



Exploring Strawberries

This activity plan covers the Early Years Foundation Stage links shown below:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Be confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in a familiar group.
- Maintain attention, concentrate, and sit quietly when appropriate.

Communication, Language and Literacy

- Enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language, and readily turn to it in their play and learning.
- Sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Listen with enjoyment, and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

- Count reliably up to ten everyday objects.
- In practical activities and discussion, begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- Investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate.
- Find out about, and identify, some features of living things, objects and events they observe.
- Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change.

Physical Development

- Move with control and coordination.
- Recognise the importance of keeping healthy, and those things which contribute to this.
- Handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

Creative Development

- Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel.
- Explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions.
- Express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative and role-play, movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments.



Getting to know more about



Strawberries



Did you know? Strawberries

- Contain lots of vitamin C inside to help fight off coughs and colds.
- Are full of fibre to give us a healthy tummy.
- 100grams of strawberries gives us almost twice the vitamin C our body needs for a day
- Strawberries are the only fruit which have their seeds on the outside NOT the inside!
- There are about 200 seeds on the outside of a single strawberry!





Touch activity



Hand a strawberry to each child - best to do this activity sitting at a table and using plates.

Explain that they need to be handled with care, because strawberries are very soft and will squash easily, discuss with the children;

Q. Is the strawberry rough or smooth, stroke it gently with your finger?

Q. Does the strawberry have a smell?

Q. Can you give your strawberry a kiss?

Q. Rub your strawberry gently on your cheek, is it smooth or scratchy?



Taste activity

Remind the children of the bumpy texture they discovered earlier and explain that this is because of the seeds on the strawberry.

Note how the tiny seeds are on the outside, not hidden within like in apples, pears and many other fruit.

Demonstrate how to pick off a few seeds with your finger nails.

Q. Lead by example - Can you place a seed on your tongue?

Q. Does it have a flavour?

Show the children how to lick the strawberry with your tongue to feel the bumpiness of the seeds.

Show the children how to hold the fruit firmly but gently, gather up all the leaves and stalk in the fingers of the other hand, and pull to remove the hull.

Strawberries are soft enough to be cut with a child's plastic knife and they look very different when cut horizontally from when they are cut across. If you stand a hulled strawberry on its widest part and cut downwards in half you can create strawberry hearts.

Use your strawberry hearts to paint some lovely strawberry lipstick on your lips! Or perhaps paint your tongue with the juice - does it make your tongue turn red?

Now your fingers are nice and juicy lets lick our fingers and see who can make the loudest popping sound when we suck the juice off them!





Song and rhyme time



You can learn this rhyme together and use it as an easy counting song. Perhaps have the strawberries in a cup as you sing along and ask the children to come and remove one as the song goes along.

To the tune of '10 green bottles'

10 ripe strawberries sitting in a cup

10 ripe strawberries sitting in a cup

If you (could add in child's name) came along and ate one up

There'll be 9 ripe strawberries sitting in a cup



Craft activity



For the craft activity below each child will need a red or pink sock. We have provided a Parent template letter as part of this activity sheet which can be copied and sent home:

Resources needed: Pink or red sock, newspaper, black paper, black felt tip pens, elastic bands, green paper/fabric.

Strawberry Treasure Hunt

Ask each child to bring in a red or pink sock. Ask the children to stuff their sock with scrunched up newspaper and squash it into a round shape. Put an elastic band around the top of the sock to secure it and then add a piece of greenery to represent the strawberry leaves, you could use crepe paper, ribbon or another item of your choice.

Using black paper make some strawberry seeds and stick them onto the sock. This could also be done with a felt tip pen.

Once all your strawberries are made ask the children to put them into a basket or bag which you have provided. Ask all the children to leave the room (or this could be done before the children arrive for the day). Hide the sock strawberries around the room, under tables, chairs and in toy boxes etc. Let the children back in the room and ask them to sit in a circle.

Explain that today they will be going on a Strawberry treasure hunt and will need to hunt high and low for hidden strawberries. Place a basket or bag in the centre of the room which the children can all put the strawberries they find into. Each child can go and hunt for a strawberry one by one.

Choose one child to start the hunt and tell them how they have to go on their hunt, this should be a different way of moving, either crawling, hopping, skipping or slow walking etc. Once the child finds a strawberry they can bring it back to the centre of the room, put it in the basket and sit down, then the next child will go.

The children who are not hunting for the strawberry can sing the rhyme below:

**Picking strawberries, Picking strawberries, Growing in the sun,
We have found one, bright and juicy, Now we'll find another one!**

If a child is struggling to find a strawberry suggest places they could look. Once all the children have found a strawberry their prize could be a real strawberry to eat!



More fun with Strawberries

Taste for Life Garden

To support the work you are doing in class and to show parents and other children what you are doing why not create a vegetable and fruit patch for your classroom?

Each of the children could add their hand made strawberry to the garden. Why not make a range of fruit and vegetables to decorate the display. Perhaps the children could choose their favourite fruit or vegetable to add to the patch.

Help the children to discuss where the fruit or vegetable will be placed, will it be on a tree, a bush or growing in the ground?

Many of the rhymes and songs on the accompanying activity sheets can be used alongside your vegetable/fruit patch.

Pick Your Own

Why not visit a local pick your own farm – it's a great way to introduce children to growing and harvesting. The children can get a great feel for where their food is coming from and it is a fun and tasty day out for the group!

Grow Your Own

Strawberries are very easy to grow and just need a bit of space and lots of sunshine. You can buy strawberry plants from most garden centres and if they are already flowering you could have plants bearing fruit within a month. To protect the young fruits from birds you may want to cover the strawberries with a net.



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At home



Parent Information Sheet

Our nursery is participating in the Taste for Life Pre-school Education Programme supported by Organix. This programme helps children learn about, experience and enjoy fruit and vegetables by participating in a range of different activities linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

At the moment we are learning all about strawberries!

One of the fun things we will be doing is having a Strawberry Hunt where we will be hiding and finding special strawberries we have made.

On _____ please ensure your child attends nursery with an old red or pink sock that can be turned into a strawberry for our treasure hunt!

Yummy Strawberries!

These pretty little parcels of goodness shouldn't need anything sweet to help them down!

However, to encourage children to try them, try adding strawberries to smoothies or simply dip into organic full fat natural yoghurt.

As a healthy summer treat, liquidise strawberries with apple juice and freeze in ice lolly trays. Or make "ice cream" by mixing/pureeing mashed fruit (banana works best) with full fat natural yogurt or fromage frais and then freezing.

Strawberries make wonderful smoothies liquidized on their own or with other fruit. They are very satisfying to squash with a fork and then spread on bread or rice cakes. Delicious on top of full fat soft cheese!

Use organic ingredients if possible; organic foods are free from artificial chemical pesticides. Up to the age of seven, children's bodies are more susceptible to the disruption water soluble pesticides can cause. To find out more about organic foods and why they are beneficial visit www.organix.com/about-us/why-organic.

More fun at home...

We will be doing lots more at nursery to find out more about Strawberries and other fruit and vegetables. You can join in with our food adventure too, helping your child develop their love of healthy nutritious foods by visiting www.tasteforlifenursery.com for recipe ideas, nutritional tips, games and activities, including the Taste for Life reward chart and sticker sheet.



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