Recipes for Mindful Taste Testers













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Food skills and nutrition can be taught at any grade level and children love exploring food through experiential learning. The recipes included here work for all ages and can be adapted to a range of classroom settings. Some recipes can be done in centres where each table group has the ingredients, while others encourage students to see food as fun, such as, by using fresh fruits and vegetables to make edible art.

The goal is to encourage children to paint their plate with the different colours of a rainbow, try new foods and build food skills. Students can choose whether to taste the food but first use their five senses to observe the colour, smell and texture. They can explore by asking: What colours do you see? What does it smell like? Is it crunchy, soft, juicy, dry, sweet, salty, savoury, sour? Some students may try it with their tongue before deciding whether they want to eat it. We encourage not "yucking someone else's yum", meaning it's okay if they decide it's not for them while they remain respectful (e.g., "it's not for me" or "no thank you"). This approach helps students make their own food choices without influencing others and reinforces that everyone can decide what they want to eat.

Veggies and dip



Ingredients:

Carrots and celery sticks	
125 ml (1/2 cup)	sour cream
.63 ml (1/8 tsp)	garlic
.63 ml (1/8 tsp)	onion powder
1.25 ml (1/4 tsp)	dill

Students can mix the ingredients for the dip as a table group. Place the dip in individual cups.

Hummus



Ingredients:

1 can	chickpeas (rinsed and drained)
1 clove	garlic (minced or pressed)
45 ml (3 tbsp)	freshly squeezed lemon juice (from one lemon)
1.25 ml (1/4 tsp)	salt (or to taste)
30 ml (2 tbsp)	olive oil
30 ml (2 tbsp)	water

Combine all ingredients using a blender or food processor. Serve with vegetables, rice crackers and/or naan.

Banana people

Ingredients:

1/2 banana
raisins or chocolate chips for eyes
diced strawberry piece for the mouth
cheese cut into a hat

Optional: pretzel sticks for arms and legs



Yogurt parfait

Ingredients:

- vanilla yogurt
- variety of in-season fruits, diced (to reduce cost, use frozen fruit that has been thawed in the fridge overnight)

Optional: cereals that are nut free to sprinkle on top

Students make their own from a parfait buffet.

Layer the parfait: fruit, then yogurt, then nut-free cereal or more fruit. Each student will need their own cup and spoon.



Mini pizzas

Ingredients:

- mini circular naan or half an English muffin (if soy allergy, use Triscuit cracker; if gluten allergy, use sliced zucchini or rice cakes)
- tomato sauce
- grated cheese (if lactose/dairy allergy, omit the cheese or use vegan cheese)
- toppings (e.g., chopped or sliced vegetables)

Students can each make a pizza in table groups or in a line, buffet style.

Bake at 177 C (350 F) and let cool for 10 minutes before serving.



Cucumber sandwiches

Ingredients:



2 cucumber slices
2 pieces of cheese
1 slice of ham, folded or cut to size

Cucumbers, ham and cheese can be precut, and students make their own sandwich.

Delectable bugs (also known as bumps on a log)

Ingredients:

- stick of celery
- hummus (check ingredients if sesame or nut allergy) or cream cheese as the “glue”

Decorate celery to look like a spider, caterpillar, ant, butterfly or creation of the students’ choice by using sliced apples, oranges, cumbers, raisins, and diced red pepper.

Smoothie

Ingredients:



- vanilla yogurt - half a 750 g container (or 3 cups)
- fresh, frozen or canned fruit (at least three kinds; you choose quantity)
- baby spinach or other greens (you choose quantity; 125 ml (½ cup) is good to add nutrition but not alter taste or texture)
- milk, or milk alternative if there is an allergy to lactose or dairy, or use 100% fruit juice (add until consistency is easy to pour)

Optional: ground flax seed, oat bran, etc.

Blend ingredients and serve in individual cups.

Fruit flowers with dip

Ingredients:

Seasonal fresh, canned or dried fruit

Dip:

60 ml (1/4 cup)	yogurt (plain or vanilla; if using plain, add vanilla extract)
5 ml (1 tsp)	honey
15 ml (1 tbsp)	whipped cream cheese

Optional: 5 ml (1 tsp) cocoa powder

Students make edible flowers from diced pieces of fruit. They can work in groups to make the fruit dip to enjoy with their creations.

Vegetable stew

Ingredients:

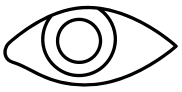
2.5 ml (1/2 tsp)	garlic powder and 1 teaspoon thyme (can also add basil)
2.5 ml (1/2 tsp)	salt
2.5 ml (1/2 tsp)	black pepper
45 ml (3 tbsp)	olive oil, more as needed
1	onion, chopped
1.5 l (6 cup)	vegetable or beef broth
454 g (1 lb)	potatoes, peeled and cubed
4	carrots, cut into one-inch pieces
4 ribs	celery, cut into one-inch pieces
45 ml (3 tbsp)	tomato paste
30 ml (2 tbsp)	cornstarch or as needed; combine with 30 ml (2 tbsp) water (or as needed) before adding to stew
180 ml (3/4 cup)	frozen peas
1 can	kidney beans or black beans, drained and rinsed



Combine all ingredients in electric skillet or pressure cooker, cook until vegetables soften, let cool and serve in individual cups or bowls.

What else could you make to help children explore different fruits and vegetables?

Descriptive words to help talk about the vegetable or fruit



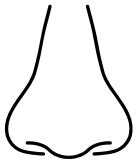
See

round
oval
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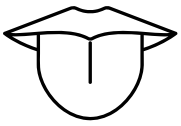
Hear

crack
crunch
pop
squish
squeak



Smell

earthy
peppery
fresh
strong
mild



Taste

salty
sweet
sour
garlicky
peppery
juicy
crunchy
bland
refreshing
tart
tangy
spicy



Touch

smooth
dry
firm
moist
rough
soft
slimy
fuzzy
bumpy
prickly
slippery