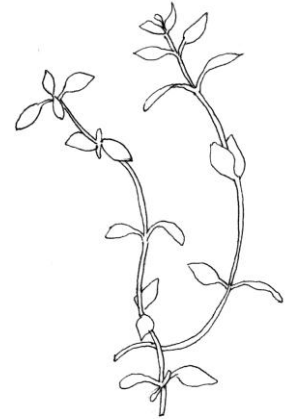


HERB-A-LICIOUS HARVEST

School garden pesto – grade 3

This is a two-part lesson that starts outside and moves inside to the kitchen or classroom. Children learn about growing food and experience the sights, smells and flavours of fresh herbs in the garden through hands-on harvest and food preparation. The hands-on learning experience brings an understanding of local, organic foods to life.

Age	suitable for grades 1-6
Time	90 minutes
Timeline	September - October
Location	garden and kitchen or classroom
Subject	Science and Technology
Extensions	Art, math, languages (see end of lesson plan)



Grade 3 Curriculum Expectations (Science and Technology, Ontario 2007)

Growth and changes in Plants:

- 2.2 Observe and compare the parts of a variety of plants
- 2.6 Use appropriate science and technology vocabulary in oral and written communication
- 3.3 Describe the changes that different plants undergo in their life cycles
- 3.7 Describe the different ways in which plants are grown for food, and explain the advantages and disadvantages of locally grown and organically produced food, including environmental benefits

Materials

Bowl(s), bag(s) or tray(s) to collect herbs
Hand blender + bowl
Dish towels or paper towels
Container to collect food waste for composting
Ingredients for cheese-free, nut-free pesto (technically “tapenade”)

- olive oil
- garlic
- black olives
- salt + pepper to taste
- bread or crackers for dipping

Note: instead of basil, try using fresh parsley, arugula, cilantro, lemon basil, thai basil, or a combination of the above.

Handout Basil colouring sheet

Procedure

- 1. Introduction:** Gather in the school garden. Discuss growing plants for food (do children recognize any of the food plants?), compare garden food with other food sources (e.g. how is garden produce grown differently than food at the supermarket? How is the pesto we are making different from store-bought pesto? What foods are growing in the garden that are hard to find at the store?) Students can participate in a discussion of the advantages of growing our own food.
- 2. Harvest:** Identify the plants you will be picking. Children must learn to distinguish between basil plants vs. other leafy plants in the garden, and between different varieties of basil. Encourage the students to identify and describe visible plant parts, e.g. in September the flowers are beginning to form seeds. Students harvest tips of plants (as pictured below).
- 3. Washing:** Bring leaves inside to the classroom (if water is available in the classroom) or the kitchen. Children separate leaves from stems and flowers, and then leaves must be washed before we begin food preparation. This is a good opportunity to mention that we grow our herbs organically – whereas food from the grocery store should always be washed to eliminate harmful chemical residues. Each student can help to dry some of the basil, allowing them to experience the fragrance of the herb hands-on.
- 4. Food preparation:** to give each child an opportunity to participate, divide the tasks between small groups. Everyone should be seated and working on the basil colouring sheet, while small groups are called up to the food prep station to complete tasks below. Wash hands before starting.



- Add olive oil to blending bowl
- Add handful of chopped black olives
- Peel and add garlic clove
- Add leaves bit by bit
- Take turns using the hand blender to make a paste
- Add salt and pepper to taste

5. Tasting: If children are divided into groups, each group can have a small bowl of pesto and some bread or crackers for dipping. While the class is enjoying their snack, ask for a show of hands of who likes the pesto and who doesn't. You can also review the lesson and have children tell the class which part they liked best.

Extensions

Math: Survey the classroom: how many people liked the pesto? How many people tried it for the first time? Chart your results.

Languages: Students write a journal entry or a poem about their experiences in the garden.

Art: Draw a picture or design a poster about visiting the school garden or about eating pesto in the classroom.