



Preschool Home Visit Learning Plan Peppers (Bell Peppers)

Harvest Objectives

Families will describe and act out the pepper lifecycle.
Families will identify that peppers grow on vines and have seeds inside.
Families will taste a piece of pepper.



Harvest Vocab

Fruit Plant Smooth Vine

Materials & Prep

Peppers (enough for each family member to taste small $\frac{1}{4}$ pieces, ideally of at least 3 different colors)

1 Set Pepper Life Cycle large cards (see separate document)

1 Set per child Pepper Life Cycle small cards (see separate document; set to print 4 pages per sheet and then cut each sheet into quarters for small cards)

Chalkboard/Whiteboard and chalk/whiteboard markers

Images (included at end of learning plan)

Knife & Cutting Board

Taste Test Chart

Stickers (or small Post-It Notes)

Taste Test Extension supplies (optional)

Literature Connections

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert

A Fruit Is a Suitcase for Seeds by Jean Richards

The Vegetables We Eat by Gail Gibons

Warm Up

- In order to engage the family and activate prior knowledge, show them the bell peppers and pass them around so everyone gets to hold and/or touch them. Do not tell them what they are. Tell them to think of the name for the food, but to keep their answer inside their head. Then when everyone has held a bell pepper, ask them, "What is this called?" Consider having everyone say the answer aloud on the count of three, this way you'll know who in the family knows. Then discuss, have ever seen one before? Eaten one before? How was it prepared? Where do they think bell peppers come from? How do they grow? (On trees, bushes?)
- In order for the family to explore more about the pepper life cycle, have a common experience and think about what they know, tell them that they get to put the pepper life cycle in order. If you prefer, you may give them the hint to start with the seed in the ground. Allow one or two minutes for each child to put the small cards in order. Then ask them, "Why do they think one piece goes before, or after, another? How do they know?"
- It is okay if the order is incorrect. Have the children leave the cards in the order they think is best and continue as a family (below.) Then the children will be able to go back and fix their own mistakes.



- Note: For very young preschool students, have them work independently with an adult, and give them only the first two pieces and ask them to put them in order. Then give them the next two, to add on, until the entire life cycle is complete. Alternatively, you could put out the large cards in order first, discussing each briefly. Then the young preschool child could be given the small cards to match with the larger cards.

Explain

- Using the large life cycle cards, discuss the correct card sequence.
- Then to review, have the family act out the entire life cycle.
 - Seed—crouch down into a ball, arms wrapped around knees
 - Germination—legs act as roots and they are slightly stooped over
 - Leaf Growth—stand taller and have their arms act as leaves
 - Flower Growth—their face is the flower and their arms wrap around their face
 - Pollination—one hand turns into a bee, touches their nose, and then respectfully touches a friend's flower (nose)
 - Immature peppers—extend the arms from the nose just a little bit to look like a small pepper
 - Pepper—extend arms completely from the nose to turn into a large pepper
 - Seed Dispersal—pepper falls to the ground, or is picked and eaten by a person for lunch
- Have the children go back to their small cards and make any corrections in the order. For children that need the reinforcement, ask them, “Why do they think one piece goes before, or after, another? How do they know?”
- As a family, discuss the picture that shows the bell pepper growing on the vine, and explain the word “vine” if needed. Can they think of any other foods that grow on vines? (Grapes, pumpkins, some beans, etc.) Also explain the word “smooth” with other examples, if needed.
- Explain why we should eat bell peppers (healthy eyes, healthy muscles, healthy immune system, and heals cuts) and for each reason come up with an action to help the family remember. For example, for healthy immune system they can shake one finger while saying “no” and then put a hand on their forehead while saying “fever.” Also explain how to pick a good bell pepper (it should be smooth, firm and have no mushy spots.) Please see the next pages for images to share with the family.

Taste Test

- After rinsing the peppers, cut quarter pieces for everyone to taste. If possible, have two colors available to taste. Do they notice any difference in taste? Which one do they like better?
- Create a chart that says “I Like” with a smiley face and “I Don’t Like” with a sad face. Give each family member a sticker, and ask them to vote by placing it in a column. Count the number of people that like peppers, and don’t like peppers, and write that number in each column.
- Review health benefits of eating peppers and how they grow.



Toddler Tasting

- To make pepper baby food puree, rinse, and cut pepper in half. Steam until soft (about 4-7 minutes) and let cool. When cool remove skin (it should slide off, otherwise peel.) Place peeled pepper in blender/food processor and puree until smooth, adding water if needed.

Taste Test Extension

Rule of 15 “Put a food on the table at least 15 times to see if a child will accept it.” Susan B. Roberts, Tufts University Nutritionist and Co-author of Feeding Your Child for Lifelong Health

For an additional tasting experience, prepare this recipe with the family having each member help in an age-appropriate manner.

Pepper Salad (for about 4 servings)

(adapted from: <http://www.superhealthykids.com/healthy-kids-recipes/potluck-party-pepper-salad.php>)

1/4 from 2 bell peppers, chopped (a mix of orange, red, green, and yellow)

1/4 tomato, chopped

1/4 red onion, chopped (optional)

1/2 can black beans, rinsed and drained (optional)

1/3 avocado, pitted, peeled and chopped (optional)

Mixing Bowls & Spoons

Can opener

Cutting board and knife, Plastic knives

1 plate & wheat cracker (per person)



1. All family members should wash their hands.
 - a. Wet hands with warm water
 - b. Apply hand wash (soap)
 - c. Lather and wash for AT LEAST 15 seconds (the length of the ABC song)
 - d. Rinse both sides of hands with water all the way up to the wrists
 - e. Dry hands and shut off faucet with towel
2. Have a family member rinse and cut the peppers and tomatoes.
3. Have another family member cut the onion.
4. Have a family member open the avocados, remove 1/3, and cut into large pieces.
Demonstrate how to properly hold the knife handle and have each child cut the avocado using plastic knives.
5. Have the family mix ingredients in a medium bowl and stir. Serve on top of a wheat cracker and enjoy!

How do Bell Peppers grow?

Bell peppers grow on a plant.

After pollination, the bell pepper flowers swell into the bell peppers we eat.



Why should we eat Bell Peppers?

Vitamin A



Healthy eyes

Iron



Healthy muscles

Vitamin C



Healthy immune system (prevents colds)

Vitamin B₆



Healthy brain

Vitamin K



Heals cuts