

Nibble on a Good Book



Sponsored by

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Nibble On A Good Book Course Outline/Overview

Our main goal was to motivate our students to read more and to foster the love of reading. The second goal is to encourage our students to take more Accelerated Reader tests by rewarding the top readers with a monthly cooking activity. We chose a “delicious” book and planned a cooking (nibbling) activity to match the story. The top three Accelerated Reader students from each class each month are invited to the Media Center for this delicious activity. We read the book to the winning students and cooked up the adventure to match. During cooking math and science connections were incorporated. (Stirred- in). Students are encouraged to read more chapter books which are worth more points to become the top three winners in their class. Everyone wanted to come to this activity to “Nibble on a Good Book.”

Language Arts, Reading and Writing

LA.4.4.1.1 Write narratives based on real or imagined ideas, events, or observations that include characters, setting, plot sensory details, a logical sequence of events, and a context to enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience)

LA.4.3.4.1 Spelling, using spelling rules, orthographic patterns, and generalizations and using a dictionary, thesaurus, or other resources as necessary

LA.4.3.5.3 Share the writing with the intended audience.

LA.4.3.1.1 Generating ideas from multiple sources (e.g., text, brainstorming, graphic organizer, drawing, writer's notebook, group discussion

LA.4.3.1.3 Organizing ideas using strategies and tools (e.g., technology, graphic organizer, KWL chart, log) to make a plan for writing that prioritizes ideas and addresses the main idea and logical sequence)

LA.4.1.6.2 Listen to, read, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text(LA.4.1.6.3 Use context clues to determine meanings of unfamiliar words

Science

SC.3.N.1.1 Raise questions about the natural world, investigate them individually and in teams through free exploration and systematic investigations, and generate appropriate explanations based on those explorations.

SC.3.N.1.4 Recognize the importance of communication among scientists.

SC.3.N.1.5 Recognize that scientists question, discuss, and check each others' evidence and explanations.

SC.3.N.1.6 Infer based on observation.

SC.5.P.8.1 Compare and contrast the basic properties of solids, liquids, and gases, such as mass, volume, color, texture, and temperature

SC.2.P.8.4 Observe and describe water in its solid, liquid, and gaseous states.

SC.2.N.1.1 Raise questions about the natural world, investigate them in teams through free explorations, and generate appropriate explanations based on those explorations.

SC.2.N.1.3 Ask "how do you know?" in appropriate situations and attempt reasonable answers when asked the same question by others.

SC.2.N.1.5 Distinguish between empirical observation (what you see, hear, feel, smell, or taste) and ideas or inferences (what you think).

C.5.P.8.3 Demonstrate and explain that mixtures of solids can be separated based on observable properties of their parts such as particle size, shape, color, and magnetic attraction. AA

SC.5.P.8.2 Investigate and identify materials that will dissolve in water and those that will not and identify the conditions that will speed up or slow down the dissolving process. (Assessed as SC.5.P.8.3.)
ead, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text

The Mitten



By: Jan Brett

Annotation

When Nicki drops his white mitten in the snow, he goes on without realizing that it is missing. One by one, woodland animals find the mitten and crawl in; first a curious mole, then a rabbit, a badger and others, each one larger than the last. Finally, a big brown bear is followed in by a tiny brown mouse, and what happens next makes a wonderfully funny climax. As the story of the animals in the mitten unfolds, the reader can see Nicki in the borders of each page, walking through the woods unaware of what is going on. Once again Jan Brett has created a dramatic and beautiful picture book in her distinctive style. She brings the animals to life with warmth and humor, and her illustrations are full of visual delights and details faithful to the Ukrainian tradition, from which the story comes.

Engage

Introduce title, author; cover and discuss what the story might be about. Picture walk making sure to discuss the detailed illustrations on the main portion of the pages and on the borders of each page (setting, clothing, animals) stopping before last page. Read aloud for enjoyment and to see how story ends.

Author on the Internet

<http://janbrettsblog.com/>

Recipe

Mitten Snack

Supplies

Mitten cookie cutter; bread; jelly; raisins; coconut; small candies

Use a mitten-shaped cookie cutter to cut two pieces of bread. Arrange the bread with thumb shapes together, like a mirror image. Spread jelly on the bread. Decorate the mittens with raisins, coconut, or small candies. Older children can try to decorate the mittens exactly the same to make a matching pair!

Additional Activities

Snowman Soup!

1 package hot chocolate mix
3 Hershey Kisses

10 mini-marshmallows
1 candy cane
Place in a small zip lock bag or in a new mug.

Attach this poem:

"When the weather outside is frightful,
Snowman Soup can be delightful.
May it warm your spirit and your soul.
Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow!

When you feel a chill or 'burrrrrr',
Use the peppermint stick to stir.
Add hot water and sip it slow.
Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow.

Curriculum Connections

Math:

1. [Mitten Measuring](#)- measure the length of a mitten using Unifix cubes/Legos/blocks, cotton balls, pennies, and inches (also [Glove Measuring](#))
2. Create snowflakes using paper pattern block shapes

Foreign Languages

1. Have students look up five words in Ukraine-

Language Arts:

Inferring Word Meaning by teaching your [students](#) to use context and illustrations to infer word meanings will help them be better readers and deeper thinkers.

Materials

- [The Mitten](#) by Jan Brett
- Chart paper and markers
- Paper
- Pencils
- Crayons

Procedure

Read the book [The Mitten](#) to the class. After you read it, show the class a list of words from the book that may have unfamiliar meanings, like *burrowed*, *jostled*, *talons*, *investigate*, *drowsy* and *silhouetted*. Tell them that you are going to go back and read these words in the story and try to figure out their meanings. Find the first word in the text and read the sentences around it. Then "think aloud" to model how to figure out the

meaning of the word. *Teacher:* "It says that the mole found the mitten and *burrowed* inside. Then it says that it was cozy and warm and he decided to stay. I think *burrowed* must be how he went into the mitten. He probably went in like he goes through tunnels underground. I bet he thought the hole in the mitten for your hands was a tunnel and he went right in." Point out how the words in the sentences around *burrowed* helped to figure out what it means. Model your thinking as you infer the meaning of two or three more words on your list. Be sure to model a word where the illustrations help you find the meaning, like *talons*. Then have the student's help you figure out the next word. When they seem to understand what to do, work together to find a few more meanings. If they aren't quite getting it, model another word or two and then try again to let them help you. Have the students work with a partner to figure out the meaning of another word. Have them write it on a piece of paper and listen as you read the text around the word. Then give the students time to write or draw what they think the word means. Share their responses and discuss what helped them figure out the meaning.

Assess

You can informally assess as the students share their work. Then continue to work on this skill both with the whole class and in small guided reading groups.

Extend

Repeat the lesson with a new book, giving the students more responsibility in inferring the meanings. Honey...Honey...Lion! Is another fun Jan Brett book to use with this lesson plan.

Writing with Strong Verbs

Use The Mitten to show your first graders how to write using strong verbs. Teaching your students to use strong verbs is an easy [elaboration strategy](#) that they can use when they write.

Materials

- The Mitten by Jan Brett
- Chart Paper and markers
- Paper and crayons

Procedure

After your students are familiar with the book The Mitten, tell your students that you noticed that each time an animal found the mitten and entered it, Jan Brett used some really interesting action words or verbs. Point out how she could have just said that each animal "went" inside, but that would have gotten kind of boring. Read the book again and have the children find the different words that she used to tell *how* the animals entered the mitten. The mole *burrowed*, the rabbit *wiggled*, the bear *nosed*, etc.

Make a list of the different words. You can also point out other words in the book that could be substituted for "went" like *swooped* and *lumbered*.

Give each student a piece of paper. Tell the students to imagine another animal, like a butterfly or a snake, is going to enter the mitten. Their job is to draw a picture of that animal going into the mitten and write a sentence describing it. The snake *slithered* into the mitten. The butterfly *floated* into the mitten. You might want to write the sentence frame on the board to make it easier for them. "The _____ the mitten." Let the students share their pictures and add any new strong verbs to your list. Tell them that you are going to be looking for the use of strong verbs in their writing from now on.

Assess

Look at their drawings. Did they use strong verbs? New ones? Or words from your list? Notice which students are beginning to pay more attention to word choice when they write in writing workshop.

Extend

- Leave the list displayed in the classroom. Make sticky notes available so that the students can add new words to the list as they find them when they are reading other books independently.
- Continue to encourage them to choose interesting words when they write.
- Start another list for words to use instead of "said."

Science:

Objective(s): Children will get to know habitat that involve snow, ice, and cold regions when they build (aesthetic, physical, cognitive) dioramas for a variety of habitats related to *The Mitten* by Jan Brett.

Materials: The Science Center will have small boxes, books about habitats that involved snow, ice, and cold regions, tissue paper of a variety of colors, pipe cleaners, crayons, markers, glue, and scissors.

Procedures: Children will read about the habitats they create. They will use the materials and work together to create the habitat in *The Mitten* by Jan Brett and other cold weather habitats

Social Studies/Geography

Social Studies

Read more about Ukraine then tell your student the information they would find interesting.

Where does this story take place? What language is spoken there? What does *Baba* mean? What do you call your grandmother?

Strega Nona

By: Sundee T. Frazier



Annotation

In a town in Calabria, Italy, a long time ago, there lived an old lady everyone called Strega Nona, which meant “Grandma Witch.” She had the magic touch and everyone in the village went to see her for a cure if they had troubles. But Strega Nona was getting old and she needed someone to help her keep her little house and garden so she put up a sign in the town square. Big Anthony, who didn’t pay attention, came to work for her. Strega Nona gives him the list of chores he must do, and what he will be given in exchange for his work. Strega Nona also tells him what he must **not** do. He must never touch her magic pasta pot. One day Big Anthony overhears Strega Nona singing her magic spell and to his astonishment the pot is full of steaming pasta. He then hears the spell to end the cooking, but, alas, for Big Anthony he does not see Strega Nona blow three kisses to the pot. Big Anthony tells the townspeople of the magic pasta pot that cooks by itself. They laugh at him and tell him he has told a big lie, which makes Big Anthony very angry. “I’ll show them!” he says to himself!

When Strega Nona leaves to visit her niece, Big Anthony sees his chance. He invites the entire town to a feast. He says the magic spell and the pasta pot begins to cook. When everyone is full, he says the magic spell to stop the pot, except he doesn’t know to blow three kisses. The magic pasta pots cooks and cooks and cooks. Soon it is bubbling over and heading toward town. Big Anthony is in big trouble. Will Strega Nona save the day? You will find out when you come see the play.

Curriculum Connections

Language Arts

Create a Story Map

Read *Strega Nona* to your students. Have them list the locations in which the story takes place. Have your students map a plot line and match the plot to locations in the story. Create a town map that shows the geographical plot of the story. Have your students work at their desks to map the plot or have them work together to help you create a map of the story on the chalkboard or bulletin board.

Social Studies

.This story takes place in Calabria, Italy. What would you see if you visited a small Calabrian village today? If you venture inland on those impossibly curvy mountain roads, you'll see abandoned railroad tracks everywhere, and you'll drive past countless roadside fountains dispensing natural mineral water. Take your place in line to fill your plastic bottle, or ask a local woman to teach you how to balance a terra cotta jar of it on your head. Driving through the towns, you'll see old men playing cards at tables in the main squares. Grandmothers sit on their doorsteps knitting, weaving or embroidering. You could spot a group of villagers waiting outside the house of a local *santina*, a psychic who "sees" the souls of the dead, blesses the farm animals or performs miracles. You may meet but unforgettably hospitable villagers wearing voluminous black skirts or colorful traditional costumes. Delicious fish, vegetables, cheese, sausage, salami, wild mushrooms and figs make up the foods of the region. Much of Calabria today is unchanged from ancient times.

Music:

Play Italian music in the background as you are are preparing the food with the students.

Serving Up a Special Activity Strega Nona's Pasta Pot



Strega Nona (Italian for Grandma Witch) can do magical things. After reading the story, students will remember the wonderful song Strega Nona sings. Big Anthony knows the song but he never sees the three kisses. Tell your students that you want to see if your pasta pot will boil. Sing the song as you add the water (it is really white vinegar). Watch as the pasta pot boils up but not over. Sing the second verse and blow three kisses. They will watch as the pasta pot goes back down. We all have some magic in us!

Materials:

Large cooking pot
Hot Plate
1 cup baking soda
2 cups white vinegar
1 lb spaghetti (precooked)



Teacher Preparation:

Have your pasta pot ready by putting the baking soda on the bottom of the pot. Place the cooked pasta on top. **Students watch as you pour the vinegar on top and watch it bubble!**

Science Expanation:

Baking soda and vinegar react to form a gas. This is called a chemical reaction. Repeat this experiment in a cup. Add one teaspoon of baking soda to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vinegar and observe the gas. Also try this in a ziplock bag to observe the gas.

Making Web connections:

Web sites for Strega Nona:

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~humiowa/streganona5.html>

Story summary and lesson plan ideas

<http://faldo.atmos.uiuc.edu/CLA/LESSONS/106.html>

Language arts lesson plans

http://www.eduplace.com/tview/pages/s/Strega_Nona_Tomie_dePaola.html

Enrichment activities for Strega Nona

Web sites about Tomie de Paola:

<http://www.geocities.com/tomiedepaola/index.html>

<http://childrensbooks.about.com/library/weekly/aa110500a.htm>

About Calabria, Italy:

<http://www.initaly.com/regions/calabria/calabria.htm>

<http://majesticmoose.net/photography/calabria>

Photo gallery of pictures from Calabria

<http://www.glilli.com/Foods.htm>

Calabrese recipe site

If You Give a Pig a Pancake



By Laura Numeroff

Annotation

A little girl decides to share her breakfast with a pig, and the ensuing chain of events takes them both on an adventure throughout the home. When she gives a pig a pancake, the pig wants some syrup to go with it. The syrup makes the pig sticky, so she wants to take a bath. She asks for bubbles in her bath water, and so on. The story ends where the two started, with the pig wanting a pancake.

Engage

If... Have your students sit in a circle and create a story as a group using the “If...Then” model. Give them a prompt using an “If” statement, such as “If dogs could talk...” A student will then follow with a “then” statement, such as “Then they could ask us for dog treats.” The next student adds on with “If dogs could ask us for dog treats...” and so on. Record your students’ story and read it together when the class is done. They can even make illustrations to supplement it, and the book can be put on display in your classroom.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.lauranumeroff.com/>

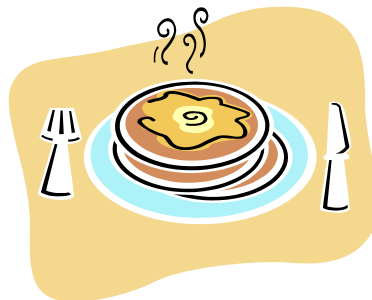
Recipe:

Momma’s Pancakes

This recipe is a quick and delicious pancakes recipe that any kid (or pig!) will enjoy.

Ingredients:

- 1 egg
- 1 Cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 Cup milk
- 3 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp oil
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt



To Make: Beat egg with wire whisk until fluffy. Beat in remaining ingredients until smooth. For thinner pancakes, stir in additional milk as needed. Heat griddle or pan until medium-hot. Cook each pancake until golden brown on each side, turning once. Add other ingredients that you love and enjoy! (Yields about 10 pancakes)

For quicker pancakes just purchase your favorite prepared mix.

.Activity:

Cooking as a Class

Your students can have a great time whipping up their own pancake breakfast in your school's cafeteria! For safety purposes, we recommend that all the actual cooking be done by adult volunteers unless your students are old enough to participate in a supervised cooking environment. Younger students can participate by adding their own special ingredients to the pre-made pancake batter outside of the cooking area. Set up a topping bar with fruit pieces, gummy candies, chocolate chips, sprinkles, and any other ingredients that they might find fun and delicious. The batter can be portioned out on an individual basis in Styrofoam cups or other portable containers for your students to mix their additions in

Curriculum Connection:

Picture Mail

In the story, the pig and the little girl take many photographs throughout their day, and the pig wants to mail them to her friends. Your students can record the fun activities in their school day by drawing pictures of themselves and each other. Once finished, have them pick names out of a hat to determine who the secret recipients of their art will be. For additional fun, have your students put their heads down on their desks while one student only delivers their "mail." Allow them to open their surprises once everyone has taken their turn.

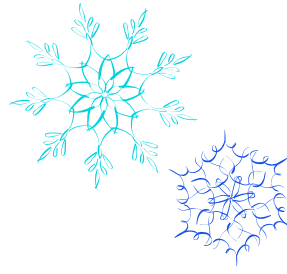
Reading

Procedures:

In small groups or as a class, depending on ability level, have the students write their own circle story(s). Give them the prompt, "If you give a _____ a _____..." Have them supply an animal and food and work from there, adding at least five events and working back to the original prompt.

Closure: Have the students share their story(s) and, if possible, illustrate and publish them.

Snowflake Bentley



By: Jacqueline Briggs Martin

Annotation:

From the time he was a small boy, Wilson Bentley saw snowflakes as small miracles. And he determined that one day his camera would capture for others the wonder of the tiny crystal. Bentley's enthusiasm for photographing snowflakes was often misunderstood in his time, but his patience and determination revealed two important truths: No two snowflakes are alike; and each one is startlingly beautiful. His story is gracefully told and brought to life in lovely woodcuts, giving children insight into a soul who had not only a scientist's vision and perseverance but a clear passion for the wonders of nature.

"Of all the forms of water the tiny six-pointed crystals of ice called snow are incomparably the most beautiful and varied." — Wilson Bentley.

Snowflake Bentley won the 1999 Caldecott Medal.

Engage

Review the importance of a Caldecott book

Author on the Internet

<http://snowflakebentley.com/>

Recipe:

Make snow cones with the children

Supplies:

Snow cone machine
Syrup
Cups
ice



Activities:

- Cut out snowflakes.
- Compare snow crystals to those formed by other substances. Find as many ways as possible to observe and record your observations of a variety of crystals.
- How much snow really falls in Vermont in a typical year? Compare that to the snow or rainfall in your area.
- <http://www.sec.state.vt.us/kids/>

- Snow has inspired many poets some more successful than others. Find and share a snow poem that has meaning for you. Try Jack Prelutsky's **It's Snowing! It's Snowing** (Morrow, 1984 ISBN 0688015131. [Order Info.](#)). Find a way to illustrate and display your poem
- http://nb.wsd.wednet.edu/lmc/pathfinders/snowflake_pathfinder.htm

Curriculum Connection:

- Read some biographies about other people whose lifelong interest in something is at least understandable if not shared by you. Find ways of presenting the lives of these people to others in your discussion group.
- Brainstorm a list of words that you connect with snow. Find art prints by various artists who depict snow. Attempt to find a way to use each word on your list when describing these works of art.
- Grow your own snowflakes in a bottle. It is simple, inexpensive and fun to grow your own crystals. Go to this website to set up an experiment for some snow science.
- <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/project/project.htm>

Find fun facts about snow on the following website.

<http://www.nashua.edu/novakc/Snowflake/snowflake1.htm>

The Hungry Caterpillar

By: Eric Carle



Annotation

The story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* is a simple one that emphasizes numbers and days of the week. The caterpillar is not only very hungry, but he also has unusual tastes in food, ones that delight children. After popping out of an egg on Sunday, the very hungry caterpillar eats holes through the book's pages as he eats his way through a variety of foods, beginning with one apple on Monday and two pears on Tuesday and ending with five oranges on Friday and 10 different foods on Saturday (chocolate cake, ice cream, a pickle, Swiss cheese, salami, a lollipop, cherry pie, sausage, a cupcake, and watermelon).

Not surprisingly, the very hungry caterpillar ends up with a stomach ache. Fortunately, a serving of one green leaf helps. The now very fat caterpillar builds a cocoon. After staying in it for two weeks, he nibbles a hole in the cocoon and emerges a beautiful butterfly. For an entertaining explanation of why his caterpillar comes out of a cocoon rather than a chrysalis, see Eric Carle's [Web site](#).

Engage

1. Introducing Book: The children will be introduced to the book by the front cover. There will be some pre-reading questions: "What do you think the book is about?" "What do caterpillars do?"
2. Discussion of pictures: There will be some questions: "Have you ever seen a caterpillar with so many colors?" "How big is a caterpillar? Is it as big as big as this book?"
3. Presenting story to children: I will start off by reading the page and slowly showing the picture to the students. I have selected three different pages to ask a question "What day do you think is next?" on page 4, "What else do you think the caterpillar will eat?" on page 6, "What will happen when the caterpillar is full?" on page 8.

Before Reading : Show the book. Discuss what the book could be about.

Explore creative movement like a caterpillar.

Explore creative movement like a butterfly.

Invite predictions about how a caterpillar changes into a butterfly

Author on the Internet

<http://www.eric-carle.com/home.html>

Recipe:

Make edible insect

Clean your celery stalks and cut into pieces about 4 inches long.

Apply a layer of peanut butter onto the natural inner curve of the celery.

Neatly lay out a few raisins in a row on top of the peanut butter.

Consider an alternative to peanut butter, cream cheese, which is delicious as well.

Serve and enjoy!

Supplies

Celery Peanut butter

Crème cheese Raisins

Activity

Label the Caterpillar

Label the butterfly

<http://www.teachingheart.net/veryhungrycaterpillar.html>

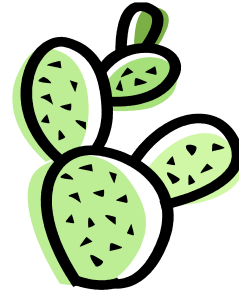
Curriculum Connection:

MATH: Initially, the caterpillar in the story is small. Provide each group of students eight caterpillars of various sizes (make out of construction paper) and 8 index cards for each caterpillar showing the inches of one of the caterpillars. Have the students work together to measure the caterpillars and then match the caterpillar to the correct index card. Walk around the room and check each groups responses. When finished have each student place all the materials from this activity in a ziplock bag. Collect each set and keep for future use.

MATH/GRAPHING: The caterpillar in this story enjoyed many foods. Prepare a graph with the foods the caterpillar ate. Give each student a small sticky note. Have them write their name on the sticky note. Then have the students place their sticky note on the area of the graph that shows their favorite food. When everyone has placed their sticky note on the graph - ask graph questions: What food was chosen the most/least? How many apples were chosen?...

SCIENCE: Use patterns of the life cycle of a butterfly and have students practice sequencing them. (little egg on leaf, little caterpillar on leaf, larger caterpillar on ground, very large caterpillar on big leaf, other leaves nearby have been eaten, caterpillar building a cocoon, caterpillar inside of a cocoon, butterfly emerging from a cocoon, and butterfly flying away)

Cactus Soup



By: Eric A. Kimmel

Annotation

Kimmel sets his version of "Stone **Soup**" during the Mexican Revolution, inspiring some marvelously atmospheric watercolors by Huling. Hungry soldiers encounter the poverty-feigning townsfolk of San Miguel and announce that they will make enough **cactus soup** for the troops and the village. And they make it from an unlikely ingredient—a single **cactus** thorn. By story's end, the soldiers' leader has used reverse psychology to coax genuinely tasty foodstuffs out of the villagers ("Too bad you don't have onions. **Cactus soup** always tastes better with onions. But why ask for what you don't have?"), and teaches everyone a delicious and festive lesson about sharing and community.

Engage

For children who do not live in desert climates, discuss what grows in this type of climate. Cacti are abundant in a desert habitat, Did you ever eat a cactus? Did you know that this is an edible plant? Discuss and display various cactus plants and prickly pears.

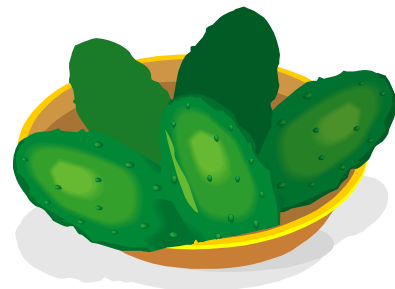
Author on the Internet

<http://ericakimmel.com/>

Recipe: Cactus Soup

Ingredients

- 1 Cactus (prickly pear chopped like an onion)
- 1 tbsp. butter or vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, trimmed and chopped fine
- 1 large carrot, cut into coins



- 3 medium red-skinned potatoes (unpeeled, and cut into halves)
- 1/2 sweet red pepper, chopped
- 1 large garlic clove, pressed
- 6 cups chicken broth (or a combination of broth and water)
- 1 medium zucchini, diced large
- 1 medium yellow squash, diced large
- 1/2 cup corn kernels, fresh or frozen
- 2 cups cooked tubettini or ditalini, or other soup pasta (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Croutons

Instructions

1. In a large pot, melt the butter or heat the oil, then sauté the onion on medium-high for 2 to 4 minutes. Stir in the cactus, celery, carrot, potatoes and red pepper, sautéing for 6 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds, then add in the broth. Bring the soup to a boil. Add the zucchini, squash, corn and pasta, cooking another 8 minutes or until the zucchini is the desired softness. Season to taste with the salt and pepper. Before serving, sprinkle on the cheese and croutons, Serves 6 to 8.

Activity:

Make Cactus Soup



Curriculum Connection:

Social Studies:

Edible cactus is also known as nopales (no-PAHles), nopalitos or cactus pads. This vegetable is popular in Mexico and other Central American countries, parts of Europe, the Middle East, India, North Africa and Australia. Its popularity is increasing in the United States where it can be found at Mexican grocery stores, specialty produce markets and farmer's markets. Edible cactus is characterized by its fleshy oval leaves (typically called pads or paddles) of the nopal (prickly pear) cactus. With a soft but crunchy texture that also becomes a bit sticky (not unlike okra) when cooked, edible cactus tastes similar to a slightly tart green bean, asparagus, or green pepper. Cactus pads contain beta carotene, iron, some B vitamins, and are good sources of both vitamin C and calcium.

Cactus has also had other practical uses. The long, soft spines of *Oerocereus celsianus* are used as pillow and bed stuffing. Spines of other cacti are used as toothpicks, combs, sewing needles and fishhooks. Yet other cacti are used as building materials and as living fences or hedges. One the earliest recorded cultivation of a specific cactus species for a specific purpose was by the Aztecs. They grew *Opuntia coccenillifera* which acted as a host to the cochineal scale insect. It was harvested and crushed to

produce a dye that was either a rich purple (from the female scales) or a brilliant scarlet (from the male scales). The dye was used in fabrics and cosmetics.

Students can research through the internet or books about the Mexican Revolution, including the biographies of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata.

Discuss the country and culture of Mexico.



Science:

Planting

- Prickly pear cactus is easy to grow from the seeds inside the fruit. Sprinkle the seeds over the soil in a shady area and keep the soil slightly moist while they germinate.

Culinary Uses

- Cactus fruit seeds can be dried, either in the sun or with a dehydrator, and ground into flour. Arizona Indian tribes have been eating them this way for centuries. The seeds can also be used in soups.

Read more:

[Cactus Fruit Seeds | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/facts_8030583_cactus-fruit-seeds.html#ixzz1T8K9bV38](http://www.ehow.com/facts_8030583_cactus-fruit-seeds.html#ixzz1T8K9bV38)

Growing Vegetable Soup

By: Lois Ehlert



Annotation

Together, a father and a child share the joys of planting, watering, and watching seeds grow. Now available for the first time as a lap-sized board book, this beloved Lois Ehlert story includes a mouthwatering vegetable soup recipe.

Author on the Internet

<http://www.childrensliteraturenetwork.org/birthbios/brthpage/11nov/11-9ehlert.html>

Engage

Touching Activity:

Teacher will have one of each vegetable in the book

Tasting Activity:

- Hand sanitizer
- a knife, spoon or fork
- paper plates or bowls
- napkins.

Cut the vegetables you select for the children to taste. Put each cut vegetable into a separate paper bowl or plate. Use the spoon or fork to place them on napkins for serving to each child. The children can clean their hands with the hand sanitizer before eating.

Recipe: Make vegetable soup

You can use the soup recipe on the back cover of *Growing Vegetable Soup*. Or you can use frozen or canned vegetables for a quicker version.

Can be made in a crockpot. Remember to include vegetables from the story: corn, peas, carrots, green Beans, zucchini, spinach, rutabaga, turnips. The child can help by measuring water in a cup, tearing or cutting up vegetables, putting ingredients into a sauce pan, stirring soup. Make sure that they get a turn to stir the soup before it gets hot.

Curriculum Connection:

SCIENCE:

How Plants Drink

All plants use their roots to drink water. Demonstrate this by using a piece of celery or Queen Anne's Lace (usually found growing wild on the roadside), or a white carnation from your local florist. Place in a clear bottle or jar, fill with water and add a several drops of food coloring. Within a few hours your plant will begin changing colors from the bottom up. Explain that this is because the plant drinks through the roots at the bottom and pulls it up into the plant.

Seed Size

Review the seeds on the "we are planting the seeds" page. If possible, have those seeds available. Seeds come in many different sizes from tiny carrot seeds to large bean seeds. Give your child an assortment of seeds and compare the different sizes. Talk about (if possible have the real vegetable or fruit on hand) how each seed will grow into a fruit or vegetable that is much larger than the seed itself. This will easily lend itself into a discussion on the greatness of God and His creation.

Seeds, Sets, and Sprouts

Using pages "we are planting the seed" and "and all the sprouts" talk with your child about how vegetables are planted from different starts. If possible, have samples on hand or visit a greenhouse for this lesson. I have found that most greenhouses are happy to teach about their products. You may want to inquire ahead of time as to when a good, non-busy time would be for your learning visit. Using the page "and giving them water" can your child tell you which vegetables are started from seed (corn, pea, green bean and carrot) from set (potato and onion) and from sprout (tomato, cabbage, pepper and broccoli)?

Bean Sprout

Materials: clear jar, yogurt container, paper towel and bean seeds. Wrap strips of paper towel around the yogurt container so that when placed upside down in the jar the paper will touch the sides. Push the bean seeds between the jar and the paper so that they

will stay without falling. Wet the paper and place the jar in a sunny location. Be sure to keep that paper moist. Watch as the beans swell, split, and sprout both down (roots) and up (shoots). You can take pictures each day for a two week period of the bean starting as soon as it shoots through the ground. It is truly amazing to record this process and to go back and look through your photos.

Plant a Rainbow

By: Lois Ehlert



Annotation

Engage:

Ask the students if they know that the colors of the rainbow are always in the same order. Teach the name ROY G BIV to the students. Show students a live flower in a pot. Ask them what they know about flowers. Where did the flower come from? What does it need to grow?

Author on the Internet

<http://www.childrensliteraturenetwork.org/birthbios/brthpage/11nov/11-9ehkert.html>

Activity:

Rainbow Jello

Teachers will prepare the jello ahead of time. One pan for each color of the rainbow (ROYGBIV) (red, orange, yellow, green, blue. Purple will be indigo and violet)

Things You'll Need:

6 boxes of Jello mixes (cherry, orange, lime and blue raspberry)

Baking pan

Non-stick cooking spray

Spray a large aluminum cake pan with a light coating of non-stick spray.
Mix up the first flavor of Jello according to the recipe on the box.
Pour it into the cake pan to set.
Put the cake pan on a level shelf in your refrigerator and allow the Jello to set up.
Make another flavor of Jello by following the recipe on the box.
Pour it on top of the first layer of Jello and return to the refrigerator to allow the second layer to set.
Repeat this process until you've created 4 layers in your rainbow Jello, or however many you would like.
Cut it with a spatula to showcase the rainbows.

Read more: [How to Make Rainbow Jello | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_2267260_make-rainbow-jello.html#ixzz1T8OzHrdL)
http://www.ehow.com/how_2267260_make-rainbow-jello.html#ixzz1T8OzHrdL

Curriculum Connection:

Science: Give each child a white carnation. Have each child select a vase with food coloring to put it in. (Have several vases with different colors such as red, yellow, blue, green, purple, and blue.) Keep a class log and write a daily entry to note changes. Students will observe the water rising up the stem and going to the flower to change its color.

MAKING RAINBOWS

On a sunny day, place a small mirror in a glass bowl of water so that the mirror rests against the side of the bowl. Set the bowl in direct sunlight.
You can find a prism at many science stores or teachers store. Show your child the prism, and how to see all the colors of a rainbow in the prism.

Everybody Cooks Rice



By: Norah Dooley

Annotation

On her way to find her little brother for dinner, Carrie samples each family's dinner in her neighborhood. By the time she tracks down her brother, Carrie has discovered a world of rice dishes in her own backyard.

In some of the homes Carrie receives more than a meal. A lesson learned is, although we come from different places and cook different dishes that should not keep us apart. Even when you think there is nothing that will connect you with there is; at least in the kitchen there is.

Engage

Read the following quote from Nelson Mandela: **“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background or his religion. If [people] can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”** Talk briefly about the United States being a place where we often have the opportunity to meet people who are different from ourselves. Explain that the class will focus in the next few days on some of the ways we can learn to enjoy and celebrate those differences.

Author on the Internet

http://www.norahdooley.com/www.norahdooley.com/Norah_Dooley.html

Recipe: Fried Rice

Ingredients:

- 1 - 2 green onions, as desired
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste
- 4 tablespoons oil for stir-frying, or as needed
- 4 cups cold cooked rice
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- 1 - 2 tablespoons light soy sauce or oyster sauce, as desired

Preparation:

Wash and finely chop the green onion. Lightly beat the eggs with the salt and pepper. Heat a wok or frying pan and add 2 tablespoons oil. When the oil is hot, add the eggs. Cook, stirring, until they are lightly scrambled but not too dry. Remove the eggs and clean out the pan.

Add 2 tablespoons oil. Add the rice. Stir-fry for a few minutes, using chopsticks or a wooden spoon to break it apart. Stir in the [soy sauce](#) or [oyster sauce](#) as desired.

When the rice is heated through, add the scrambled egg back into the pan. Mix thoroughly. Stir in the green onion. Stir in the bean sprouts. Serve hot.

Curriculum Connection:

Art and Social Studies:

Design a recipe box. Cut brightly colored paper with Scissors to cover a recycled tissue box. Use School Glue to attach the paper.

Draw cooking utensils, food sources, and flags. Cut them out and glue them on the recipe box.

Continue to garnish the box using Markers and other decorative materials such as aluminum foil (to carry out the cooking theme). At home, ask your family to make several new recipes.

Investigate how rice is cultivated. Try growing some in your classroom. Find out what the differences are among various types of rice. Which types are healthiest to eat?

Estimation Contest!

In the media center we filled a jar with rice and students estimated the number of grains in the jar. The winner received a dragon piñata.

Resources and Bibliography

www.orientaltrading.com (to purchase assorted student incentives)

<http://childfun.com/>

http://www.jerseyhistory.org/activity_recipe.html

<http://www.carolhurst.com/>

<http://www.kraftrecipes.com/yourkids/main.aspx>

<http://www.creativekidscrafts.com/>