



## Preschool Home Visit Learning Plan

### Melon

#### Harvest Objectives

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

Families will identify that melons grow on a vine.

Families will taste a piece of melon.



#### Harvest Vocab

Firm

Fruit

Vine

#### Materials & Prep

Melons (enough for each family member 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)

#### 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

One Cool Watermelon by Hannah Toft [boardbook]

#### Warm Up

- In order to engage the family and activate prior knowledge, create 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 melons and review the different activities with the family and how they should use the equipment. Then encourage the family to explore the melons 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.



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- Cut some of the melon open. Allow the family to explore the various seeds and observe them as they dry.
- Add paper, pencils and crayons to the station for the family to draw their observations. Teachers/Home Visitors/Parents can write down the observations on individual paper, or collectively on one large paper.

### **Explain**

- After the family has explored the melons, gather together in a large group. Share with the family 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 family 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 family 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 hollow when you tap on them). Please see the next pages for images to share with the family.

### **Taste Test**

- Rinse the melons. If you did not do so at the station, cut each in half and show the family what they look like on the inside.
- Slice each into pieces. If different varieties are available, have each family member predict which one will be his/her favorite. Then after tasting have each family member share which one 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 family member a sticker, and ask them to vote by placing it in a column. Count the number of people that like and don’t like melon and write that number in each column.

### **Toddler Tasting**

- To make melon baby food, cut melon in half and scoop out seeds. Remove the rind from one half of the melon and then dice. Mash or serve diced pieces as finger foods. If you prefer to puree, place the dices into blender. Consider adding cereal or another food to thicken up the melon puree.

### **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 the family have each member help in an age-appropriate manner.



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Melon Flowers (for 4 servings)

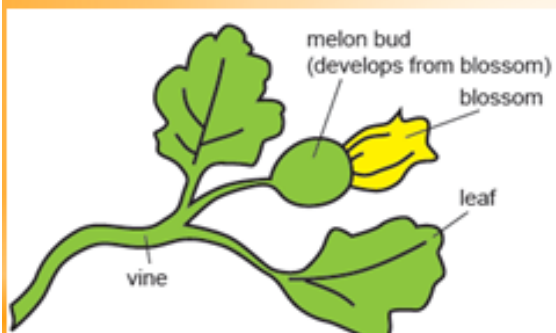
(adapted from: <http://pinterest.com/pin/190417890465784160/>  
with original credit to parents.com)

1 slice cantaloupe                      1 slice honeydew or 1 kiwi  
2 Grapes                                  Knife & Cutting Board  
2 Flower cookie cutters (different sizes)      Plate (1 per person)



1. All family members should wash their hands.
  - a. Wet hands with warm water
  - b. Apply hand wash (soap)
  - c. Lather and wash for AT LEAST 15 seconds (the length of the ABC song)
  - d. Rinse both sides of hands with water all the way up to the wrists
  - e. Dry hands and shut off faucet with towel
2. If using whole melons, rinse melons and grapes by putting them under running water and rubbing the entire surface to remove any soil. Have an adult cut the cantaloupe, and honeydew/kiwi into slices for each family member to make a cookie cutout. Cut the grapes in half.
3. Demonstrate how to use the flower cookie cutters by pressing down in the melon slice. Have each family member make two melon flower cutouts.
4. Demonstrate how to assemble a flower with the melon layers and use the grape slice as the center. Enjoy!

## 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



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