Purpose
The purpose of this lesson is to introduce a new food to the children in your classroom. The more times children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they are to eat and enjoy these foods in the future.

Overview
In this lesson, children will describe what spinach looks like under a magnifying glass. Children will also share if they like how spinach feels, smells, and tastes.

Words to Use
- feel
- leaf
- smell
- taste
- spinach
- green

Introduction
This activity will work well as a circle time activity and at tables, in small groups, for tasting.

"Today we are going to be detectives. Does anybody know what a detective does? A detective gathers clues by using his or her eyes, hands, nose, and mouth. We are all going to be food detectives today. We are going to use a magnifying glass, something all good detectives carry, to look closely at a food that many of us have not tried before. After we all take a turn looking at the new food, we get to smell and taste the new food."
Activity Description

1. Gather the children in a circle and explain that everybody is going to be a food detective. Remind children that a good food detective uses his or her eyes, ears, hands, and mouth to collect clues.

2. Pass a few spinach leaves around the circle and encourage each child to touch the spinach and look at the spinach with their own magnifying glass.

3. Ask the children what spinach looks like and if they like the way spinach feels on their hands.

4. Ask the children to wash their hands and go to their tables.

5. At the tables, provide each child with a sample of spinach. Encourage children to smell the spinach before tasting it.

Summary

“Today you were a food detective and used your eyes, hands, nose, and mouth to describe a new food. Who liked the way spinach felt on your hands? What did spinach look like with a magnifying glass? Who liked the way spinach smelled? Who liked how spinach tasted?”

Enrichment

Ask each child to count the number of spinach leaves in their sample.

Learning Objectives

1. CHILDREN WILL complete the first of four spinach tasting experiences.

2. CHILDREN WILL describe what spinach looks like under a magnifying glass.

Teaching Objectives

1. TEACHERS WILL model healthy eating behavior for children.

Teaching Tips

■ Young children are more likely to try a new food if the behavior is modeled by an adult.

■ Children may not want to try a new food. Encourage each child to take one bite.

ATTENTION: TEACHERS!

Following this activity, please fill out the teacher’s evaluation form for this lesson.
**Food Detectives**

**TEACHER EVALUATION**

**Spinach**

*Take a few moments to complete this feedback form. Since this is a new curriculum, your comments are vital to its future success. Thank you for your time and response. We value your input.*

**A** Children completed the first of four spinach tasting experiences.

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**B** How many...

- children in your classroom tasted spinach? [ ]
- total children in your classroom? [ ]

**C** Children examined spinach under a magnifying glass.

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**D** Teacher modeled healthy eating behavior (tasting spinach) for children.

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**E** Did your classroom complete the enrichment activity?

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**PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOU!**

List names of Head Start teachers, teacher aides, and other Head Start staff members who led this lesson:

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

**How many other adults (volunteers) helped lead this lesson?** [ ]
Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce a new food to the children in your classroom. The more times children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they are to eat and enjoy these foods in the future.

Overview

In this lesson, children will taste test spinach prepared two different ways.

Words to Use

- spinach
- raw
- green
- sautéed
- leaves

Introduction

This activity will work well at tables in small groups. Each table should have two plates: one plate with samples of raw spinach and one plate with samples of sautéed spinach.

An easy way to prepare sautéed spinach:

1. Wash fresh spinach leaves and let dry.
2. In a large pot over medium heat, add 1½ pounds of baby spinach.
3. Stir occasionally until spinach leaves wilt and turn a vibrant green color.

Today we are going to be taste testers. What does a taste tester do? Taste testers try new foods and describe how they look, smell and taste.
Activity Description

1. Gather the children in small groups at their tables after they have washed their hands.
2. Ask the children what food is in the middle of the table. Remind the children of when they were food detectives. Ask the children how the raw spinach and cooked spinach look alike and how they look different.
3. Instruct each child to take a sample of raw spinach.
4. After every child has a sample, ask the children to smell the spinach. Ask the children how the spinach smells.
5. Encourage each child to take at least one bite of spinach.
6. After everyone has smelled and tasted the sample, ask the children if they liked the spinach.
7. Repeat this process for the sautéed spinach.
8. Ask the children if the raw spinach and sautéed spinach looked the same or looked different, smelled the same or smelled different, tasted the same or tasted different.

Summary

“Today we were taste testers. What did we taste today? Who liked the raw spinach? Who liked the sautéed spinach?”

Enrichment

Use distance words such as near/far, close to/far from to describe objects in the room compared to samples of spinach on the tables.

Learning Objectives

1. CHILDREN WILL complete the second of four spinach tasting experiences.
2. CHILDREN WILL describe if raw spinach and sautéed spinach are similar or different in appearance, smell and taste.

Teaching Objectives

1. TEACHERS WILL model healthy eating behavior for children.

Teaching Tips

■ Some children may not want to try even small samples of raw spinach or sautéed spinach. Encourage each child in your classroom to try one bite of spinach.
■ The more times children are exposed to new foods the more likely they are to like the new food.
■ Children are more likely to try a new food if you model the behavior!

ATTENTION: TEACHERS!

Following this activity, please fill out the teacher’s evaluation form for this lesson.
Take a few moments to complete this feedback form. Since this is a new curriculum, your comments are vital to its future success. Thank you for your time and response. We value your input.

### Please indicate if the following learning and teaching objectives were met:

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| ☐ no   | children in your classroom tasted spinach?  
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                  ____________________ |
Purpose
The purpose of this lesson is to introduce a new food to the children in your classroom. The more times children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they are to eat and enjoy these foods in the future.

Overview
In this lesson, children will help prepare a healthy snack.

Words to Use
- □ spinach
- □ mandarin orange
- □ salad
- □ chef

Introduction
Making the spinach salad will work well in one large group.

“Today we are going to be chefs. What does a chef do? A chef makes food that tastes really good. What did we already do that a great chef always does? What do great chefs do after they are done cooking?”

Remind children that anytime chefs make food, they wash their hands; and, great chefs always taste the food that they make.
Activity Description

Prepare the spinach salad with the children in your classroom.

1. Wash the spinach well and let dry.
2. Open can(s) of mandarin oranges. Pour the mandarin oranges into a colander and drain juice or syrup.
3. Provide each child with 1 zip top plastic bag.
4. Each child should add a bunch of spinach leaves, a spoonful of mandarin oranges and a few slices of almond (optional) to his/her zip top plastic bag.
5. Instruct each child to “lock” his/her bag and shake his/her spinach salad for 2 minutes.
6. Encourage each child to take at least one bite of spinach salad.

Summary

“Today we were chefs. What did we make today? Who liked making the spinach salad?”

Enrichment

Play music while the children are shaking their bags and encourage children to dance.

Learning Objectives

1. CHILDREN WILL complete the third of four spinach tasting experiences.
2. CHILDREN WILL help prepare a healthy snack.

Teaching Objectives

1. TEACHERS WILL model healthy eating behavior for children.

Teaching Tips

- Please do not add dressing to the salad.
- Children can eat the salad from the ziplock bags with their fingers.
- Encourage each child to take one bite of spinach salad.
- Remember that the more times children are exposed to a new food the more likely they are to develop a taste preference for that food.
- Children are more likely to try a new food if an adult models the behavior!

ATTENTION: TEACHERS!

Following this activity, please fill out the teacher’s evaluation form for this lesson.
Take a few moments to complete this feedback form. Since this is a new curriculum, your comments are vital to its future success. Thank you for your time and response. We value your input.

1. What comments or reactions did the children in your classroom have about their tasting experience?

2. Did you make any changes to the lesson in order to meet the objectives? If yes, please describe.

3. Did you experience any difficulties in completing this lesson?

4. Do you have any additional comments?

*PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOU!

List names of Head Start teachers, teacher aides, and other Head Start staff members who led this lesson:

Comments:

How many other adults (volunteers) helped lead this lesson?
The purpose of this lesson is to introduce a new food to the children in your classroom. The more times children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they are to eat and enjoy these foods in the future.

Overview
In this lesson, children will help prepare a healthy snack.

Words to Use
- spinach
- chef
- lasagna

Introduction
Making the spinach lasagna roll-ups will work well in a large group.

Remind children that anytime chefs make food, they wash their hands; and, great chefs always taste the food that they make.
Activity Description

Prepare the following recipe with the children in your classroom.

1. Combine the following ingredients:
   ■ 2 lightly beaten eggs
   ■ 2 cups of low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese
   ■ 2 cups shredded part-skim Mozzarella cheese
   ■ 2 10-oz packages of spinach

2. Demonstrate how to assemble a spinach lasagna roll-up. Place one spoonful of the mixture on one end of a lasagna noodle and roll up.

3. Assist each child in rolling up his/her own noodle and secure with a toothpick. Only a teacher should secure with a toothpick.

4. Place seam side down in a baking dish and let children pour pasta sauce over each roll-up.

5. Cover dish and bake in 350 degree oven for 25–30 minutes.

6. Remove toothpick before serving and cut roll-ups into smaller pieces no larger than ½ inch for easy chewing.

7. Encourage each child to try a bite of his/her spinach lasagna roll-up.

Summary

“Today we were chefs. What did we make today? Who liked making the spinach lasagna roll-ups?”

Enrichment

Take a field trip to the grocery store and have the children find the spinach in the produce section.

Learning Objectives

1. CHILDREN WILL complete the fourth of four spinach tasting experiences.

2. CHILDREN WILL help prepare a healthy snack.

Teaching Objectives

1. TEACHERS WILL model healthy eating behavior for children.

Teaching Tips

■ Encourage each child to take one bite of the spinach lasagna roll-ups.

■ Remember that the more times children are exposed to a new food the more likely they are to develop a taste preference for that food.

■ Children are more likely to try a new food if an adult models the behavior!

ATTENTION: TEACHERS!

Following this activity, please fill out the teacher’s evaluation form for this lesson.
Please indicate if the following learning and teaching objectives were met:

**A** Children completed the fourth of four spinach tasting experiences.
- [ ] Yes
- [x] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________

**B** How many... children in your classroom tasted spinach?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________

**C** Children helped prepare a healthy snack.
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________

**D** Teacher modeled healthy eating behavior (tasting spinach) for children.
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________

**E** Did your classroom complete the enrichment activity?
- [ ] Yes
- [x] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________
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List names of Head Start teachers, teacher aides, and other Head Start staff members who led this lesson:

- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________

How many other adults (volunteers) helped lead this lesson?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

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Take a few moments to complete this feedback form. Since this is a new curriculum, your comments are vital to its future success. Thank you for your time and response. We value your input.

**1** What comments or reactions did the children in your classroom have about their tasting experience?

- ________________________________________________________________
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- ________________________________________________________________

**2** Did you make any changes to the lesson in order to meet the objectives? If yes, please describe.

- ________________________________________________________________
- ________________________________________________________________
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**3** Did you experience any difficulties in completing this lesson?

- ________________________________________________________________
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**4** Do you have any additional comments?

- ________________________________________________________________
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**date lesson completed:**

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Please indicate if the following learning and teaching objectives were met:

**A** Children completed the fourth of four spinach tasting experiences.
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
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**B** How many... children in your classroom tasted spinach?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
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**C** Children helped prepare a healthy snack.
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
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**D** Teacher modeled healthy eating behavior (tasting spinach) for children.
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- Comments: ________________________________________________________________
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**E** Did your classroom complete the enrichment activity?
- [ ] Yes
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