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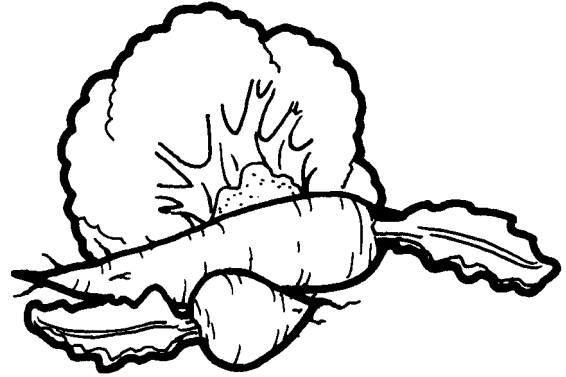
Vegetable-Tasting Party

Preparation Time:

A few hours

Math Concept:

This activity introduces three-, four-, and five-year-olds to the concepts of taste and flavors, observation and investigation, and processing sensory input. Children will sort vegetables by taste and color.



Materials:

a variety of vegetables, plates, napkins, paper towels (If you do not prepare the vegetables at home, add knives, a colander, a peeler, etc.)

What to Do:

In this activity children have the opportunity to taste different vegetables, compare their tastes, and sort them according to a variety of characteristics such as taste and color. (Some children may end up liking vegetables they have never thought about eating before.) To prepare this activity, decide upon a variety of vegetables and prepare them in bite-sized portions. (Make sure that these pieces are easily eaten by small children.)

Explain to children that they will be taking part in a taste test. They will want to try as many different kinds of vegetables as they can to see the different ways they taste. They do not have to take more than a bite of any vegetable unless, of course, they want to. Encourage children to decide which they like best, which is their least favorite, and why.

Self-Directed Teaching Focus:

Prepare a different vegetable every day and provide these as snacks. Use as many different kinds as possible to give children exposure to different sensory experiences. (Even a negative reaction to something is a sensory experience, and their not liking something does not make the activity a failure.)

Directed Teaching Focus:

Have children sort vegetables by taste and then by color. Talk about how they made their decisions.

What to Say:

Today we are going to have a taste test. We have a lot of different kinds of vegetables here, and we are going to try them and see what we think of them. You can have as much or as little of each one as you want. Try to taste them all so you can tell us what you think.

Doing More:

Have clay or play dough available for children to use in making models of vegetables. They can make them true-to-life or experiment with blue tomatoes and pink broccoli.

Evaluation and Processing Through Storytelling:

Let children dictate stories to be illustrated later or to go with their clay models. Topics could include “Why I Like Carrots” or “Pink Broccoli Tastes Funny.”

Vegetable-Tasting Party *(cont.)*

NAEYC Appropriate Practices

Appropriate Practice:

Three-Year-Olds

“Children are encouraged to “taste” in small portions with the possibility of more servings if desired.”

Concept Connection:

A vegetable-tasting party is the perfect way to let children sample and taste many nutritious snacks without any expectation for them to try more than a taste.

Appropriate Practice:

Four- and Five-Year-Olds

“Teacher moves among groups and individuals to facilitate children’s involvement with materials.”

Concept Connection:

This activity is a perfect opportunity for a teacher to model a positive attitude toward trying new things and to show by example how much fun it is to investigate and experiment with vegetable tastes.

Appropriate Practice:

Four- and Five-Year-Olds

“Teacher’s expectations match and respect children’s developing capabilities.”

Concept Connection:

This activity will be different for every child. The teacher can create an attitude of acceptance about each child’s individual tastes and attitudes by supporting each child’s choices.