



HARVEST LESSONS

LESSONS TO USE AGAIN & AGAIN

Guides & Tools



HARVEST LESSONS ARE A FUN WAY FOR K-4 CLASSROOMS TO EXPLORE, TASTE AND LEARN ABOUT EATING MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EVERY DAY.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

ACTIVITY	GRADE LEVEL	CURRICULUM CONNECTION	TIME
#1: Read About Food	all	Literacy: listening comprehension	20 min.
#2: Observe Food	all	Science: classification, observation	20 min.
#3: Taste Tests	all	Literacy: speaking, listening, description, adjectives, vocabulary Math: measurement, data	20 min.
#4: Collect & Graph Taste Test Data	all	Math: data, graphing	15-30 min.
#5: Compare Cooked & Raw Foods	all	Literacy: speaking, listening, description	15 min.
#6: Mapping the History of a Food	3-4	Social studies: geography, past and present	20 min.
#7: Posy Poetry	2-4	Literacy: range of writing, description, adjectives, vocabulary	20 min.
#8: The Seed Dance	K-2	Science: seasons, life cycles, structure and function (parts of a plant)	10 min.
#9: Create a Super Plant	3-4	Science: adaptations	20 min.
#10: Harvest Blanket	all	Literacy: description, adjectives, vocabulary	15 min.
#11: Keeping a Journal	all	Literacy: informative/explanatory writing	15 min.



(Activity Summary, continued)

ACTIVITY	GRADE LEVEL	CURRICULUM CONNECTION	TIME
#12: Create an Ad Campaign	2-4	Literacy: opinion writing, understanding author's craft	30 min.
#13: Storage Vegetables Memory Game	all	Social Studies: comparing the past and present	20 min.

ACTIVITY #1 (20 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

READ ABOUT FOOD

Each Harvest Lesson includes a connection to literature & literacy by suggesting books related to the featured food. The book can be read aloud, or, if multiple copies are available and the reading level is suitable, students can read the book in pairs. Below are suggestions for engaging students in a book about food.

Reading Comprehension Suggestions

Be sure to pre-read books to make sure they are developmentally appropriate for the class you are teaching, and relevant to the other components of the Harvest Lesson that you select. While pre-reading, you can also take the time to think of 3-4 questions to ask students while and after reading the story, and to note any difficult words you might want to define for students while and/or before reading the story. In coming up with questions, consider and try to include the three types of reading comprehension: within the text, beyond the text, and about the text.

Questions that target within the text comprehension can be answered using evidence from the text, and might include describing characters, explaining an event in the story, or summarizing the story. Questions beyond the text include inferring why something happened or is important, forming opinions about the story, making predictions, and making connections between the story and your own life. Questions about the text relate to author's craft, asking students to consider why a book is written a certain way. Below is a chart with examples of question stems for each type of reading comprehension.

- over -



(Activity #1, continued)

Within the Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the problem in the story? • What happened in the story? • What did you learn from this story?
Beyond the Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you think that character felt when ___? • What do you predict will happen next? why? • How are you similar to the main character? How are you different?
Beyond the Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a good title for this story? Why or why not? • How did the writer make this book interesting (/funny/sad/exciting)? • Look at the way the writer ended the book. Do you think this was a good way to end the story? Why or why not?

To keep students engaged when asking questions, try having them “turn and talk” about the question to the person sitting next to them, or the the people in their group if they are sitting or working in groups. Or, if the question asks for an opinion, have students “vote” by standing up if they agree and shaking their head no if they disagree.

Suggestions for Integrating Food

Make sure to help students connect the story with the featured food. If the book discusses a specific recipe or way of preparing the food, use that recipe for your taste test. In crafting your comprehension questions, you can ask students to remember what they have observed about a vegetable or learned about its nutrition or history, and compare or connect that to the information in the story. For example, ask why it makes sense for that food to appear in that story - is the story set in a place where that food grows well and is eaten often?

Cultivating the connection between the story and the food might be as simple as telling the students the food comes up in the story, and asking them to listen carefully and raise their hand/put up their thumb every time they hear the name of the food. Although it seems simple and obvious, it's important to reinforce the connection between the book and the rest of the lesson so students not only develop their literacy skills, but also become familiar with and excited about the featured food so they can improve their eating habits!

**ACTIVITY #2** (20 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

OBSERVE FOOD

Every lesson includes observing the featured food as an optional activity. This quick, simple activity helps build students' interest in the featured food, and develops their observation skills. Whether the food is new to students or familiar, taking 5 or 10 minutes to look carefully at a few real life examples of the vegetable and draw it can be a powerful way to engage students. It is also often a great segway into a discussion of why this crop grows well in Vermont and why it is healthy to eat.

ACTIVITY #3 (20 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

TASTE TESTS

Taste tests are a vital part of the Harvest Lessons that should be included every time. The VT FEED guide has more ideas about how to conduct taste tests, and you can refer to HOM's Taste Test Toolkit.

Taste Test Tips:

- Coordinate with food service.
- Prepare the food multiple ways and compare.
- "Don't yuck my yum" - Encourage students to keep any negative reactions to themselves. These responses can influence other kids perceptions of a food and willingness to try.
- Ask students to describe the texture and taste of the food - provide them with some suggestions to get them started, especially for younger students - outlaw good and bad - go for adjectives like smooth, crunchy, squishy, chewy, crispy, salty, sweet, bitter, sour, tangy, spicy, fresh, earthy.

ACTIVITY #4 (15-30 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

COLLECT & GRAPH DATA ON TASTE TESTS

Collect data for your class, multiple classes or the whole school. Try graphing data with a tally chart, bar graph, scaled bar graph or pictograph. Be sure to submit your taste test results on the Vermont Harvest of the Month website:

www.vermontharvestofthemonth.org/submit-taste-test-results.html

**ACTIVITY #5** (15 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

COMPARE COOKED & RAW FOOD

For many foods, we recommend a taste test comparing raw and cooked foods, or between foods cooked simply in different ways, (steamed vs. roasted vs. raw). Take a survey to find out what kids like best. Heating foods can change the structure of the compounds found within food.

It is important to eat both cooked and raw foods, because while some things are changed or destroyed when heat is applied, other compounds are better absorbed when they have been cooked. For example, Vitamin C is best found within raw foods. Boiling carrots increases the carotenoids, but destroys polyphenols, a group of chemicals with antioxidant properties.

ACTIVITY #6 (20 MINUTES)

GRADES 3-4

MAPPING THE HISTORY OF A FOOD

Many of our Harvest Lessons feature a mapping activity for students to learn more about the history and origins of featured foods. You can use a map in the classroom, project a map on the smartboard to talk about the food, or give each student the provided map to fill in. Mapping food's history is a great way to visualize the movement of people and food over time.

ACTIVITY #7 (20 MINUTES)

GRADES 2-4

POSY POETRY

This activity is also from *Project Seasons*, a book published by Shelburne Farms. It is also often referenced by VT FEED.

MATERIALS: bite sized samples of a food (or variety of foods), pencils, small slips of paper, bowl or basket

PROCEDURE: Gather samples of a food (or of different kinds of food), and create stations around the room. Define adjective, noun and verb. Have students rotate through stations, taking sample of a food and writing three descriptive words for each sample and place it in a bowl or basket. These words can be adjectives describing the flavor, color, or texture, nouns that students associate with the food, or verbs describing the action of eating. After all students have rotated through each station, they will break into groups, and record all the words at each station. As a group they will arrange the words into a poem created using the input of the whole class. Take turns reading poems aloud in a poetry reading.



ACTIVITY #8 (10 MINUTES)

GRADES K-2

THE SEED DANCE

This is a fun movement activity that will help younger children get familiar with the life cycle of a plant, and the parts of a plant. No materials are needed besides the script below.

Announce to the children that they are all going to be seeds. "You are a seed. Any kind of seed you want to be. Make your bodies as small as you can." Go around and ask children what kind of seed they are and then remind them that seeds don't talk.

Say "It is the middle of winter and you are covered by a layer of cold snow. Now you start to feel something new, cold water is melting through the soil. The soil is getting warmer, and you feel your sprouting roots and leaves. The sun is shining on your leaves and warming your feet in the soil. Feel your roots grow into the soil and your stems and leaves follow the sun up! Up! Up! You grow more leaves which make more food. You form a bud, which opens into a beautiful flower, and along comes a honeybee to pollinate you, and a heavy fruit starts to grow. Now you are fully grown fruit full of seeds and ready to be harvested! We can start this again with another seed."

ACTIVITY #9 (20 MINUTES)

GRADES 3-4

CREATE A SUPER PLANT

Thinking about defense, reproduction and food, students will invent a "Super Plant" by combining parts of different plants. Students will use collage and drawing to design their "Super Plant." At the end of the lesson, students will present on their "Super Plants" and the adaptations that allow it to survive.

ACTIVITY #10 (15 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

HARVEST BLANKET

MATERIALS: blanket or sheet, collect a variety of vegetables with different shapes and textures (a combination of familiar and perhaps unfamiliar vegetables with a variety of textures makes this a more interesting activity, i.e. rutabegas, celeriac, etc.)

PROCEDURE: Sit with children in a circle and spread a sheet or blanket between you. One at a time, pass a food under the blanket, and have children feel it, using their words to describe texture. After all the kids have passed it around and felt the texture, ask who has ideas about what it might be before revealing the food to the group.

**ACTIVITY #11** (15 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

KEEPING A JOURNAL

Keeping a journal throughout the year is encouraged, and can be a great way to keep track of students' progress throughout the year. Depending on the grade level, you can adjust the prompts for journaling.

GRADES K-1: You may have students draw a picture of the food, and work out how to spell the food. First graders may label the parts of the plant.

GRADES 2-4: Draw and label plant parts. Students should write full sentences with a prompt of your choosing. What color is the vegetable, and why is it good for us? Where does this food originate?

ACTIVITY #12 (30 MINUTES)

GRADES 2-4

CREATE AN AD CAMPAIGN

Discuss some tricks advertisers use to get people to buy things. Think about an advertisement or watch an advertisement with kids. What kind of sound effects or music does it use? What do the people look like? Does it look like you will have more fun or be more popular if you use their product? Pbskids.org/dontbuyit is a great resource for ideas of how to talk about advertising with kids.

After this discussion, tell the kids you are going to create an ad campaign for something that people should want! Make a poster ad campaign or commercial skit for a vegetable or food. When advertising something healthy, you don't need to use tricks, and can create truthful advertisements. How will it make you feel? How is it healthy/how does it help your body? How does it taste? What descriptive words can you use?

**ACTIVITY #13** (20 MINUTES)

ALL GRADES

STORAGE VEGETABLES MEMORY GAME

Using pictures or actual foods that we can eat all winter, place many different foods under a blanket. As a group, have children lift up the blanket and count to 10 or 20 as they get a look under the blanket. Cover up the foods and go around the circle, seeing how many things they can remember, and talking about how we store different foods.

Food to put under the blanket:

Various root vegetables, potatoes, onions, garlic, honey, eggs, jam, frozen fruits and veggies, honey, maple syrup, flour, oats, dry beans, butter, cheese and more.

As you discuss storage methods, ask how has storing food changed over time? How is it the same? This activity is not limited to foods we can eat locally in the winter. Try it with names for kitchen tools or a variety of vegetables in the fall harvest.

Have fun!