

Educational Activities

Foods
Let's learn to taste and recognize them



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Introduction

The following are three examples of activities to help you learn, distinguish and enjoy foods. Use your creativity to adapt them to your environmental, social, and cultural reality!

► Activity 1

Where does our food come from?

In brief

This activity is to help children become aware of the fact that all the different foods they eat come from somewhere. A taste workshop and a geographic map allow the children to understand that taste and other sensory properties of certain products are linked to their “territory”, place of origin.

Participants

Children aged between 8 and 16.

Objectives

- Understand the meaning of « region ».
- Deepen knowledge of the Presidia, Ark products and other local products from their own Country.
- Learn to identify the differences between products from their own region through the senses (sight, touch, smell, taste).

Coordinators

Teachers.

Materials

- Geographical map (or the teacher can draw one)
- Post-it notes (or normal slips of paper and adhesive tape or tacks)
- Some marker pens
- Samples of local products (even Ark and Presidia products if available)

Activity description



Part 1: research in the family

In the days preceding the activity, the children are asked to do some research work in the family to identify local products and indicate their origin.

Part 2: class debate

In class, the children present their research work; the debate concerns the definition of food origin and, therefore, of region.

Part 3: Taste Workshop

The teacher gets the children to taste Presidia and Ark of Taste products, stimulating them to identify the products and to describe them using their senses.

Part 4: locating regional origins

The teacher explains the meaning and importance of the region, then goes on to ask the children to identify on the map the products identified through their research, using the notes.

The children are given a summary of the characteristics that link each product to its region: the teacher tells the story of the product, illustrates the physical aspects of its place of origin (geology, climate, morphology, etc.), explains production techniques and describes the aspect and taste of the products. The map and notes are to be enriched with drawings and hung up in the classroom, like posters.

Variants

Field trips can be organized to the places of origin of the food products identified, inviting a producer or one of the children's relatives to class to tell the story and characteristics of a product.

Further information

For further information on the activity, contact Younes Zghari – Morocco (younes.zg@gmail.com) and John Kariuki Mwangi – Kenya (j.kariuki@slowfood.it)

▶ Activity 2

Fruit jigsaw puzzle!

In brief

This activity is to help children become aware of the fact that all the different foods they eat have specific sensory characteristics that are useful in distinguishing and knowing them.

Participants

Children aged between 4 and 13, divided into groups of 3 children each.

Objectives

- Stimulate concentration, observation, coordination.
- Comparative and tactile tasting.

Coordinators

Teachers, in the classroom or outdoors.

Materials

For each group of 3 children:

- 3 fruits of different colors or varieties (e.g. 3 different qualities of bananas or 3 mangos of different colors)
- A tray
- 3 small plates

Activity description

Part 1: dividing the fruits

The teacher cuts each fruit into 6 wedges/slices and mixes them up on the tray. He/she then repeats the procedure for each fruit group. In the meanwhile, the children have to wash their hands.

The material (tray of fruit, plates) is then given to each group and each participant is given a wedge of a different color.

Part 2: reassembling the jigsaw puzzle

All members of the group have to:

- reassemble each fruit, making sure the parts match perfectly
- taste a wedge of both their own fruit and the fruit of their group mates (comparative tasting)
- inspire verbalization (making comparisons and considerations: e.g. which of the three fruits is sweeter, more sour, more compact or mealy, etc.)

Part 3: stimulating verbalization

The teacher gathers the children's impressions and invites them to make comparisons, focusing on the aspects of biodiversity: shapes, non-uniform colors, flavors and textures...

Variants

Field trips can be organized to the orchards, inviting a producer or one of the children's relatives to class to tell the story and characteristics of a product.

▶ Activity 3

Sensing the garden

In brief

This activity is to help children become aware of the fact that all the different foods they eat have specific sensory characteristics that are useful in distinguishing and knowing them.

Participants

Children from 5 years of age, divided into groups equal in number.

Objectives

- Stimulate the sense of smell.
- Group work.

Coordinators

Teachers, in the classroom.

Materials

For 24 children:

- Table or work top
- 24 samples of 12 types of vegetables and/or fruits
- 24 perforated containers, all the same and non-transparent (as an alternative, make some small packets with paper/cloth)
- A sheet of paper and a marker
- 12 small cups or other containers on which to write or to stick some labels

Preparation

The teacher prepares an alpha-symbolic key on a sheet of paper, e.g.:

A = ◇

B = #

...

Match a plant to each letter/symbol, e.g.:

A = \diamond = cipolla

B = # = pomodoro

...

Prepare 3 samples for each fruit and vegetable:

- 1 sample is put into a perforated container/packet marked with the corresponding letter
- 1 sample is put into a perforated container/packet marked with the corresponding symbol
- 1 sample is put into a cup marked letter + symbol + name of the fruit or vegetable and is placed on the table. The cups are then to be covered with paper to keep the contents them hidden from the children's sight and smell.

Example:

3 samples are made from the onion: one marked with the letter "A", one marked with the symbol " \diamond " and one in the glass marked "A \diamond onion".

Activity description

Part 1: distributing samples and their pairs

Each child is given a secret packet: by just smelling it, they have to identify its twin sample (tell the children that the child holding a packet marked with a letter has to look for a partner among those with the packet marked with a symbol, and vice versa)

Part 2: sensorial identification

When all the pairs are reunited, the teacher invites the children to come to the table to indicate which plant the 2 samples refer to, and gives each couple the cup containing the third corresponding part. On uncovering the cups, each pair can touch the content and memorize the scent-shape-tactile feel (preferably with their eyes closed).



Help us find more photos!