

# Little Chef's Kitchen: Cooking Fun with Five Easy Recipes

## Lesson Overview

In this lesson, young learners will transition from observers to active participants in the kitchen. They will explore five simple, no-heat recipes that develop fine motor skills, following multi-step directions, and sensory exploration.

## Learning Objectives

- **Objective 1:** The learner will follow 2-step verbal directions during food preparation.
- **Objective 2:** The learner will practice three fine motor skills: spreading, mashing, and rolling.
- **Objective 3:** The learner will identify and name at least three different colors or textures of food.
- **Objective 4:** The learner will demonstrate basic kitchen safety (washing hands and "listening ears").

## Materials Needed

- **Safety Gear:** An apron (or old t-shirt) and a stool if needed.
- **Tools:** Kid-safe butter knife or spreader, a plastic fork, a large bowl, a muffin tin (optional for sorting), and small plates.
- **Ingredients for the 5 Recipes:**
  - Celery stalks and raisins (for Ants on a Log)
  - Yogurt and berries (for Parfait Towers)
  - Bread and bananas (for Banana Smash Toast)
  - Tortillas and sliced cheese/turkey (for Rainbow Wraps)
  - Oats, honey/maple syrup, and sunflower butter (for Energy Sun Balls)

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## 1. Introduction: The Magic Chef's Hat (The Hook)

**The Hook:** Put on a chef's hat or apron. "Welcome to the Little Chef Kitchen! Today, we aren't just eating food—we are *making* it. Did you know you have magic hands that can turn fruit and bread into art?"

**The "Tell Them":** "Today we are going to learn how to be safe in the kitchen. Then, we will make five special snacks: Ants on a Log, Parfait Towers, Banana Smash, Rainbow Wraps, and Sun Balls. By the end, you will be a Kitchen Master!"

## 2. Body: The 5-Recipe Challenge

*Instructional Model: I Do (Demonstrate), We Do (Collaborate), You Do (Independent Practice)*

## Safety First (The Foundation)

**I Do:** I show how to wash hands thoroughly while singing the "ABC" song.

**We Do:** We wash our hands together at the sink.

**You Do:** The student finds their "station" and sits with "listening ears" ready.

## Recipe 1: Ants on a Log (Spreading & Counting)

- **I Do:** I show how to spread cream cheese or nut butter into the "ditch" of the celery.
- **We Do:** We count out 5 "ants" (raisins) together.
- **You Do:** The student presses the raisins into the log.

## Recipe 2: Yogurt Parfait Towers (Layering)

- **I Do:** I show how to put one spoonful of yogurt in a clear cup, then one spoonful of fruit.
- **We Do:** We alternate layers: "Yogurt, Berry, Yogurt, Berry."
- **You Do:** The student chooses the next fruit to add and drops it in the "tower."

## Recipe 3: Banana Smash Toast (Mashing)

- **I Do:** I show how to use a fork to press down on a banana slice until it's "squishy."
- **We Do:** We both use forks to mash the rest of the banana in a small bowl.
- **You Do:** The student spreads the "banana mush" onto a piece of toast.

## Recipe 4: Rainbow Wraps (Rolling)

- **I Do:** I lay a tortilla flat and place "colors" (spinach for green, cheese for yellow, ham for pink) in a line.
- **We Do:** We name the colors as we place them.
- **You Do:** The student uses their fingers to roll the tortilla up into a tight "sleeping bag."

## Recipe 5: Energy Sun Balls (Rolling & Shaping)

- **I Do:** I take a small scoop of the oat mixture and roll it in my palms to make a circle.
- **We Do:** We both feel the "sticky" texture of the dough.
- **You Do:** The student rolls three "Sun Balls" and places them on a plate.

## 3. Conclusion: The Grand Tasting (Recap & Closure)

**Summarize:** "Look at all the things you made! We mashed, we spread, we rolled, and we layered."

**Recap:** Ask the student: "Which food was squishy? Which food was crunchy? Which was your favorite to make?"

**The "Tell Them What You Taught":** "You learned that you can make your own healthy snacks and how to use your hands to be a chef!"

**Cleanup:** Play a "Cleanup Song" and have the student help put plastic bowls in the sink.

## Success Criteria

- The student can successfully mash a banana using a fork.
- The student can wait for instructions before moving to the next ingredient.
- The student can name at least one texture (e.g., "sticky" or "crunchy").

## Assessment

- **Formative (During):** Observe if the student can follow the "Yogurt, Berry" pattern in Recipe 2. Check if they are using their fingers to roll in Recipe 4.
- **Summative (After):** Ask the student to explain to another family member how they made the "Ants on a Log." If they can describe the steps (spread then add raisins), the objective is met.

## Adaptability & Differentiation

- **For Struggling Learners:** Pre-scoop the ingredients into small bowls so they only have to focus on the "assembly" part. Use a wider spreader rather than a knife.
- **For Advanced Learners:** Incorporate math by asking them to "double" the raisins (add 2 for every 1). Ask them to predict what happens if we mash the banana for a long time vs. a short time.
- **Sensory Note:** If a student dislikes "sticky" hands, provide a damp cloth nearby for frequent wipes during Recipe 5.