

# Mashed Potatoes with Herbs

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



## Ingredients

10 medium to large local potatoes, look for a variety of colors!

Variety of fresh herbs, like dill, parsley, chives, thyme, etc.

3 Tbsp. butter

1/2 cup milk



## Steps with the Students

### Keep it Clean

Ask students to wash their hands. 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 the 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 and to create buy-in from the kids to try them. Show them a picture of the farmer who grew the potatoes. Tell them a story about eating potatoes yourself. What are the differences between white potatoes and a sweet potatoes? Explain that a potato and sweet potato are completely different vegetables and are not even in the same plant family! (They're not even cousins!) Show them that they will be tasting different varieties of potatoes in a wide variety of colors.

## Materials

### At Each Student Cooking Station

Cutting boards or paper plates (two for each table)

Plastic knives (one for each child)

Paper plates (one for each child)

Tablecloths (one for each table)

1 large bowl (for each table)

Mixing spoon

Potato masher (as many as possible)

### At the Teacher's Station

Sharp knife

Cutting board

Induction burner or electric burner

Large pot with lid

Extension cord

### At Sink Area and for Clean Up

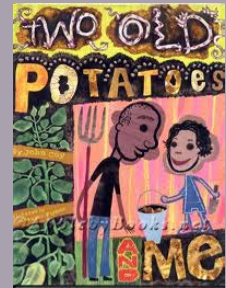
Sponge, dish soap, paper towels

### 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, a mixing bowl, potato masher, and spoon at each table. Set up a station to sample and vote for herbs.

## Literature Connections

*Two Old Potatoes and Me*  
by John Coy



## Curriculum Connections

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

1. Show students potatoes and sweet potatoes (first uncut and then cut) and ask them to use their senses to describe the similarities and differences. Record their observations on a Venn Diagram.
2. Read students "Two Old Potatoes and Me." Ask students about details of the book and prompt them to retell the story. What was the main lesson? Who were the main characters? How did they react to challenges?
3. What ingredients in the recipe come from a plant? Which part of the plant?

## 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](http://www.growing-minds.org).

## Introduce the Equipment

Show the students the tools they will use to make the mashed potatoes. Demonstrate the proper way to use the knives.

## 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 mashed potatoes (yes-tasting it is a step!). **Write the steps on the board.**

**Step 1:** Explain that the potatoes were already washed.

**Step 2:** Cut the potatoes into small pieces

**Step 3:** Add the potatoes to the bowl at your table.

**Step 4:** One person brings the bowl to the teacher station where the water is boiling.

**Step 5:** Add the potatoes to the water (teachers do this step).

**Step 6:** Visit the herb exploration station and vote for your favorite herb.

**Step 7:** Read a book about potatoes.

**Step 8:** Drain the water off of the potatoes (teachers do this step).

**Step 10:** Add butter and milk to the potatoes.

**Step 11:** Mash the potatoes with the potato masher.

**Step 12:** Stir in the winning herb.

**Step 13:** Taste the potatoes.

**Step 14:** Clean up.

## Did you know. . .

Potatoes aren't roots! They are *tubers*, which are underground stems. Sweet potatoes are roots.



Potatoes can be steamed, boiled, microwaved, fried, juiced, pureed, and even eaten raw!

## More Potato Activities

### Name that vegetable!

Use children's natural curiosity to encourage them to try new fruits and vegetables. Peel and cut a sweet potato into small sticks for a classroom tasting or snack. Ask students to taste the sticks and guess what fruit or vegetable it is.

### Make Sweet Potato Slips!

Cut a sweet potato in half, and perch it on the mouth of a jar by suspending it with toothpicks. By sure the bottom half of the potato is submerged in water. Place it in a sunny location and add water so the bottom half remains wet. After a while (several weeks) shoots will form on the top of your potato. You can gently remove these and place them in water, again half-submersed, and roots will develop. When they reach a couple of inches, simply transplant them into your garden and water them thoroughly.

## Get Them Cooking!

### Wash and Prepare the Ingredients

Evenly divide the pre-washed ingredients (potato halves, butter, milk) between the children's tables.

### Cutting and Cooking

Ask students to take a seat at the tables/desks. Ask students at each table to start cutting the potatoes into small pieces. Young students will need help from an adult cutting the potatoes. Ask students to put the cut potatoes into the large bowl and bring them to the teacher station.

### Voting and Mashing

While the potatoes cook, ask students to sample the variety of herbs using all of their senses. Which one is their favorite? Allow them to cast a vote and use the winning herb in the recipe. If you need to fill time while the potatoes cook, read the book *Two Old Potatoes and Me*. Once the potatoes are cooked, drain them and divide them evenly among the tables. Ask students to add the butter and milk and to take turns mashing the potatoes. Stir in the winning herb.



## Last Steps

### Taste it!

Ask students to take a small serving of the mashed potatoes and sample them.

### 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.