



Harvest Objectives

Children will describe and act out the tomato lifecycle.

Children will identify that tomatoes grow on vines and have seeds inside.

Children will taste a piece of tomato.

Harvest Vocab

Firm

Fruit

Seed

Materials & Prep

Various Tomatoes (consider having two or more colors—red, yellow, orange, green, purple; two or more sizes)

1 Set Tomato Life Cycle large cards (see separate document)

5-10 Sets Tomato Life Cycle small cards (see separate document; set to print 4 pages per sheet and then cut each sheet into quarters for small cards)

Images (included at end of learning plan)

Knife & Cutting Board

Taste Test Chart

Stickers (or small Post-It Notes)

Literature Connections

Tomatoes Grow on a Vine by Mari Schuh

Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes by Demian Elaine Yumei

Tomatoes to Ketchup by Inez Snyder

Warm Up

- In order to engage the children and activate prior knowledge, show them the tomato and pass them around so everyone gets to hold and/or touch them. Do not tell them what they are. Tell them to think of the name for the food, but to keep their answer inside their head. Then when everyone has held a tomato, ask them, “What is this called?” Consider having everyone say the answer aloud on the count of three, this way you’ll know how many children in the group know. Then discuss, have they ever seen one before? Eaten one before? How was it prepared? Where do they think tomatoes come from? How do they grow? (On trees, bushes?)
- In order for the children to explore more about the tomato life cycle, have a common experience, and think about what they know, put the children in small groups (of 2-4 children), or have them work independently.
- Using the small cards, tell them that they get to put the cards representing the tomato plant life cycle in order, starting with the seed planted in the soil. Allow one or two minutes for them to work and discuss. Then check-in with some children. Ask them, “Why do they think one piece goes before, or after, another? How do they know?”



- It is okay if the order is incorrect. Have the children leave the cards in the order they think is best and continue as a large group (below.) Then the children will be able to go back and fix their own mistakes.
- Note: For very young preschool students, have them work independently with an adult, perhaps during small group time, give them only the first two pieces and ask them to put them in order. Then give them the next two, to add on, etc.

Explain

- As a large group, using the large life cycle cards, discuss the correct card sequence. Have the children hold up the cards in the correct order in front of the group.
- Then to review, as a large group have the children act out the entire plant life cycle.
 - Seed—children crouch down into a ball, arms wrapped around knees
 - Germination—legs act as roots and they are slightly stooped over
 - Leaf Growth—stand taller and have their arms act as leaves
 - Flower Growth—their face is the flower and their arms wrap around their face
 - Pollination—one hand turns into a bee, touches their nose, and then respectfully touches a friend's nose
 - Immature Tomato—extend the arms from the nose just a little bit to be a small tomato
 - Tomatoes-- extend the arms from the nose entirely to be a big tomato
 - Seed Dispersal—tomato falls to the ground, or is eaten by a student for lunch
- Have the children go back to their small cards and make any corrections in the order. For children that need the reinforcement, ask them, “Why do they think one piece goes before, or after, another? How do they know?”
- Discuss the picture that shows the tomato growing on the vine, and explain the word if needed. Can they think of any other foods that grow on vines? (Grapes, pumpkins, some beans, etc.)
- Explain why we should eat tomatoes (helps heal cuts, prevent colds, healthy heart, healthy eyes, and healthy muscles) and for each come up with an action to help the children remember. For example, for healthy heart they can tap their heart while saying “healthy heart.” Also explain how to pick good tomatoes (they should be firm when you press them gently). Please see the next pages for images to share with the children.

Taste Test

- After washing the tomatoes, slice each variety into pieces. Taste the different varieties and have each child share which he/she liked the best.
- 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 tomatoes and write that number in each column.
- Review with the children how tomatoes grow and if there are seeds inside.

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 to expand the HOM experience.

Tomato Cheese Patterns (for 20 children)

60 cherry tomatoes

30 cheese cubes

20 skewers

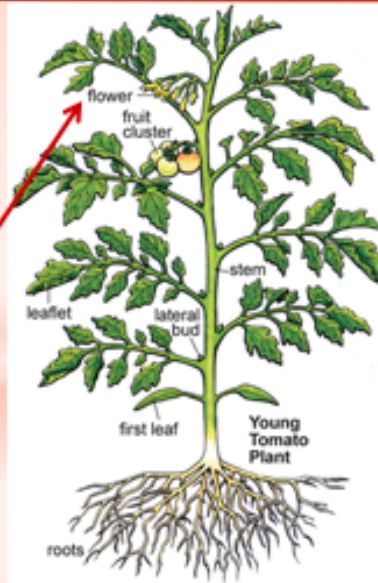
Plate (1 per child)

1. Rinse the tomatoes under running water.
2. Invite the children to wash their hands and come to the table for a cooking activity.
3. Demonstrate how to make the pattern by sliding one cherry tomato onto the skewer, followed by a piece of cheese. Have the child do the same and then complete the pattern by having 3 cherry tomatoes and 2 cheese cubes on the skewer. Serve and enjoy, or save for snack by writing the child’s name on the plate.

How do Tomatoes grow?



Tomatoes grow on a vine. After pollination, tomato flowers swell into tomatoes that we eat.



Why should we eat Tomatoes?

Lycopene Vitamin A Vitamin C



Healthy heart



Healthy eyes



Healthy immune system (heals cuts, prevents colds)

Potassium



Healthy muscles

Vitamin K



Heals Cuts