

Objective

By the end of this lesson, Connor will be able to modify a traditional bolognese sauce recipe to suit a vegetarian diet, understand basic knife skills, and explain how acids can change the structure of proteins in both meat and meat alternatives.

Materials and Prep

- Knife (chef's knife preferred)
- Cutting board
- Vegetarian meat alternative (e.g., soya or lentils)
- Canned tomatoes
- Onion
- Garlic
- Carrot
- Celery
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- Herbs (e.g., basil, oregano)
- Acidic ingredient (e.g., vinegar or lemon juice)
- Cooking pot
- Stirring spoon

Before the lesson, ensure that all ingredients are available and prepped as needed. Familiarize Connor with basic knife safety and techniques.

Activities

• Knife Skills Practice

Start with a fun knife skills practice session. Connor will learn how to properly hold a knife, chop vegetables, and prepare ingredients for the sauce. This will build his confidence and safety in the kitchen.

• Understanding Protein Structure

Engage Connor in a discussion about how acids affect proteins. Use simple examples to explain denaturation and coagulation, and how this applies to both meat and vegetarian alternatives.

• Cooking the Bolognese Sauce

Guide Connor through the process of making the bolognese sauce, encouraging him to modify the recipe as needed for vegetarian preferences. This hands-on activity will reinforce the skills learned earlier.

• Taste Testing

After cooking, have a taste test! Let Connor evaluate his dish and discuss what he might tweak next time. This will encourage critical thinking and creativity in cooking.

Talking Points

- "Knife skills are essential in the kitchen. A good cook knows how to handle their tools safely and efficiently."

- "When we cook meat or meat alternatives, we can change the texture and flavor using acids. Can you think of any examples?"
- "Denaturation is when proteins unfold and change structure. This happens when we cook meat or add an acid."
- "Vegetarian alternatives can be just as delicious as meat! What do you think makes a good substitute?"
- "Cooking is about experimentation. Feel free to add your own twist to the bolognese sauce!"
- "Taste is subjective. What do you like in a bolognese sauce? How can we make it better?"
- "Always taste as you go. It helps you learn and adjust flavors!"
- "What are some other dishes we could modify for a vegetarian diet?"
- "Cooking with friends or family makes it more fun! Who would you like to cook for?"
- "Remember, practice makes perfect. The more you cook, the better you'll get!"
- "Cooking is a skill that will serve you for a lifetime. What do you want to learn next?"
- "Don't be afraid to make mistakes in the kitchen; they often lead to the best discoveries!"
- "Herbs and spices can elevate your dish. What are some you enjoy using?"
- "What are the health benefits of a vegetarian diet? Let's explore that!"
- "Cooking can be a way to express yourself creatively. How do you want to express yourself today?"