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# Lesson Plan: My Fun Harvest Basket

## Materials Needed:

- A small basket, bag, or bucket
- A few real fruits and vegetables (e.g., an apple, a carrot, a potato, a small gourd or pumpkin)
- Construction paper (brown, red, orange, green, yellow)
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue stick
- Crayons or markers
- A picture book about fall, farming, or harvest (e.g., "We Gather Together" by Wendy Pfeffer or "Tops & Bottoms" by Janet Stevens)

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## Lesson Details

**Subject:** Science, Art, and Life Skills

**Grade Level:** Preschool / Kindergarten (Age 5)

**Time Allotment:** 45-60 minutes

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### 1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Explain in their own words that "harvest" means gathering food that has finished growing.
- Identify and name at least three different harvested foods.
- Sort vegetables and fruits based on where they grow (under the ground vs. on a plant/tree).
- Practice fine motor skills by cutting and gluing to create a harvest craft.

### 2. Introduction: The Mystery Basket (10 minutes)

**Goal:** Spark curiosity and introduce the topic.

1. **Engage:** Sit with the student and show them the empty basket. Say, "I have a special job for us today! We are going to be farmers and go on a harvest. But first, what does 'harvest' mean?" Listen to their ideas.
2. **Explain:** Explain in simple terms: "Harvest is the time when farmers and gardeners gather all the yummy foods they have grown. They pick the apples from the trees and pull the carrots from the ground. It's like a big food-collecting party!"
3. **Explore:** Place the real fruits and vegetables on the floor. Let the student touch, smell, and describe them. Ask questions like:
  - "What color is this apple?"
  - "How does this potato feel? Is it smooth or bumpy?"
  - "Where do you think a carrot grows? In a tree?" (This leads into the next activity).

### 3. Instructional Activity: Where Does It Grow? & Harvest Hunt (15 minutes)

**Goal:** Teach about different types of harvested foods and get the student moving.

1. **Story Time:** Read the chosen picture book about farming or harvest. As you read, point out the different foods and how the characters are gathering them.
2. **Sorting Game:** Talk about how some foods grow underground and some grow on top of the ground.
  - Hold up the potato and carrot: "These grow **under** the ground! The plant is on top, but the part we eat is hiding in the dirt."
  - Hold up the apple and gourd: "These grow **on** a plant, like a tree or a vine, where we can see them."
  - Have the student create two piles: an "under the ground" pile and an "on the plant" pile.
3. **Harvest Hunt:** While the student covers their eyes, hide the real fruits and vegetables around the room. Hand them the basket and say, "It's harvest time! Let's go find and gather our crops!" Cheer them on as they find each item and place it in their basket.

### 4. Creative Application: My Harvest Basket Craft (15 minutes)

**Goal:** Reinforce learning through a hands-on, creative project.

1. **Create the Basket:** Give the student a piece of brown construction paper. Help them draw and cut out a simple basket shape. Or, they can simply use the whole page as the background for their harvest.
2. **Make the Food:** Provide the other colors of construction paper. Encourage the student to draw and cut out shapes of their favorite fruits and vegetables (e.g., a red circle for an apple, an orange triangle for a carrot, a yellow circle for a pumpkin).
  - **Differentiation:** For a child still developing scissor skills, you can draw the shapes with a thick black marker for them to cut along, or you can cut the shapes out for them. For an advanced child, challenge them to make a vegetable you haven't talked about yet.
3. **Assemble the Harvest:** Have the student glue their paper fruits and veggies "inside" their paper basket. They can use crayons to add details, like leaves on the carrots or a stem on the apple.

### 5. Closure and Assessment (5 minutes)

**Goal:** Review the concepts and connect the lesson to real life.

1. **Show and Tell:** Ask the student to show you their craft and tell you about the food they "harvested" in their basket. Ask, "What was your favorite part about harvest time?"
2. **Review:** Ask one final time, "So, what does it mean to harvest something?" (Looking for a simple answer like "picking food" or "gathering vegetables").
3. **Taste Test:** As a fun reward and sensory conclusion, wash and cut up one of the real food items (like the apple) for a healthy and delicious harvest snack.

### Extension Ideas

- **Go on a Field Trip:** Visit a local farm, pumpkin patch, or apple orchard to see a real harvest in action.
- **Plant a Seed:** Plant a fast-growing seed, like a bean or a radish, in a small pot with soil. The student can water it and watch it grow, eventually having their very own tiny harvest.
- **Cook Together:** Use the harvested items (real or purchased) to make a simple recipe, like vegetable soup or applesauce.

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