

READY

Children brainstorm ways of preparing fruits and vegetables.

SET

- Place names of different fruits and vegetables in a hat or box. Suggested fruits and vegetables include apples, broccoli, carrots, celery, corn, cucumbers, grapes, lettuce, potatoes, peaches, peas, strawberries, and tomatoes.

GO

1. Create groups of 4-6 children. Include a range of ages in each group.
2. Give each group a piece of paper and a pencil or pen. Ask the group to choose one child to record. (This should be someone who writes fast.)
3. Have each group pick the name of a fruit or vegetable out of a hat or box.
4. Give each group 5 minutes to come up with as many different ways as they can to prepare the fruit or vegetable they picked, either for a snack or as part of a meal. Before beginning, give the following example:
Banana—plain, on cereal, in a milk shake, in a yogurt and fruit smoothie, on a sandwich with peanut butter, with a yogurt dip, in banana bread or banana muffins, in an ice cream banana split
5. When time is up, ask each group:
 - Which fruit or vegetable did your group have?
 - Is it a fruit or vegetable?
 - How many different ways did you come up with to prepare your fruit/vegetable?
6. Next, ask each group to circle those preparation ideas that they think are the healthiest. Discuss some things that the children should think about when they are deciding if something is healthy. Does it have a lot of vitamins? Is there a lot of fiber in the item? Does it have a lot of added fat or added sugar? Using the banana example, ask the children which they think is healthier, a plain banana or an ice cream banana split. The ice cream banana split has added fat and sugar, so it's probably less healthy than a plain banana.
7. Ask each group to share their preparation ideas, and share which they think are the healthiest.
8. After each group presents, ask if anyone has other preparation ideas for that fruit or vegetable.
9. Ask the children to vote for their favorite healthy preparation idea for a fruit and for a vegetable.
10. Conclude the activity by encouraging the children to share their favorite healthy preparation ideas with their families and to ask their families if they have any other ideas.

Fixin' Fruits & Veggies



TIME

- Prep — 10 minutes
- Activity — 30 minutes

MATERIALS

- Paper and a pencil or pen for each group
- Small pieces of paper and a hat or box

MATERIALS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

- Pictures of fruits and vegetables (see clip art in Appendix)



Fixin' Fruits & Veggies

Modifications for Younger Children

1. With all children in one group, point to pictures of different fruits and vegetables and ask the children:
 - What is this?
 - Is it a fruit or vegetable?
 - Can anyone tell me a way to prepare this fruit or vegetable for eating? Share the following as an example before beginning:
 - Banana—plain, on cereal, in a milk shake, in a yogurt and fruit smoothie, on a sandwich with peanut butter, with a yogurt dip, in banana bread or banana muffins, in an ice cream banana split
 - As a group, circle those ideas that seem to be the healthiest. Discuss some things that the children should think about when they are deciding if something is healthy. Does it have a lot of vitamins? Does it have a lot of added fat or added sugar? Using the banana example, ask children which they think is healthier, a plain banana or an ice cream banana split. The ice cream banana split has added fat and sugar, so it's probably less healthy than a plain banana.
 - Ask the children to vote for their favorite healthy preparation idea for a fruit and their favorite healthy preparation idea for a vegetable.
2. Conclude the activity by encouraging the children to share what they have learned with their families and to ask their families if they have any other ideas.

GO FARTHER

- In the following weeks, prepare one of the favorite vegetables or fruits as a snack. You may wish to use the rating form from Activity 13: Taste It!

- Have children gather healthy fruit and vegetable recipes using the internet or their families as resources. Use the recipes to create a cookbook.
- Encourage children to submit drawings with their recipes. Younger children can draw or color fruits and vegetables to accompany recipes.
- Celebrate the completion of the cookbook by selecting an assortment of the recipes to be prepared for snacks in the coming weeks.
- Make copies of the cookbook and provide to each family or sell it as a fundraiser. (Be sure to check for copyright issues if the recipes are from the Internet or cookbooks.)

BRING IT HOME

- Ask the children to talk with their families about family recipes that include fruits and vegetables, and collect them for the cookbook. They also can create a family fruit and vegetable cookbook with the information they obtain.
- Send a completed cookbook home with each child.