



Harvest Objectives

Children will compare different root vegetables.
Children will identify different root vegetables.
Children will taste a piece of a root vegetable.



Harvest Vocab

Absorb Firm Root Vegetable

Materials & Prep

Root Vegetables (enough for each child to taste small $\frac{1}{4}$ pieces, ideally of different varieties: jicama, turnips, rutabaga, etc.)
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)

Literature Connections

Up, Down, and Around by Katherine Ayres
Tops and Bottoms by Janet Stevens
The Vegetable Alphabet Book by Jerry Pallotta and Bob Thomson
Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert

Warm Up

- In order to engage the children and activate prior knowledge, gather in a circle and pass around the different root vegetables. Allow everyone to touch and look at them, and ask them to think about how they would describe them (size, shape, color, weight, texture, smell, etc.) Do not tell them what they are. Tell the children to think of the name for the food, but to keep their answer inside their head. Then when everyone has held the root vegetables, ask them, “What are these called?” Consider having everyone say the answer aloud on the count of three. This way you’ll know how many children in the group know.
- Then discuss, have ever seen these before? Eaten one before? How was it prepared? Where do they think root vegetables come from? How do they grow? (On trees, bushes?)
- Draw a Venn diagram on the board. Holding up the root vegetables, ask the students what they have in common (texture, size, color, etc.) Record their observations in the middle of the Venn diagram. Then hold up just one root vegetable. Record their descriptions that only fit that root vegetable. Repeat with the second root vegetable. Note: To make this activity more kinesthetic, in small groups (no more than 8 children), have each child come up with a describing word and write it on a sticky label, or post-it note. Then the child can stick their own word onto the Venn diagram.

Explain



- Explain that botanically they are vegetables (there are no seeds inside). What other vegetables can they think of? (Lettuce, celery, spinach, rhubarb, potatoes, etc.) If possible, put out pictures of fruits and vegetables and have the children think about which ones are vegetables. Explain the word “root” (plant part that is in the ground, that absorbs water and nutrients for the rest of the plant).
- Explain why we should eat root vegetables (helps heal cuts, prevent colds, gives energy for play, and healthy digestion) and for each reason come up with an action to help them remember. For example, they can put a hand on their stomachs while saying “healthy digestion.” Also explain how to pick good root vegetables (they should be firm when you press them gently). Please see the next pages for images to share with the children.

Taste Test

- Wash all root vegetables well. Peel (jicama, rutabaga) and cut each in half and show the children what they look like on the inside. Slice each vegetable into small bite-sized pieces. Taste the different varieties 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 root vegetables and don’t like root vegetables and write that number in each column.
- Review with the children how the root vegetables 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 root vegetable 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.

Jicama Cucumber Salad (for 20 children)

1 pound jicama, peeled and grated	2 cucumbers, grated
1 fresh lime	3 tsp. chili powder (optional)
Plates (1 per child)	Hand grater
Knife and Cutting Board	Mixing bowl and spoon
Wheat Crackers (optional)	

1. Rinse the jicama and cucumber under running water. Cut the cucumber into pieces that are the size of the hand-grater. Peel and cut the jicama into pieces that are the size of the hand-grater.
2. Invite the children to wash their hands and then come to the table for a cooking activity.
3. Demonstrate how to use the hand-grater by holding the jicama and cucumber pieces away from the grater and pushing downward. Have each child to grate some jicama and cucumber.

4. In mixing bowl combine ingredients and squeeze lime juice. Serve on plates and/or wheat crackers and enjoy!

How do Root Vegetables grow?



Root
Vegetables
grow in the
ground.
The bulb part
is what we
eat.



Why should we eat Root Vegetables?

Vitamin C



Healthy immune
system (prevents
colds, heals cuts)

Fiber



Healthy digestion,
cleans out your system

Starch



Healthy bodies
(energy for cells)