

Fresh Summer Salsa

Instructions and ingredient quantities are written for a class of approximately 20 children.

Ingredients

3 pounds of local tomatoes or 4 pints of small tomatoes such as yellow pear, sun gold, or cherry tomatoes (washed)
 3 sweet green, red, or yellow peppers (washed, deseeded and cut into large chunks the students will chop into smaller pieces)
 1 bunch scallions (cut into sections the students will chop into smaller pieces)
 3 garlic cloves (peeled)
 1 bunch cilantro (washed and divided)
 3-4 limes (cut into 20 pieces-or one for each child)
 Salt and pepper
 Corn tortilla chips

Materials

At Each Student Cooking Station

Cutting boards or paper plates (one for each child)
 Plastic knives (one for each child)
 3-4 large bowls (one for each table)
 3-4 small bowls (one for each table-to use for compost)
 Tablecloths (one for each table)
 3-4 choppers (one for each table)

At Teacher's Station

Paper plates
 Plastic forks
 Sharp knife
 Cutting board
 Large serving spoon

At Sink Area and for Clean Up

Sponge, dish soap, paper towels



Before you start cooking:

Set up the students' tables for the cooking class. Wash the tables/desks and lay table cloths over them. Put a cutting board and plastic knife at each student's place; put two bowls, a spoon, and a chopper at each table.

Steps with the Students

Keep it clean

Ask students to wash their hands thoroughly. Review proper hand washing techniques: Wet hands with clean water, add soap, rub hands together vigorously and scrub thoroughly. Rub hands with soap for at least 20 seconds (sing ABCs), rinse with clean water.

Introduce the Ingredients

Write the list of ingredients on the board. Show students the ingredients in their whole form and point out which part we eat. This is your opportunity to tell the story of the vegetables in the recipe and to create buy-in from the kids to try them. For this recipe, tell the students a few tomato facts or our own story or memory about eating tomatoes. Tell them about the farmer who grew the tomatoes. Ask them, why does it matter that some (or all) of the ingredients were grown close by? Get their ideas and then offer your ideas (fresher, tastes better, keeps jobs in our community).

Literature Connections

Chicks and Salsa
 by Aaron Reynolds

Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes
 by Demian Elaine Yumei



Curriculum Connections

Use hands-on cooking classes as a mechanism for teaching curriculum concepts. A few ideas for activities to accompany the fresh summer salsa recipe include:

1. Show students the different types of tomatoes and ask them to make up their own creative names for the tomatoes.
2. Review the word "tool." What does that word mean? What are some tools carpenters use to build a house? What are some tools a chef uses to make food? Ask students to invent their very own cooking tool and draw a picture of it.

Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at www.growing-minds.org.

Introduce the Equipment

Show the students each of the tools they will use in this recipe and have them guess what the tool is used for. Demonstrate the proper way to hold and handle the tools.

What's going to happen? Review the Steps with Students

Go over each of the steps of making the recipe, from washing the vegetables to trying the salsa (yes-trying it is a step!). **Write the steps on the board.**

Step 1: Wash all vegetables.

Step 2. Using a plastic knife, cut the pepper, scallions and tomatoes into very small pieces (show them how small).

Step 3. Using the choppers, mince the garlic.

Step 4. Tear the cilantro into small pieces using your hands.

Step 6. Add all chopped and minced ingredients to the large bowl.

Step 7. Squeeze the lime slice so that its juice goes into the large bowl.

Step 8. Take turns stirring the salsa.

Step 9. Add a dash of salt and pepper (teachers do this step).

Step 10. Try it!

Step 11. Clean up.

Get Them Cooking!

Wash and Prepare the Ingredients

Choose several children to wash the vegetables by running them under water (with a teacher's assistant or volunteer's help). Bring the veggies back to the teacher's cooking station and prep them while talking a bit more about each ingredient. See preparation instructions in the ingredient list.

Chop, Chop, Mix!

Ask the students to take a seat at the tables/desks. Put a chunk of tomato or cherry tomatoes, a chunk of pepper, a piece of scallion, a bit of cilantro, and a slice of lime on each child's cutting board. Put one or two garlic cloves in each of the choppers. Prompt students to start cutting the ingredients using their plastic knives. Prompt them to take turns mincing the garlic in the choppers. When the children use the choppers, they should take three turns chopping and then pass the chopper. (Create a pattern with this step by having the students chant Chop, Chop, Chop, Pass; Chop, Chop, Chop, Pass; Chop, Chop, Chop, Pass.) Once the ingredients are all very small, students can add them to the bowl on the table. Prompt students to squeeze their lime into the salsa. Take turns mixing.



Last Steps

Taste it!

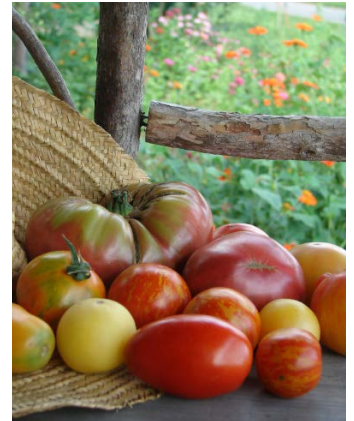
Give each child a paper plate with several chips and a spoonful of their groups' salsa. Prompt the children to try their salsa together all at once.

Clean Up

Kids can help in the clean up process by putting their plates in the trash and helping to pick up debris on the floor. While you finish clean up, ask a volunteer to read the suggested books.

Did you know...

There are over 10,000 types of tomatoes!



Tomatoes have cousins! The tomato is a cousin of the eggplant, red pepper, ground cherry, and the potato.

While tomatoes are perfectly safe and healthy to eat, their leaves are actually toxic.

Making salsa by combining chile peppers, tomatoes, and other ingredients like squash seeds has been documented back to the Aztec culture.

More Salsa Activities Mystery Ingredient

Offer each group a mystery ingredient to add to their salsa. Some delicious mystery ingredients for salsa include plums, peaches, cucumbers, and green beans. Have them choose an ingredient, chop it finely and add it to the salsa.

Name that Salsa

Ask the students to come up with a name for their salsa. Review other things that have names or titles. What do titles communicate? Books, songs, etc. Student come up with all sorts of whacky titles:

Squishy Bitsy Salsa

Mountain Fresh Cucumber Salsa

Super Summer Salsa

Mix It Up Saucy Salsa