is a great way of teaching children that they may not like it, but their friends might. Remember, it can take a child multiple times of exposure before they like a new food.

An Apple a Day

HOMEMADE APPLESAUCE

Adapted from Sarah's Applesauce Recipe on Allrecipes.com

Recipe makes about four cups

Taste testing serving size: 1/4 cup

Servings per recipe: About 16 servings

Ingredients

- Six apples, peeled & cored (\$9)
- One and a 1/3 cup water
- One tsp. ground cinnamon (\$1/2-oz.)

Supplies

- Peeler (\$9/three-count)
- Knife (\$15)
- Cutting board (\$7)
- Medium bowl (\$12/two-count)
- Measuring cups & spoons (\$10)
- Three-quart saucepan & lid (\$17)
- Induction burner (\$50)
- Large spoon (\$6)
- Potato masher (\$5)
- Paper plates (\$5/100-count)
- Plastic spoons (\$2/100-count)

Preparation

- Peel and core the apples and chop them into chunks.
- Measure out the water and cinnamon.



Continued on next page →

Tips

- If time constraints are a concern, complete steps 1-5 ahead of time. At this point, the applesauce will be cooled and ready to mash. Have children play a part in the recipe by having them each mash the applesauce before taste testing.
- Have one child volunteer at a time to help with pouring the ingredients; this will help with classroom management.
- Stimulate conversation by asking the children sensory questions.

Examples of questions include:

What does the applesauce feel like in your mouth?

Is it sweet?

Does the applesauce make a sound?



An Apple a Day

HOMEMADE APPLESAUCE

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before preparation, cooking, and taste testing.
2. Call on three children as volunteers. Have one child add the apples, one child pour the water and one child sprinkle the ground cinnamon into the saucepan.
3. Place the saucepan on an induction burner and cover with a lid. Make sure that the induction burner is displayed at a distance from the children and that the cord does not cause a tripping hazard.
4. Heat the saucepan to medium high heat and heat for 15 to 20 minutes or until apples are soft.
5. Once heated through and softened, stir with a large spoon and allow applesauce to cool in a fridge.
6. Once cooled, mash the applesauce with a potato masher. Give each child a chance to mash the apples until thoroughly broken down.
7. Using a spoon, divide the applesauce up into taste testing bowls.
8. Hand each child a taste testing bowl and a spoon.
9. As a classroom, try the applesauce together.
10. Enjoy!



Tips

- If you taste tested both recipes, ask the children about the difference between raw and cooked apples.

Examples of questions include:

Did they like the raw or cooked apples best?

What did they like about each of them?

What was the difference between the raw and cooked apples?

Buying Local Guide

WHY BUY LOCAL FOOD?

- Procuring items from local farms will help to support the local economy and create jobs.
- When produce doesn't have to travel far, it is able to be harvested closer to its peak ripeness causing it to taste better and fresher.
- With less travel time and a sooner harvest date, produce has longer shelf life which helps to reduce waste.
- Children will begin to develop a connection surrounding the origins of their food.

HOW DO I BUY LOCAL FOOD?

- Reach out to your food distributor to ask for local foods.
- Connect with nearby farmers to purchase directly from their farm. You can find farms near you at www.localharvest.org
- Find nearby farmers markets to purchase local produce from. Visit www.georgiaorganics.org/good-food-guide/ to find a farmers market near you.
- Reach out to local purchasing agencies on procuring local produce.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR BUYING LOCAL FOOD

- The Common Market (www.thecommonmarket.org)
- Farm'd (www.farmd.com)
- Fresh Harvest (www.freshharvestga.com)
- Georgia Grown of the Georgia Department of Agriculture (www.georgiagrown.com/)
- The Turnip Truck (www.turniptruckga.com)





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QUALITY CARE
for CHILDREN