



Harvest Objectives

Children will investigate melons, including exploring size, shape, weight, etc.

Children will identify that melons grow on a vine.

Children will taste a piece of melon.



Harvest Vocab

Firm

Fruit

Vine

Materials & Prep

7 Melons (plus enough for each child to taste small $\frac{1}{4}$ pieces, ideally of different varieties: watermelon, honeydew melon, cantaloupe, etc.)

Images (included at end of learning plan)

Items for station discovery (magnifying glasses, ruler, string of different lengths, balance, scale)

Paper/pencils/crayons (optional)

Knife & Cutting Board

Taste Test Chart

Stickers (or small Post-It Notes)

Smocks (optional)

Literature Connections

Eating the Alphabet: Fruits & Vegetables from A to Z by Lois Ehlert

One Watermelon Seed by Celia Lottridge

Watermelon Wishes by Lisa Moser

Warm Up

- In order to engage the children and activate prior knowledge, for 1 – 3 days set a table aside for a Melon Discovery Lab. On the table place scientific tools such as measuring tapes/rulers, string of different lengths (for measuring), a scale, magnifying glasses, tub of water, etc. Add the melon. Before free play begins review the different activities with the students and how they should use the equipment. Then during free play encourage the children to explore the melon and scientific equipment. Here are some possibilities:
 - How heavy is a melon? Put the melon on one side of the scale and see how many items are needed on the other side to balance the scale.
 - Do melons sink or float? Put the melon in a tub of water. Watch what happens. Put other classroom items in the tub. Which do the same as the melon?
 - How wide are melons? Trace around a melon on a piece of paper. How many fingers can fit inside the traced melon? Take a piece of string and measure from one side of the melon to the other. Cut the string and tape it onto the piece of paper. Use a ruler or unifix cubes to estimate width.
 - Can you make a melon pattern? Using other items around, make a pattern. Melon, paper, melon, paper, melon, paper; or melon, melon, pencil, melon, melon, pencil.



- One day, cut some of the melon open. Allow the children to explore the various seeds and observe them as they dry.
- Add paper, pencils and crayons to the station for children to draw their observations. Teachers can write down the child's observations on each child's paper, or collectively on one large paper.

Explain

- After children have explored the melons, gather together in a large group. Share with the children the names of the melons. Explain that the melon grows on a vine. Explain that botanically they are fruit (there are seeds inside). What other fruit can they think of? (Apples, oranges, pears, etc.) If possible, put out pictures of fruits and vegetables and allow the children to think about which ones are vegetables.
- Explain why we should eat melons (healthy brains, healthy immune system, healthy heart, and healthy muscles) and for each come up with an action to help the children remember. For example, for healthy immune system they can shake one finger while saying "no" and then put a hand on their forehead while saying "fever." Also explain how to pick good melons (cantaloupe should smell sweet, honeydew and watermelon should sound hallow when you tap on them). Please see the next pages for images to share with the children.

Taste Test

- Rinse the melons. If you did not do so at the station, cut each in half and show the children what they look like on the inside.
- Slice each into 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 and don't like melon and write that number in each column.
- Review how melons 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 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.

Melon Flowers (for 20 children)

(adapted from: <http://pinterest.com/pin/190417890465784160/> with original credit to parents.com)

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|-----------------------|---|
| 1 Cantaloupe | 1 Honeydew or 4 kiwi |
| 1 Bunch Grapes | 3-5 Flower cookie cutters (different sizes) |
| Knife & Cutting Board | Plate (1 per child) |

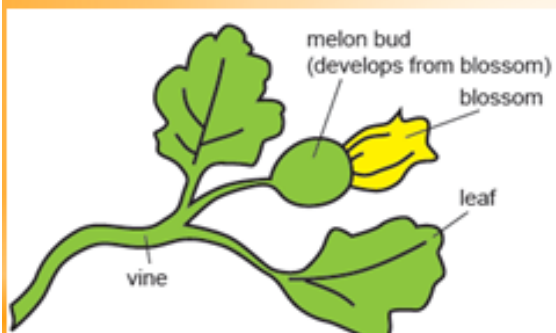




Preschool In-Class Learning Plan
Melon

1. Rinse the melons and grapes by putting them under running water and rubbing the entire surface to remove any soil. Cut the cantaloupe, and honeydew/kiwi into slices for each child to make a flower cutout. Cut 10 grapes in half.
2. Invite the students to wash their hands and come to the table for a cooking activity.
3. Demonstrate how to use the flower cookie cutters by pressing down in the melon slice. Have each child make two melon flowers.
4. Demonstrate how to assemble their flower with the melon layers and using the grape slice as the center. Serve and enjoy, or save for a later snack by writing the child's name on the plate.

How do **Melons** grow?



Melons grow on a vine. After pollination, the melon flowers swell to become the melons we eat.



Why should we eat **Melons?**

B Vitamins



Healthy brain

Vitamin C



Healthy immune system
(prevents colds, heals cuts)

Potassium



Healthy muscles

Lycopene



Healthy heart



Preschool In-Class Learning Plan
Melon