

# Salad Party

**Pillar: Healthy Eating and Positive Social Environments**

**Division: II**

**Grade Level: 4**

**Core Curriculum Connections: Science**

## I. Rationale:

This is a nutritious and tasty way to explore the purpose, characteristics, and uses of common plants and plant parts, while reinforcing the value of plants as an essential part of a healthy diet. In this cooperative learning activity, students will plan and participate in a 'salad party' to increase their knowledge of plant parts, improve their classification skills, and enjoy a healthy alternative to an "all sugar" treats party. The purpose of this activity is to provide a positive experience with "veggies" while practicing basic skills of observation, classification, and cooperation. It also provides a model for healthy eating and encourages the home - school learning connection.

## II. Pillar Focus (Healthy Eating and Positive Social Environments):

*Students will be able to:*

- sample a variety of vegetables from different plant parts
- identify where specific vegetables comes from.
- sort and classify vegetables according to various characteristics, including taste and nutritional content.
- familiarize themselves with a variety of new vegetables and be encouraged to investigate them further.
- create a super salad and share in its consumption.

## III. Curriculum Outcomes: Science 4

### Topic E Plant Growth and Changes

2. Identify and describe the general purpose of plant roots, stems, leaves and flowers.

3. Describe common plants, and classify them on the basis of their characteristics and uses.

## IV. Materials:

- plant parts poster
- Ziploc baggies (all sizes)
- peelers
- knives (dull for kids)
- serving containers
- serving utensils (preferable tongs)
- plates
- forks
- salt
- pepper

- herb vinegar

## V. Procedure:

**\*\*Preparation:** Several days before the activity, Divide students into cooperative learning groups and have them decide which group member is going to bring in each type of vegetable for the salad. Each group member must choose to bring in a vegetable that is a different plant part. For example, one student may choose a vegetable that is a root or bulb (carrot, onion, garlic, jicama, radish, etc.), a stem (celery, asparagus, chives, or sprouts), a leaf (lettuce, cabbage, spinach, greens), a flower (such as broccoli, cauliflower, or artichoke), a fruit (tomato, cucumber, peppers, zucchini, peas, etc.). Remind those that are bringing in "fruit" that their contributions should be vegetables that are the fruit of the plant so bananas, peaches, etc. are not appropriate.

**\*\* Note:** Arrange for a few parent volunteers to come and help out with preparing the vegetables on the day of the activity. It may be helpful to have one parent per group.

1. Have students bring in their vegetables the day before the party. Each student's contribution is put in a baggie with their name on it.
2. Begin classifying by first having everyone who brought a bulb or a root bring it to the table in the front of the room. Discuss the characteristics and purpose of a root or bulb, determine if all items truly fit this category, and divide them into sub-categories putting the roots in one group and the bulbs in another. On the board, behind the classifying table, display a large diagram of a plant with its parts labelled. Set aside the roots and bulbs, and do the same activity with each plant section in ascending order (stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits respectively).
3. Next, ask the students to develop a different way to classify the vegetables. They consult as a group and decide what new characteristic will be used as a basis for grouping the "veggies" together. Groups then share their system of classification with the class and demonstrate it. Possible categories may include size, color, shape, weight, taste, texture, vitamins or nutrients, peeled or unpeeled (whatever they wish), but they must agree within their group on the basic rule of their classification system.
4. As a way to introduce new vegetables, provide each group with an unfamiliar "veggie" and ask them to determine which plant part it is. Some uncommon vegetable suggestions include artichokes, jicama, mushrooms (fun to discuss!), bok choy, radicchio, sugar peas, leeks, kale, jalapeno peppers, tomatillos, basil, olives, and dandelion greens.
5. If you were able to obtain parent volunteers, have each parent work with one plant part and the students who brought those e.g. stems (celery, asparagus, chives, and sprouts) to help students peel, slice, and serve vegetables. After the vegetables are prepared and put into separate serving dishes with tongs, set it up like a great salad bar. Everyone enjoys a salad feast!

## VI. Extensions and Variations:

1. Use leftovers and ends to do vegetable prints with tempera on butcher paper.
2. Learn the song, "Dirt Made My Lunch" by Steve Van Zandt (available on CD: Earthy Tunes by Mary Michel).
3. Use all peelings and organic waste for composting.
4. Save seeds from the fruits and plant them.

## VII. Assessment Ideas:

1. Homework - Following the party, have students check out their own kitchen, and find five plant foods that were not used at the party. They list the foods and identify which part of the plant it came from.
2. Write thank you notes to the parent helpers. Each note must contain some statement of one thing each student in the group learned that was new to them.
3. Evaluation - Using grocery food ads from the newspaper, students cut and paste ten plant foods and the identify plant parts. This works well when done in teams of two.

❖ *Source of idea: Educator's Reference Desk*