

Toddler 18-36 Months

Grow a Vegetable

Nutrition Objective

This lesson helps children recognize and identify foods that go in the fruit and vegetable food groups on MyPlate and explore how foods grow. They grow lettuce from the cut-off lettuce root (scrap gardening) and taste fresh fruits and vegetables.

Materials and Ingredients

butter lettuce
bell peppers
blueberries

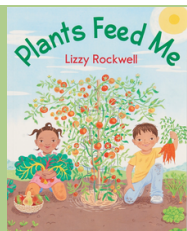
teacher knife and cutting board
serving containers
paper plates
toddler knives



Food Preparation (according to CACFP guidelines)

Before preparing foods, show the whole foods to the children.

- Cut off bottom of butter lettuce and save. Rinse lettuce leaves, bell peppers, and blueberries.
- Separate lettuce leaves, cut bell pepper into ½ inch pieces, and cut blueberries in half.
- Place all foods into different serving containers.



Lesson Introduction

Read and Discuss: *Plants Feed Me* by Lizzy Rockwell.

- As you read each page give children the opportunity to name and identify different fruits and vegetables.
- Repeat new vocabulary while pointing at the illustrations (*stem, roots, vine, pods, tubers*)
- Ask questions from the text such as "Where do plants grow?" (*gardens, parks, pots, etc.*) "For what do plants reach?" (*the sun*) "What are some fruits and vegetables you like to eat?"

TSGOLD: 8a, 9a, 9b, 9d, 10a, 10b, 11a, 12a, 17a, 18a

Lesson Process

- Everyone washes their hands.
- Introduce and discuss the ingredients for today's recipe.
- Show children the lettuce, bell pepper, and blueberries. Tell children how they all grow from plants, and we are eating different parts of plants (leaves and fruits). Fruits have seeds inside that can grow new plants.
- Demonstrate cutting the bell pepper and lettuce. (**save the bottom 2 inches of butter lettuce for the lesson extension**). Show students the seeds inside the bell pepper.
- Pass out the fruit and vegetables.
- Children use toddler-safe knives to cut their food into smaller bites.
- Eat together and give children time to taste and comment on the colors, shapes, and flavors.

TSGOLD: 1b, 1c, 2c, 7a, 8a, 8b, 11a

Lesson Extension- Scrap Gardening

Materials: shallow dish, lettuce bottom, water

- Fill a shallow dish with enough water to keep the lettuce bottom submerged.
- Show the lettuce root (bottom), and place it in water. Ask children what they think will happen.
- Place in a sunny location and change the water every day.
- In a few days, lettuce leaves will begin to grow. They can be cut, rinsed, and eaten.

Extension: Take pictures to document the process; cutting the stem, growing new leaves, eating the leaves. Print, laminate, and staple to create a classroom scrap gardening book.

TSGOLD: 11a, 24, 25, 28

Physical Activity

Materials: rings

- Students hold the rings out in front of themselves like steering wheels.
- Play music. Scan the QR code for “Driving in My Car” song that includes other actions.
- Students practice starting, stopping, moving faster, and slower. Students can also hop on one foot or jump over obstacles.
- TSGOLD: 4, 5, 8a, 8b



School to Home

Send home family letters to share the fun activities children did in the classroom.

For additional activities, songs and information, visit
<https://colosph.cuanschutz.edu/school-wellness>



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