

Sweet Potato Fritters

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



Adapted from www.thepancakeprincess.com

Ingredients

1-2 local sweet potatoes
1 large egg
Olive oil for greasing the pan
Optional seasonings: fresh herbs, salt, pepper

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, one set of measuring cups, one box grater, a mixing bowl, and spoon at each table.

Materials

At each student cooking station

Cutting boards or paper plates (two for each table)
Paper plates (one for each child)
Tablecloths (one for each table)
Box graters (one or two for each table)
1 Large bowl (for each table)
Mixing spoon
One large tray or cookie sheet per table

At the Teacher's Station

Nonstick electric skillet or stainless steel pan and induction burner (extension cord if needed)
Spatula
Olive oil

At Sink Area and for Clean up

Sponge, dish soap, paper towels

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

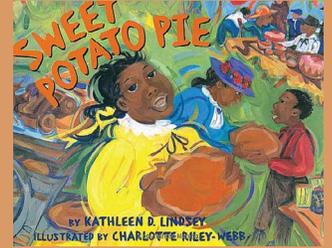
Write the list of ingredients on the board. Show students the ingredients in their whole form and point out which part we eat. This is your opportunity to tell the story of the vegetables and to create buy-in from the kids to try them. Show them a picture of the farmer who grew the sweet potatoes. Tell them a story about eating sweet potatoes yourself. Why are sweet potatoes so good for us? 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!) Sweet potatoes are in the same plant family as the morning glory flower (show them a photo of a morning glory); potatoes are in the same plant family as eggplant!

Introduce the Equipment

Show the students the tools they will use to make their sweet potato pancakes. Demonstrate the proper way to use the box graters, and measuring cups.

Literature Connections

Sweet Potato Pie
by Kathleen D. Lindsey



Curriculum Connections

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

1. Show students both types of 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 *Sweet Potato Pie*. 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.

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

Step 1. Wash sweet potatoes and any fresh herbs

Step 2. Shred 1 ¾ cups of local sweet potato (you can peel them or leave the peel on) using a box grater.

Step 3. Put the grated sweet potato in a mixing bowl. Add 1 large egg and stir to combine.

Step 4. Add any seasonings that you would like (optional). See our Mashed Potatoes with Fresh Herbs lesson plan for ideas on how to let students choose the herbs you include.

Step 5. Heat a nonstick electric skillet (you can use a stainless steel pan and an induction burner but the fritters will be more likely to stick and fall apart). Put a small amount of olive oil on the skillet and spread it around with a spatula. (teacher does this step)

Step 6. Use a measuring spoon to put tablespoons of the mixture on the electric skillet. If the fritters start to fall apart, push them back together and press down on them with the spatula. When you can easily slide a spatula under the fritters (approx. 2-3 minutes), the egg has set and you can flip the fritters and cook until browned. (teacher does this step)

Step 7. Remove the fritters from heat and place on paper towels.

Step 8. Taste it!

Step 9. Clean up.

Did you know. . .

Sweet potatoes are roots, compared to regular potatoes which are tubers (underground stems).



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

Sweet potatoes are the official vegetable for North Carolina.

Get Them Cooking!

Wash and Prepare the Ingredients

Wash and prepare the potatoes and herbs! Choose several children to wash the vegetables by running them under cold water (with a teacher's assistant or volunteer's help). Evenly divide the ingredients (sweet potato and herbs).

Grating, Mixing, Cooking

Ask students to take a seat at the tables/desks. Ask students at each table to start grating the sweet potato and if using herbs, remove the stems and tear the leaves into a large bowl. Young students will need help from an adult grating the sweet potato. Ask students to place grated sweet potato into the large bowl with the herbs. Teacher should then add the egg to the mixture. Taking turns the students should then mix then mix the ingredients thoroughly (stir, stir, pass, stir, stir, pass, etc.) The teacher will then cook the fritters at the teacher's station. What do the students think will happen as the ingredients are exposed to heat.



Last Steps

Taste it!

Give each child a sweet potato pancake on a small paper plate. Prompt the children to try the pancakes 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.

More Sweet 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.