

Time to Cook

Introduction

Display a picture of a simple food dish – for example, pasta and tomato sauce. Ask the children to examine its basic ingredients – pasta, tomatoes, olive oil and basil. Where does this food come from? List some other countries. What foods are typically eaten in those countries? Explain to the children that they are going to learn how to make two healthy meat free dips which they will be able to sample with fresh crudité's (for example, carrot and celery sticks), pita bread and corn chips. The dips can also be used as sandwich fillings.

Activity

To make the most of this lesson, you should divide the class into four groups and ask teaching assistants or parents to run the cooking workshops using the **Time to Cook – Recipe Demo** sheet and allowing the children to help with each stage. Two of the groups should prepare guacamole, and two should make hummus. They should sample the dip, then switch places with the other groups and make the other dip. Children should record each recipe by writing down and illustrating the ingredients and writing the instructions. You may want to give them a cheat sheet listing the number of steps along with words such as “chop”, “add”, “mash”, “mix”, etc. They can take their recipes home.

Extension Ideas

- Have the children come up with their own ideas for meat free dips and compile them in a Tasty Dips recipe book. Give the children the opportunity to prepare some of the dips they devised.
- Divide the class into small groups and give each group three or four simple meat free ingredients. Each group should have identical ingredients. For example you might opt for bread, tomatoes, cannellini beans and basil. There should also be some “store cupboard staples” in the room such as olive oil, herbs and seasoning. In a “Ready Steady Cook” style challenge, each group should be given 30 minutes to prepare one tasty meat free dish. With the ingredients given in this example, children could prepare a bean dip with bread; a bean and tomato salad with croutons; or a tomato and bean bruschetta. Children should get to see each others’ creations but should then return to their own group where their dish should be divided up onto plates for them to sample.
- Hold a “Foods from Around the World” workshop where children brainstorm traditional dishes eaten in different parts of the world. Indian, Vietnamese, Caribbean, Malaysian, Thai, Ethiopian, Lebanese, and Mediterranean cookery offer some great meat free options. Run a cookery demo to show children how to make one of the dishes discussed.



Background

According to the National Food Strategy, an independent review published in 2021, obesity is expected to continue increasing until it peaks at 37% of the population in the mid-2030s. It's important to teach children about healthy eating. This lesson invites children to prepare two fun, healthy meat free dishes and enjoy them in a group tasting session. The beauty of these dishes is that their preparation doesn't require a cooker, so you can make them in any classroom. This lesson can be used in conjunction with the **Let's Go Shopping** lesson. Children can learn about the ingredients while they are at the supermarket and then prepare the dishes at school later.

Learning Objectives

Children should learn the following:

- To prepare two simple meat free dishes
- To write instructions in the form of recipes
- To use kitchen equipment safely
- To understand the importance of hygiene

Accompanying Materials

Time to Cook – Recipe Demo (teacher sheet)

Time to Cook – Recipe Demo



Hummus

Hummus is a chickpea dip which is popular in the Middle East. It's often used as a sandwich filling or eaten with falafel on pita bread.

Demo Tips

Ask the children if they have ever tried hummus. Where is it from? What ingredients does it contain?

Children can be shown how to open a can safely and how to drain the chickpeas. Alternatively, you may wish to drain and wash the chickpeas prior to the workshop.

A hand blender should be used to blend the chickpeas, and children should watch carefully. Advise them to have an adult present if they plan on making hummus at home.

Ingredients

- 1 tin chickpeas
- juice of ½ lemon
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon tahini
- 100 ml water
- salt
- black pepper
- paprika (optional, as garnish)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (optional, as garnish)
- coriander leaves, chopped (optional, as garnish)

Method

Drain the chickpeas and rinse. You may want to set aside a few whole chickpeas to add to the hummus at the end. Squeeze the lemon, combine the chickpeas, lemon juice, garlic, salt, water and tahini and blend them together with a hand blender to form a creamy purée. Place in a bowl or on a plate and drizzle olive oil on the mixture or in a small "well" in the middle. Throw in the whole chickpeas you set aside earlier and garnish with paprika and a few chopped coriander leaves. Serve the hummus with pita bread and crudités.

Guacamole

Originally from Mexico, guacamole is a dip made primarily from avocados. It dates back to the time of the Aztecs, who referred to guacamole as "ahuaca-mulli" (roughly translated, this means "avocado sauce" or "avocado mixture").

Ingredients

- 2 small, ripe avocados
- 1 spring onion
- ½ clove garlic
- ½ mild green chilli
- juice of ½ lime
- few drops of hot pepper sauce
- salt and ground black pepper
- 1 tomato, stem and seeds removed

Demo Tips

Ask the children if they have ever tried guacamole. What country is it from? What ingredients does it contain?

A good way to introduce the importance of good hygiene is to ask children to jot down or discuss with a partner 10 things their hands have touched that day. These may include grass, toilet paper, their nose, a dog, etc. Discuss the importance of washing hands.

It's important that the children be able to tell which avocados to buy, so if you haven't already discussed this, for example during the **Let's Go Shopping** lesson, have a selection of avocados with you, including some which are not yet ripe. Ask the children to feel them and tell you which ones should be used. Check for ripeness by gently pressing the outside of the avocado. If there is no give when you press an avocado, then it is not ripe yet and will not taste good. If there is a little give, the avocado is ripe. If there is a lot of give, the avocado may be overripe – black inside and not good.

Ask the children why it's important to avoid touching their eyes after cutting chillies.

Method

Cut the avocados in half, scoop out the flesh and place it in a mixing bowl. Mash the avocado well with a fork. Chop the spring onions, garlic and chilli and add these. Squeeze the juice from the limes and add the juice, the hot pepper sauce and some salt and pepper. Remove the seeds from the tomato, chop finely and add the tomato to the mixture. Serve the guacamole with corn chips.

