

Multi-cultural cooking

Learning aims

- To become curious about food which is familiar to them and their friends
- To begin to understand that they have similarities and differences that connect them to, and distinguish them, from others
- Recognise and talk about special times and events for their family and community
- In pretend play imitate events and actions from their own family and cultural background.



Resources

- A collection of recipe books that represent a variety of countries and cultures including the children in your setting
- Results of a parent survey
- Cooking equipment
- Ingredients
- Cooking equipment can be used in the mud kitchen or indoor home corner with suitable materials the children can use as “ingredients”.

Activity Outline

1. Carry out a survey with parents asking them to tell you which dish they cook most often at home that their child likes. You can expect a range of responses depending on the diversity of your setting
2. Gather together some recipe books either by asking parents to bring in one or buying from charity shops. Ensure that the range is representative of the diversity of your nursery and the wider community
3. Have a small group session where you talk to the children about their favourite food at home, using pictures from the recipe book to show the children some examples
4. Model curiosity about differences in diet. For example, some children may think that a chapatti is a pancake and vice versa. Cook them both and explore with the children what the similarities and differences are between a pancake and a chapatti. What do they like about each of them? Discuss using open-ended questions with what the similarities and differences are.
5. Talk to children about the results of the parent survey (what they like to eat at home). Highlight the similarities and differences between children's favourite foods. Support the discussion using pictures from the internet or recipe books. Ask the children what they would like to make in Nursery, (ensure you guide them towards something simple to make!)
6. Decide on what recipes you will make first. Go with the children to the shop and buy the ingredients
7. Start the activity by working out which cooking equipment they will need – this promotes problem-solving
8. Work through the recipe talking through the steps and processes as you go so children can see the order
9. If possible, split the mixture into separate bowls to allow all children to have a go at making their own
10. Cook the mixture (if required) talking to the children about how long they need to cook and how they will measure this to make sure that it cooks properly
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Extending the activity

- Provide cooking equipment for the mud kitchen or home corner
- Play alongside the children, talking about what you are doing or modelling cooking. You could ask them to show you how their parents or carers cook at home
- Take photos of the children cooking and put them in the mud kitchen or home corner as prompts. Children may want to re-enact familiar activities. Encourage parents to share photos of dishes they cook regularly at home or videos via online learning platforms.

Special considerations

Settings should adhere to the EYFS statutory framework for requirements about food and drink (3.48). Consider the choice of recipe. The cooking activity should be nutritious and balanced. Be aware of dietary requirements and allergies. Make adaptations to the recipe or choose a different one as required so that all children can participate safely.

Risk assess the activity considering how you will safely manage risks such as using a cooker or knives. (EYFS 3.65)

Ensure there is sufficient staff present on the day when you are cooking, so you are compliant with the relevant staffing ratios. (EYFS 3.28 – 3.37)