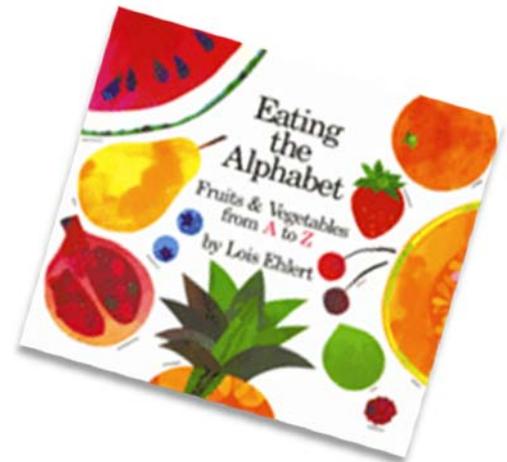
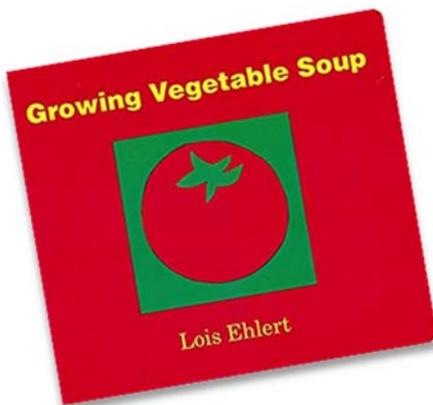


Cooking with Young Children

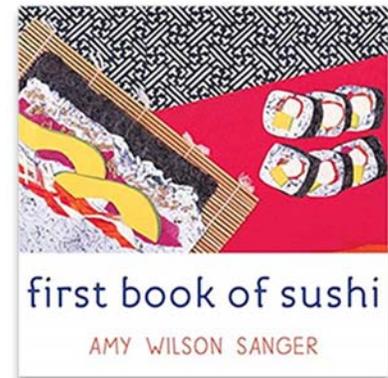
Cooking projects with children can range from very simple to quite complex. All are opportunities for children and adults to share in the process of preparing nourishing foods. The act of lovingly making healthy foods for ourselves and others can become a special part of our shared time with children. And, it is a great opportunity to learn about nutrition, following directions, measuring, basic math skills, and social skills.



A few recipes are included, along with some ideas to extend conversation with the children. These recipes can be followed while adhering to social distancing guidelines.



Also consider reading books about foods and food preparations.



Recipes Included:

- ◆ Fruit Salsa
- ◆ Slow Cooker Applesauce
- ◆ Mexican Beans and Cheese Tostadas
- ◆ Banana Berry Smoothie
- ◆ Baked Parmesan Zucchini
- ◆ Watermelon and Berry Salad

Let's get cooking!





Fruit Salsa

From: <http://www.stillplayingschool.com/2015/06/fruit-salsa-recipe-for-kids.html>

Our fruit salsa recipe is so easy. We love sharing ideas that kids can help prep even at toddler and preschool age!

The kids could use dull knives to cut soft foods as soon as they can stand up to help in the kitchen! ... For this recipe, one child could use a kid safe kitchen knife while a toddler had a dull kid's butter knife.

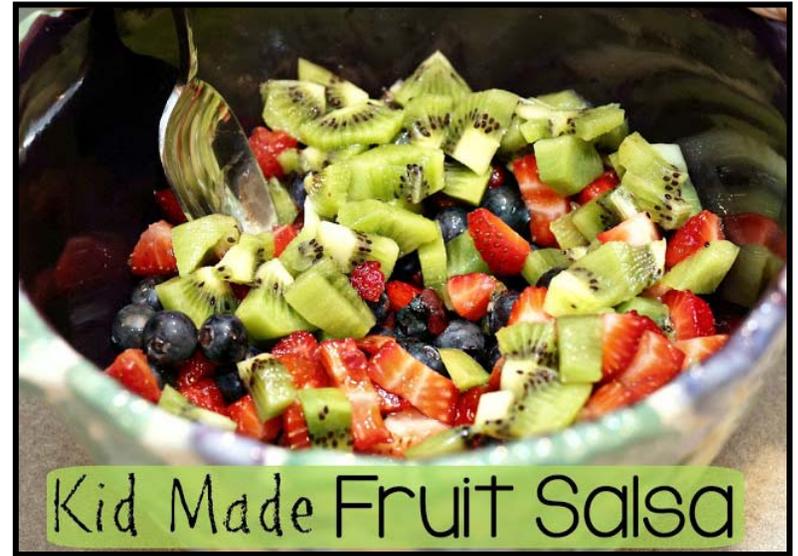
The kids could slice strawberries. The youngest could add blueberries to the bowl, too! The school-age kids could peel the kiwis. Then the children carefully sliced and chopped them up as well!

In the bowl, the juice from the strawberries and kiwis were sweet and tart enough that it didn't need any dressing to bring the salsa together. You could use any fruit you'd like for this recipe!

One final mix completes the prep and you're ready to eat the fruit salsa as a snack!

The fruit salsa can be served with store bought cinnamon sugar pita chips! You could make your own if you prefer. The chips were large enough to scoop up the salsa traditionally.

Healthy, colorful, simple, and yummy!
What fruit would you add to your perfect salsa?



Conversation Starters

- * Some fruits are hard and crunchy and some are soft. Which fruits can you think of that are soft enough we can cut them easily? (i.e., with a butter knife)
- * What's your favorite fruit?
- * How else can _____ (list the fruits you are using) be prepared or eaten?
 - * In this case, strawberry's on cereal OR blueberries in yogurt OR ???



Slow Cooker Applesauce

From: <https://www.pre-kpages.com/classroom-recipes-slow-cooker-applesauce/>

Supplies to Gather

The slow cooker makes cooking so much easier with children.

Here are the supplies you will need to gather in advance to make your own applesauce:

- Slow cooker (7-8 quart)
- Apple slicer
- Apple peeler
- Knife
- Measuring spoons
- Spoon for stirring
- Handheld blender
- Cups or small bowls for serving
- Spoons for eating the applesauce

Applesauce Prep

- Wash apples thoroughly
- Peel and core apples
- Cut apples into small chunks

School-age children could peel, core, and chop the apples. Most kids prefer their applesauce without the skin because it makes the texture chunky, but the choice is yours to leave the skin on your apples or peel them.

Kids can help with washing the apples and putting the cut and peeled apple chunks into the slow cooker.

They can also help sprinkle the cinnamon and nutmeg in the pot and stir.

Applesauce Cooking Directions

- Put the apples, lemon juice, cinnamon and nutmeg into your large slow cooker and mix with a spoon.
- Cover and cook on low for 4 hours. Keep the slow cooker in a safe location where the children won't be able to reach it.
- When the applesauce is done cooking, blend the mixture right inside the slow cooker with a handheld blender.
- When cool, serve in small cups or bowls and enjoy!
- Kids can also help carefully serve the applesauce to themselves or others.

Applesauce Ingredients

One of the best things about this recipe is that it only has 4 ingredients!

- 14 of your favorite apples. Mix up the varieties to get a unique taste, some suggestions are Honey Crisp, Golden Delicious, and Gala
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Adjust the amounts of cinnamon and nutmeg to taste. You can also adjust the number of apples and ingredients used.

As always, you should be aware of any food allergies in your classroom and adjust the recipe as necessary to accommodate these individual needs.

This recipe makes enough for approximately 20 children.



Conversation Starters

- * What do you think will happen to the apples when we heat them up in the slow cooker?
- * How many cut up apples do you think it'll take to fill most of the slow cooker?
 - * Was our prediction correct? Did we guess too many or too few apples?
- * Why do you think they call it applesauce?
- * Talk about the variety in the apples you've selected (color, size, texture of the skin)
- * Talk about the parts of the apple and purpose (stem, seeds, skin, etc.)

Mexican Beans and Cheese Tostadas

Materials

- ◆ Dishes
- ◆ Plastic or edgeless knives and spoons

Ingredients

- ◆ Corn tostadas
- ◆ Refried beans, warm
- ◆ Grated fresh cheese
- ◆ Cream
- ◆ Roma tomatoes cut into squares
- ◆ Also if you like, you can add avocado and lettuce.
- ◆ For the more adventurous, you can add salsa pico de gallo!

Instructions

- ◆ Give each child a plate, a tostada, a knife, and a spoon full of refried beans.
- ◆ Encourage them to spread the beans on the tostada, if they break, do not worry; this moment to mathematize.
- ◆ Spreading will help them to develop their fine motor skills.
- ◆ Invite them to add, cheese, cream and tomatoes to taste.
- ◆ Ready, a Mexican pleasure!

Conversation Starters

- * You can ask children about tostada shapes, ingredient colors, or textures.
- * You can also talk about the food people eat in other countries.



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Banana Berry Smoothie

From: <https://kidgredients.com.au/banana-berry-smoothie-perfect-for-making-with-kids/>

Image credit: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/208924870188544458/>

YIELD: 2 SERVES

Increase the recipe size for larger groups

This delicious banana berry smoothie is perfect for making with the kids.

Ingredients

- ◆ 1 medium banana
- ◆ 2/3 cup mixed berries, frozen
- ◆ 2 teaspoons chia seeds
- ◆ 1/3 cup greek yoghurt
- ◆ 1 1/2 cups milk
- ◆ 2 teaspoons honey

Instructions

- ◆ Slice the banana
- ◆ Place all the ingredients into a blender.
- ◆ Blend until thick and creamy
- ◆ Pour mixture into glasses and serve.

Children can:

- ◆ Peel the bananas after you 'start' them by peeling down the first part
- ◆ Cut the bananas into slices
- ◆ Measure the berries
- ◆ Measure the chia seeds
- ◆ Scoop out and measure the yogurt
- ◆ Measure out the milk and honey
- ◆ Pour the ingredients into the blender
- ◆ Secure the lid on the blender



Conversation Starters

- * Talk with the children about tools to measure quantity – teaspoon, tablespoon, cup
- * How else can _____ (list the fruits you are using) be prepared/eaten?
 - * In this case, banana bread OR berries in a fruit salad OR ???





Baked Parmesan Zucchini

From: <https://damndelicious.net/2014/06/21/baked-parmesan-zucchini/>

Crisp, tender zucchini sticks oven-roasted to absolute perfection. It's healthy and nutritious!

Simply cut your zucchini into quarters lengthwise, sprinkle on that Parmesan goodness and throw into the oven to let it get nice and crisp.

Ingredients

- 4 zucchini, quartered lengthwise
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley leaves

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Coat a cooling rack with nonstick spray and place on a baking sheet; set aside.
3. In a small bowl, combine Parmesan, thyme, oregano, basil, garlic powder, salt and pepper, to taste.
4. Place zucchini onto prepared baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with Parmesan mixture. Place into oven and bake until tender, about 15 minutes. Then broil for 2-3 minutes, or until crisp and golden brown.

Serve immediately, garnished with parsley, if desired.



Children Can:

- ◆ Preschoolers may be able to cut the zucchini lengthwise or have them cut into circles or wedges
- ◆ All children can sprinkle on the spices
- ◆ Not combining the spices ahead of time would allow the children to experience each spice individually and increase the amount each child can 'do'



Watermelon and Berry Salad

From: <https://www.buzzfeed.com/melissaharrison/cooking-with-kids>

What about a fruit salad filled with fun shapes?

Medium textured fruits such as watermelon can be cut into rounds ½-1 inch deep and then shared with the children who can use cookie cutters to cut out fun basic shapes as done in the attached picture.

Some fruits, such as starfruit naturally have a unique shape.

Blueberries would fill in nicely as the circles. Grapes could be the ovals, or ovals sliced in half...



Let your imagination spur you on. Better yet, consider asking the children what fruits could be cut or naturally have various shapes. They might see triangles in sliced strawberries or ????



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