

Number Salad

An adaptable, integrated lesson plan for K-2

By Patti Evens

Overview: After reading the non-fiction book The Vegetables We Eat by Gail Gibbons, children discuss and make connections and inferences about the parts of the vegetable plants that are eaten. A chart or class book can be made using the terms leaf (like lettuce), bulb (like an onion), flower bud (like broccoli), root (like beets or carrot), tuber (like potato), stem (like celery), fruit (like tomato), and seed (like peas or beans). The discussion leads to the class-generated idea of bringing veggies from home to school (or picking them from the school garden, or visiting a local tailgate market as a field trip), and then making their own “number salad.”

Booklinks: The Gigantic Turnip by Aleski Tolstoy, Oliver’s Vegetables by Vivian French, How Groundhogs Garden Grew by Lynne Cherry, From Seed to Plant by Gail Gibbons, The Ugly Vegetables by Grace Lin, A Harvest of Color by Melanie Eclare, I Will Never, Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child, Two Old Potatoes by John Coy, Tops and Bottoms by ***, Scarlette Beane by Karen Wallace, Jack’s Garden by Henry Cole, Vegetable Dreams by Dawn Jeffers, Whose Garden Is It? By Mary Ann Hoberman, Lily’s Garden by Deborah Kogan Ray

Science, Math, Writing Activity Link: *Inquiry-* Do you know that when you eat broccoli you are eating flower buds? Plants grow roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds. You can find all these plant parts in your garden. What may surprise you is that you can also find them at the grocery store! What roots will you find at the store? Fruits are the parts of plants that have seeds. Do all fruits taste sweet? Let’s make a shopping list for the next time that you go to the grocery store with your family. On your paper, write root, leaf, stem, flower, seed, and fruit, and be sure to leave some space under each word. Have your children:

- ✓ Take their list to the grocery store next time they go with their parent.
- ✓ Record with drawing veggies they see. They should take a ‘best guess’ as to what part of the plant the veggie represents.
- ✓ Have them bring their papers back to school for sharing.

Here's a sample:

Shopping List

Root

Carrot

Radish

Leaf

spinach

lettuce

Stem

celery

asparagus

Flower

Broccoli

Cauliflower

Seed

sunflower

sesame

Fruit

tomato

cucumber

When the shopping lists come back to school, discuss and chart their findings. Ask questions like “Which plant parts do you like to eat?” “Which plant parts are juicy or crunchy or soft or crisp?” “Do any taste sweet or spicy or tangy or savory?”

(adapted from *Gardening with Children* by Monika Hannemann et. al.)

Journal Link: Throughout the recipe below, you will find references to the students writing in their journals. Journals are a great way to integrate writing into your cooking activity. A simple journal format is the *Stick Journal*. They can each make one of these, and then title it “My Cooking Journal” and have it on hand each time you cook in the classroom.

If you have beginning-of-the-year kindergarteners, just make a “big book” version of the *Stick Journal*, and use it as a class journal, with you recording their observations throughout the cooking activity. After modeling this during the first semester, your kindergarteners will be ready to make their own journal and record their own observations through drawing and writing when you cook second semester!

Stick Journal

This is a fun book because it is so simple and so clever. You can make your book with more pages but the number of sheets of paper suggested here is at my limit of strength for punching the holes through all the layers at once. Because the punching can be difficult, I usually don't make it with large groups. I've suggested using 8 1/2 x 11 paper, but any size will work. You can make the book more decorative by using colored regular or hair elastics, bamboo sticks, decorated chopsticks, pencils, etc.

You Need:

- ❖ 4 sheets 8 1/2" x 11" white paper
- ❖ 1 sheet 8 1/2" x 11" colored paper
- ❖ 1 elastic band (I used size 33. You don't have to have this exact size but it needs to be long enough to go through the holes and stretch around the stick.)
- ❖ 1 stick about 7 1/2" long or a plastic straw
- ❖ Hole punch
 - Tap all your sheets of paper together to make them even and fold the stack in half. The colored paper should be on the outside.
 - From the back of the book, thread one end of the elastic through the top hole and insert the stick into the loop.
 - At the back of the book, pull the other end of the elastic down and put it through the bottom hole. Insert the other end of the stick into the loop.
 - 2. Punch two holes about 1/4" in from the folded edge of the paper through all the layers. You don't want the holes to be too close to the edge or they might tear but the further in toward the center the holes are, the less your book will open. They should be about 1 1/2" (or the length of your thumb) down from the top and up from the bottom.

More bookmaking ideas are available at Susan's website, makingbooks.com, which has more projects and information about making books with children. Ebooks are available for purchase at the Bookstore including *Multicultural Books To Make And Share* which contains sixteen bookmaking projects from around the world.

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Cooking Activity: *Number Salad* (adapted from Katzen)

1. Each child will need:

½ spring onion	4 small lettuce or spinach leaves	1 small carrot
1 stalk broccoli	2 cherry tomatoes	½ stem of celery
1 radish	a handful of sunflower seeds	10 dried cranberries
1/3 small cucumber	salad dressing	

First, teach your children how to wash veggies using a small brush to scrub it clean. This could be the job of a small group or the whole class taking turns, stationed at your classroom sink, or if you don't have a sink, use wash pails of water. Be sure to let them dry the veggies.

2. Get Ready:

Next, talk with children about knife safety. Use serrated, sturdy, plastic picnic knives and cutting boards. You can wrap some tape around the handle ends of the knives, and let children know that is the only end of the knife they are allowed to touch. Model for the group how to slice the onion, carrot, celery, broccoli, and radish. Then, give each of those children a paper plate, a knife and their veggies. As they chop their veggies, have them place them on another plate. The children will add the veggies to their salad bowl using the following guide:

- 1 handful of sunflower seeds
- 2 slices of radish
- 3 pieces of spring onion
- 4 small lettuce or spinach leaves
- 5 cherry tomatoes
- 6 pieces of celery
- 7 pieces of broccoli
- 8 pieces of carrot
- 9 chunks of cucumber
- 10 dried cranberries

3. Stir and pour:

After everything is in their bowl, have them stir while you pour a bit of dressing onto their salad!

After the children eat their number salad, they can reflect in their journals. We always take time and care to 'set the table'. We wash our hands before eating, and never start eating until the last one is served. Be sure to take pictures, and send the recipe home.