

Lesson Plan: Fruit & Veggie Rainbow Adventure

Subject: Early Learning - Sensory Exploration & Language Development

Target Age Group: 2-Year-Olds (Oliver, Mila, Reggie)

Focus: This lesson uses hands-on, play-based activities to introduce fruits and vegetables, encouraging sensory exploration, language skills, and creativity.

Materials Needed:

- **For Sensory Exploration:**
 - A selection of sturdy, whole fruits and vegetables (e.g., apples, bananas, oranges, carrots, potatoes, bell peppers, broccoli). Choose a variety of colors and textures.
 - Two shallow plastic bins or containers.
 - A small amount of water in one bin.
 - Small cloths or vegetable brushes.
 - An opaque cloth bag (a "Mystery Bag").
 - **For Art Activity:**
 - Large sheets of paper or a roll of craft paper.
 - Kid-safe, non-toxic, washable paint in a few primary colors on paper plates.
 - Vegetables cut for stamping (e.g., a bell pepper cut horizontally to show the flower shape, a potato cut in half, a head of broccoli, a celery stalk).
 - Smocks or old t-shirts to protect clothing.
 - **For Wrap-Up:**
 - Pre-sliced, ready-to-eat fruit (e.g., banana slices, strawberries, melon).
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Lesson Procedure

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Oliver, Mila, and Reggie will be able to:

- Engage with various fruits and vegetables using at least three senses (touch, sight, smell).
- Participate in a simple sorting activity (e.g., by color or by washing).
- Use fine motor skills to manipulate vegetables for washing and stamping.
- Verbally name or point to at least one fruit or vegetable when prompted.

2. Introduction: The Mystery Bag Song (5 minutes)

Goal: To capture interest and introduce the lesson's theme in a fun, engaging way.

1. Gather the children in a circle on the floor. Start by singing a simple welcome song they know.
 2. Show them the "Mystery Bag." Shake it gently and ask, "I wonder what's inside our mystery bag today?"
 3. Sing to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell":
*"What's in the mystery bag?
What's in the mystery bag?"*
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*Let's reach right in and pull one out,
What's in the mystery bag?"*

4. Encourage each child to take a turn reaching in (without peeking) and pulling out one item.
5. As each item is revealed, name it clearly and talk about its color and feel. For example: "Wow, Oliver! You found a yellow banana! It feels so smooth." or "Mila, that's a red apple! It's round and hard."

3. Main Activity 1: Fruit & Veggie Wash Station (10 minutes)

Goal: To provide a hands-on, sensory experience that develops fine motor skills and practical life skills.

1. Move to a protected area (floor with a splash mat or outdoors). Present the two shallow bins. One bin is the "dirty" bin with all the produce from the mystery bag, and the other has a small amount of clean water.
2. Say, "Our fruits and veggies are a little dirty! They need a bath before we can use them. Can you help me wash them?"
3. Demonstrate how to take one item, like a carrot, and use a cloth or brush to gently wash it in the water bin. Use descriptive language: "Scrub, scrub, scrub the long, orange carrot. Now it's all clean!"
4. Let the children freely explore washing the items. Encourage them to transfer the clean items to a towel or a third, empty "clean" bin.
5. Talk about what they are doing: "Reggie, you are washing the bumpy broccoli." "Mila, look how the water rolls off the smooth pepper."

4. Main Activity 2: Rainbow Stamping Art (10-15 minutes)

Goal: To encourage creativity and connect the shapes and textures of vegetables to art.

1. Lay out the large sheet of paper on the floor or a low table. Place the plates of paint and the pre-cut stamping vegetables nearby.
2. Show the children the cut vegetables. Say, "Look! When we cut the pepper, it looks like a flower inside. Let's see what happens when we dip it in paint."
3. Demonstrate dipping a vegetable stamp (e.g., the potato half) into the paint and pressing it firmly onto the paper. Lift it to reveal the print. "Stomp! The potato made a red circle!"
4. Invite the children to create their own stamped art. This is a process-oriented activity; focus on the fun of exploring the cause-and-effect of stamping, not on making a perfect picture.
5. Encourage them to try different vegetables and colors. "Oliver, what shape will the broccoli make?" "Let's try the celery stick with blue paint!"

5. Closure & Wrap-Up: A Healthy Snack (5 minutes)

Goal: To reinforce the theme through the sense of taste and practice transitioning to a calm activity.

1. While the art dries, guide the children through cleaning their hands.
2. Bring out the plate of pre-sliced, ready-to-eat fruit.
3. Sit together and enjoy the snack. As you eat, casually review the experience. "Remember how we washed the apple? Now we can eat a yummy apple slice." "This banana is sweet! We pulled a banana from our mystery bag."
4. Involve the children in tidying up by asking them to help put the whole fruits and vegetables into a basket.

Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **For Hesitant Children:** If a child is reluctant to touch the paint or water, allow them to observe first. Offer them a "tool" like a brush or a vegetable stalk to touch the paint with, so their hands don't get messy initially. Never force participation.
- **For Advanced Engagement:** For a child showing strong verbal skills, ask more complex questions: "Can you find another red vegetable?" or "Let's count the potatoes. One, two!"
- **Motor Skill Support:** If a child has difficulty grasping the vegetables for stamping, offer hand-over-hand guidance to help them feel the motion of pressing down.
- **Pacing:** This lesson is designed to be flexible. If the children are highly engaged in one activity (like the water play), feel free to extend it and shorten or skip another. Follow their lead.

Assessment (Observational)

During the lesson, observe and note the following:

- **Engagement:** Did the child actively participate in at least one of the activities? Did they watch with interest?
- **Sensory Exploration:** Did the child willingly touch the different textures? Did they seem to notice the colors and smells?
- **Language:** Did the child attempt to repeat the name of a fruit or vegetable? Did they use related words like "wash," "wet," or "stomp"? Did they point to an item when you named it?
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Was the child able to grasp the vegetables to wash or stamp them (with or without assistance)?