

Objective

By the end of this lesson, the student will understand how a vanilla plant grows, how vanilla is harvested, and how it is turned into delicious vanilla ice cream. The lesson will be engaging and interactive, allowing the student to visualize and participate in the process.

Materials and Prep

- Pictures of vanilla plants, flowers, and beans
- Ice cream-making supplies (milk, cream, sugar, vanilla extract)
- Art supplies (paper, crayons, markers)
- Small pots for planting (optional)
- Access to a blender (for ice cream activity)
- Pre-prepared vanilla extract (store-bought or homemade)

Activities

- **Vanilla Plant Exploration:**

Show pictures of vanilla plants and explain how they grow. If possible, plant a vanilla seed or a small vanilla plant in a pot to observe its growth over time.

- **Vanilla Bean Discovery:**

Introduce the vanilla bean by showing pictures and discussing how it is harvested. Let the student smell a vanilla bean or vanilla extract to connect the plant to the flavor.

- **Make Your Own Vanilla Ice Cream:**

Using the ice cream-making supplies, guide the student through the process of making vanilla ice cream. This hands-on activity will help them understand how vanilla is used in ice cream.

- **Art Project - Vanilla Journey:**

Have the student draw or create a visual story of the journey from the vanilla plant to the ice cream cone. They can illustrate each step, such as planting, harvesting, and making ice cream.

Talking Points

- "Did you know that vanilla comes from a special plant? It's a beautiful flower!"
- "After the flower blooms, it makes a long green bean. That's where vanilla flavor comes from!"
- "We have to pick the vanilla beans and let them dry in the sun. This takes a long time!"
- "Once we have the dried beans, we can make vanilla extract. It smells so good!"
- "Finally, we can mix the vanilla with cream and sugar to make yummy vanilla ice cream!"