



Tasting Exercise

How To Guide



This tasting exercise aims to enable children to:

- Be adventurous with new foods.
- Understand how their sense of smell and taste work together.
- Use their senses, memory and imagination to guess what foods they are eating.
- Collect a range of words to describe how food tastes and smells.
- Use the numbers 1 - 5

Resources needed:

- Piece of cloth as a blindfold, one for each child.
- Tasting checklist for each child from this site, or alter to create your own from a list of other seasonal foods. Pencil for each child.
- Bite sized portions of each food, enough for one piece per child, plus a few spares, in bowls. For strong tasting foods, consider lightly steaming them beforehand (e.g. parsnip leek) or using a more palatable variety for raw eating (e.g. red onion or shredded firm cabbage). Use your own good taste as a guide - foods which we would not eat raw, we should not expect children to enjoy them raw.

How to use the resources:

- Ensure everyone has washed their hands before you start
- Give each child a Food Checklist. Have a jug of water handy in case any foods provoke a negative reaction or are hot in the mouth.
- Blindfold each child. Don't bring out any food until all are blindfolded.
- Organise the order of tasting to the best advantage. Try to offer a familiar and 'easy' food as the first and last foods, so that children are reassured at the start, and left with a pleasant memory at the end.
- Give each child a portion of the first food in their hand.
- Ask each child to smell the food, and guess what the food is. Tell them to guess but keep it 'secret inside their head' rather than saying it out loud.
- Ask each child to taste the food. If children are reluctant, ask gently if they could try touching it onto their lips, touching it with their tongue, or taking a tiny mouse nibble.
- Ask children to use words to describe the smell, taste and texture in their mouth. Give them extra descriptive choices such as soft, knobbly, zingy, sweet, rough, spicy, hot, tangy, juicy, chewy etc.
- Children can take off their blindfold and decide which food they have tasted. Younger or less able children can put a cross through each food as they taste it. Older or more able children can put a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the box next to their food, according to the order they taste the food.

Extension exercises for extra time or ability:

- Ask the children to repeat all the words they found for different foods and collect them on a list
- Ask children to name other foods which are soft, sweet, sharp etc.
- Ask children which food they liked best and why, using some of their new vocabulary