A Shared Vision
Partners in Pediatric Blindness & Visual Impairment

Cranberry Sauce

This traditional recipe from one of our teachers is a delicious opportunity to talk about kitchen safety with your child

One of A Shared Vision's teachers started making this recipe with her daughter when she was four years old. Now their family has it every Thanksgiving.

With each step in this recipe, we provide sensory suggestions for you to try with your child. You can follow one or all the suggestions – touch, taste, see, smell, hear. Even though using a hot stovetop to cook the cranberries requires adult supervision, this is an opportunity to talk about kitchen safety with your child. Explain what you're doing so your child doesn't miss out on any steps in the process. "The saucepan with the cranberries goes on the stovetop." "I turned the stove on - it needs to be hot to cook the cranberries." "I'm stirring the berries so they don't burn!" "Let's listen to the cranberries pop!"

Enjoy this sauce with your Thanksgiving turkey. Stir leftover cranberry sauce into a fruit smoothie, yogurt, or pancake batter. Or put a dollop on your cheese and cracker, a turkey sandwich, or a scoop of vanilla ice cream.



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Utensils

- Large colander
- Medium saucepan
- Spoon for stirring the sauce
- Measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Knife
- Grater

Ingredients

- One 12 oz. bag of fresh cranberries
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 large navel orange

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
1. Gather the ingredients and utensils.	 What do the utensils feel like? Are their textures rough or smooth? Does metal feel colder than plastic?  What happens when you bang the spoon against the pot? Or scrape the spoon on the side of the grater? Do the measuring spoons jingle when you shake them? You've made a "kitchen band"!  A white colander will contrast with the red cranberries. Use a shiny colander if your child likes things that sparkle. When you're not using a colander for cooking, let your child practice pushing pipe cleaners through the holes to develop their fine motor skills.

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Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
2. Place the colander in the sink. Dump the cranberries into the colander. Rinse the cranberries under running, cool water. Pick out any stems and bruised berries.	 This part of the recipe involves lots of action verbs like “pour,” “dump,” “rinse,” and “pick.” Narrate out loud as you put the colander INTO the sink and dump the cranberries INTO the colander. How is that different from picking OUT the bruised berries and stems?  Touch the berries in the colander. Take a few out and put them on your work surface or your child’s feeding tray. The berries are hard. They’re not soft like blueberries or raspberries. They are smaller than strawberries.  What sound do the berries make when you dump them into the colander? They clatter and bounce. Listen to the soothing sound of the running water over the berries. Practice counting the berries with your child. Can you guess how many berries are in the colander?  Talk about the berries’ red, shiny color. Does the color “pop” in your colander or on your work surface?  Cranberries are a “superfood.” They are high in vitamin C and antioxidants. Have you ever tasted a raw cranberry? They are tart!

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Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
3. Dump the rinsed berries into the saucepan. Put a half cup of maple syrup into your measuring cup and pour the syrup into the berries. Add a cinnamon stick to the pot.	 Listen for the sound the cranberries make when you dump them into your saucepan.  Dip your finger into the maple syrup and touch it to your lips and your child's lips. Its sweet flavor complements the tart berries.  Let your child try touching the syrup. It's sticky. Make sticky fingerprints on your work surface.  Smell the syrup. Does it remind you of pancakes?  As you pour the syrup into the saucepan, talk about how real maple syrup is made from the sap of maple trees.  Let your child hold a cinnamon stick. Its texture is rough.  Smell the cinnamon stick, or your fingers after touching the stick. This signature spice of autumn adds warmth and nostalgia to everything you cook this time of year.

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Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
4. Zest the orange with the grater until you have one teaspoon. Cut the orange in half and squeeze the orange until you have ¼ cup of juice. Stir the juice and the zest into the cranberry mixture.	 Let your child hold the orange and roll it back and forth like a ball. Does your child have a favorite ball to play with? Don't bounce the orange, though.  Hold your child's hand in yours and carefully let them touch the grater. Explain that this kitchen tool is very sharp and only for adults to use. Depending on your comfort level and your child's interest, encourage your child to put their hand on top of yours while you push the orange up and down over the grater.  Talk about the bright color of the fruit and how you're scraping the orange skin off and none of the white.  Inhale the citrusy fragrance of the orange zest; it smells stronger than orange juice.  Knives are sharp, so they require adult supervision. After you cut the orange in half, your child can try to squeeze the orange and make juice. If juice sprays on the counter, rub your fingers in it. Are there any seeds?  Dip your child's finger into the orange juice or drip some juice on their hand. Taste the sweetness. Maybe your child would like juice in their favorite cup.

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Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
5. Put the saucepan on the stove. Using medium heat, bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the cranberries pop, about 15 minutes.	 The stove is hot! Allow your child to watch you as you cook the cranberries over the stove.  Listen to the sound the cranberries make when their skins pop open. What else makes a popping noise when it's heated up? Popcorn!  Smell the fruit as it cooks with the cinnamon and the orange zest.  Tell your child what's happening to the cranberries as they're cooking in the pot. "The cranberries are getting soft and are melting into a sauce."  Pull a few of the popped berries out of the pan and run them under water to cool them. Show your child the popped berries – they feel different than the smooth berries you started with.
6. Carefully remove the cinnamon stick. Taste the sauce. If it's too tangy, add a little extra syrup. Let the sauce cool. Spoon it into a serving dish for your holiday table.	 Taste the sauce. Do you like your cranberry sauce tart or sweet? It tastes nothing like the cranberry sauce that comes out of a can!

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