



Harvest Objectives

Children will investigate onions and leeks, including exploring size, shape, weight, etc.

Children will identify that onions and leeks grow in the ground.

Children will taste a piece of onion and/or leek.

Harvest Vocab

Ground

Vegetable



Materials & Prep

5-7 Onions/Leeks (plus enough for each child to taste small $\frac{1}{4}$ pieces, for onions ideally of different varieties: yellow and orange storage onions; some sweet onions)

Images (included at end of learning plan)

Items for station discovery (magnifying glasses, ruler, string of different lengths, balance, scale)

Paper/pencils/crayons (optional)

Knife & Cutting Board

Taste Test Chart

Stickers (or small Post-It Notes)

Literature Connections

The Vegetable Alphabet Book by Jerry Pallotta & Bob Thomason

Leek Hotpot by Roderick Hunt

Where Are My Onions? by Paulette Sarmonpal

Warm Up

- In order to engage the children and activate prior knowledge, for 1 – 3 days set a table aside for an Onion/Leek Discovery Lab. On the table place scientific tools such as measuring tapes/rulers, string of different lengths (for measuring), a scale, magnifying glasses, tub of water, etc. Add the onions/leeks. Before free play begins review the different activities with the students and how they should use the equipment. Then during free play encourage the children to explore the onions/leeks and scientific equipment. Here are some possibilities:
 - How heavy is an onion/leek? Put the onion/leek on one side of the balance scale and see how many items are needed on the other side to balance the scale.
 - Do onions/leeks sink or float? Put the onion/leek in a tub of water. Watch what happens. Put other classroom items in the tub. Which do the same as the onion/leek?
 - How wide are onions/leeks? Trace around an onion/leek on a piece of paper. How many fingers can fit inside the traced onion/leek? Take a piece of string and measure from one side of the onion/leek to the other. Cut the string and tape it onto the piece of paper. Use a ruler, or unifix cubes, to estimate width.
 - Can you make an onion/leek pattern? Using other items around, make a pattern. Onion, paper, onion, paper, onion; or onion, onion, pencil, onion, onion, pencil



- One day, cut some of the onions/leek open. Allow the children to explore and observe the inside.
- Add paper, pencils and crayons to the station for children to draw their observations. Teachers can write down the child's observations on each child's paper, or collectively on one large paper.

Explain

- After children have had a few days to explore the onions/leeks, gather together in a large group. Share with the children the names of the onion/leek varieties, if you know them. Explain that botanically they are a vegetable (there are no seeds inside). What other vegetables can they think of? (Carrots, radish, etc.) If possible, put out pictures of fruits and vegetables and allow the children to think about which ones are fruit.
- Explain how onions/leeks grow (in the ground), why we should eat onions/leeks (healthy brain, healthy bones, and healthy digestion) and for each one come up with an action to help the children remember. For example, they can touch their arm bones while saying healthy bones. Also explain how to pick good onions/leeks (they should be firm and without cuts). Please see the next pages for images to share with the children.

Taste Test

- Wash all onions/leeks well. If you did not do so at the station, cut each in half and show the children what they look like on the inside.
- Slice each into pieces. Have the children predict which they will like the best. Then taste and have each child share which was his/her favorite.
- Create a chart that says "I Like" with a smiley face and "I Don't Like" with a sad face. Give each child a sticker, and ask them to vote by placing it in a column. Count the number of children that like and don't like onions/leeks and write that number in each column.
- Review with the children how onions/leeks grow and the health benefits.

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 children in class using different stations, or ahead of time, and serve it with this lesson, or on a different day to expand the Harvest of the Month experience.

Baked Onion Rings (two for 20 students)

(adapted from: <http://www.superhealthykids.com/healthy-kids-recipes/ring-on-the-onions.php>)

1 1/2 cups bread crumbs
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
2 eggs, beaten
Knife/Cutting board

1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt
2 large onions
Plate (1 per child)
2 bowls





Preschool In-Class Learning Plan
Onion & Leek

1. In a bowl, combine bread crumbs, seasoned salt, and garlic powder, and set aside.
2. In another bowl, combine eggs, and beat till frothy
3. Slice onions into rings.
4. Invite the children to wash their hands and then come to the table for a cooking activity.
5. Demonstrate to them how to dip the onion rings into egg mixture, and then into bread crumbs. Have each child make two onion rings.
6. Arrange rings in a single layer on a greased baking sheet.
7. Bake in oven at 375° for 20 minutes. When cool, serve and enjoy!

How do **onions** and **leeks** grow?

Onions and leeks grow in the ground. We eat the onion bulb and the stem of the leek plant.



Why should we eat **onions** and **leeks**?

Fiber



Healthy digestion,
cleans out your system

Vitamin C



Healthy immune system
(prevents colds)

Vitamin B-6



Healthy brain

Manganese



Healthy bones