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# 15 MINUTE webinar series

ENGAGING YOUTH IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

## Cooking Up English Language Learning in Out-of-School Time

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Many youth in out-of-school time programs are interested in cooking. Cooking (and eating) is an enjoyable low-stakes social activity, and can bring people together. The low-stakes environment is especially good for children and youth learning English and can provide a rich environment to learn and practice new vocabulary. Cooking can be used to engage children and youth in literacy activities, including reading, writing, speaking and technology. In particular, cooking integrates math and science, supports the development of 21st Century skills as well as English Language Arts Common Core and other state standards.

**Following are two sets of linked lessons and an independent lesson (approximately 7 hours total, but easily spread over more sessions) that use youth interest in cooking as a springboard for language and literacy development.**

# Baking Cookies<sup>1</sup>

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

### Youth will:

- collaborate
- learn new vocabulary
- generate original sentences using new vocabulary
- transform grammatical structures (present to simple past tense)

## PREPARATION

- Gather all necessary materials ensuring adequate supply for multiple small groups to participate.
- Arrange stove access.
- Source a cookie or another alternative recipe.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Large sheets of paper & markers
- Paper
- Writing tools
- Recipe copies
- Baking sheets
- Mixing bowls
- Cooking utensils
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Recipe ingredients
- Water

## LESSON #1 INTRODUCTION TO BAKING COOKIES

- Introduce the activity.
- Hand out the recipe, and review vocabulary words that such as beat, stir, scoop, crack, mounds, transfer, etc.

<sup>1</sup>Lesson based on the work of Sil Ganzo, Founder and Executive Director, OurBridge, sil.arg@live.com.

- Use a cooperative learning group-former to divide youth into pairs.
- Encourage youth to act out the words and then write sentences using the words.
- Introduce the cooking supplies and utensils.
- Review common measurements and abbreviations such as Tbsp., tsp., c., etc. Discuss the importance of accuracy in baking.
- Give youth small bowls of water and invite them to practice measuring water from the small bowl into a larger bowl in the following amounts:
  - ▶ 1 Tbsp.
  - ▶ 1 tsp.
  - ▶ ½ tsp.
  - ▶ ½ c.
  - ▶ ¼ c.
- Have youth pick up supplies and clean for future use.

## LESSON #2 BAKING COOKIES

- Lead a group reflection about the previous lesson. Encourage youth to share what they remember from the recipe and the measuring activity. Review the recipe and vocabulary words.
- Use a cooperative learning group former to divide youth into small groups.
- Have all youth and adults wash their hands.
- Invite youth to work in small supervised groups to follow the recipe and make the cookies.
- While the cookies are baking or after they have been cooled and eaten, have youth circle the action words in the recipe and explain what they did during the activity using the simple past tense (e.g., stir becomes stirred).
- Consider repeating the lesson with healthy recipes sourced by youth and their families and the possibility of creating a program cookbook.

# Restaurant Role-Plays

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

### Youth will:

- learn and practice vocabulary from everyday life activities such as going to or working in a restaurant
- construct sentences to order meals
- practice interpersonal skills

## PREPARATION

- Gather local restaurant menus.
- Source book(s) about restaurants such as Noodle Pie by Ann Stark or Going to a Restaurant by Melinda Beth Radabaugh to use for read aloud.
- Source images of people working and eating in restaurants.
- Determine restaurant field trip or guest speaker options.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Local restaurant menus
- Book about restaurants
- Large sheets of paper & markers
- Paper
- Writing tools
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Tape

## LESSON #1 INTRODUCTION TO RESTAURANT ROLE-PLAY

- Activate prior knowledge by asking youth the following questions:
  - ▶ Have you ever eaten in a restaurant?
  - ▶ What do you know about eating in restaurants?
- Show the chosen read-aloud book. Discuss the book title and cover photo. Review vocabulary that might be new or difficult for students.
- Write the different roles in a restaurant such as: waiter, cook, chef, customer, host, etc. on a chart.
- Hold a discussion about the different restaurant roles and responsibilities.
- Work with the group to write a short script that outlines possible interactions among the roles discussed:
  - ▶ Waiter and customer
    - Waiter, “May I take your order?”
    - Customer, “I’d like to order some chicken, please.”
    - Waiter, “Ok, would you like something to drink with that?”
    - Customer, “Yes, I’d like some water.”
    - Waiter, “Thank you.”
  - ▶ Then waiter and chef
    - Waiter “Please cook an order of chicken.”
    - Chef “Your order of chicken is ready.”
    - Waiter “Thank you.”
  - ▶ And finally the waiter and customer
    - Waiter “Here is your chicken.”
    - Customer “Thank you.”
- Invite some volunteers to role play the scene.
- Explain that during the next lesson there will be more opportunities for everyone to practice.

## LESSON #2 RESTAURANT ROLE-PLAY PREP

- Review the chart with the restaurant roles and script from the previous lesson.
- Use a cooperative learning group former to divide youth into small groups.
- Have each youth pick a role to play.
- Invite youth to create:
  - ▶ Cue cards from the group script or to create their own scripts
  - ▶ Simple role-play props
- Store cards and props for the next lesson.

## LESSON #3 RESTAURANT ROLE-PLAYS

- Hold a group reflection about the previous lesson. Consider asking:
  - ▶ What went well during the role play preparations?
  - ▶ What else still needs to be done before the role plays?
  - ▶ What will you work on today?
- Encourage youth to finalize their cue cards and props and then use them to role play and experiment with the language.
- Have the groups reflect on the following and then continue experimenting:
  - ▶ What is going well?
  - ▶ What simple changes might you do to make it better?
- Suggest youth try different restaurant roles and do additional role plays.
- Gather the group together and invite small groups to perform their role plays.

## LESSON #4 CONNECTING RESTAURANT ROLE PLAYS TO THE READ WORLD

- Take youth on a field trip to a restaurant. Have them order food from the menu using the knowledge and skills that they learned in the previous lessons. OR,
- Have someone who works at a restaurant come in and speak with the youth about what he/she does and possibly do some realistic role play scenarios with the youth.

# Looking at Cooking

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

### Youth will:

- learn vocabulary related to cooking
- use grammatical structures
- learn about cooking practices

## PREPARATION

- Source photos of people cooking.

## MATERIALS

- Multiple photos of people cooking.
- Index cards or similar sized paper
- Black markers
- Paper
- Writing tools

## LESSON

- Share photos of people cooking.
- Ask youth to share what objects and actions they see in the photos using the following grammatical structures:
  - ▶ I see a \_\_\_\_\_. For example “I see a bowl.”
  - ▶ I see someone (boy, girl, man, woman) \_\_\_\_\_. For example “I see a boy stirring.”
- Write the words on a chart.
- Ask youth to look at the chart and circle words that are hard to understand or pronounce.
- Have volunteers write each word on an index card and post on the word wall.
- Pass out additional photos and have youth work in pairs to identify and try to write down the items or actions they see in the photos. Encourage them to use the grammatical structures from the group discussion.
- Have pairs describe their photos to each other or to the whole group using full sentences.
- If desired, extend the lesson by encouraging youth to write extended text or short paragraphs about the photos.

# Notes & Additional Resources

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## GENERAL

- **Out-of-School Time Curriculum, OST Cooking and Math.** St. Paul Sprockets Network and St. Paul Community Education.
- Ramaswami, R, Gersh, A., McGovern, G., & Akiva, T. (2011) **Cooperative Learning.** Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. [www.cypq.org/sites/cypq.org/files/Cooperative\\_Learning\\_GuidebookSample.pdf](http://www.cypq.org/sites/cypq.org/files/Cooperative_Learning_GuidebookSample.pdf)
- **Healthy Eating Resources**  
[www.healthiergeneration.org/resources](http://www.healthiergeneration.org/resources)
- **Building Social Supports with Families**  
[www.naaweb.org/resources/item/152-practical-ideas-and-tips-to-build-social-support-with-families](http://www.naaweb.org/resources/item/152-practical-ideas-and-tips-to-build-social-support-with-families)

# Notes