



## SECTION 3

# In-Classroom Modeling

In-classroom modeling works with the teacher training to make the curriculum real for them, in their own classroom, with their own students. Read through this section for short lesson plans to get teachers more comfortable with food exploration and taste testing that can be used in conjunction with the Grow it! Try it! Like it! curriculum

### *Background, theory for the intervention*

This in-class teacher training presentation is an evidence-based program. The activities are based on components of the Social Ecological Model (SEM) and work in tandem to support the teacher trainings. The SEM indicates that there are multiple levels of intervention needed to create lasting behavior change and/or learning. This includes the individual, interpersonal, organizational, community and policy levels. This intervention touches on individual and environmental (organizational) settings. Teachers are trained on the curriculum on an academic basis, and then those academic principles are modeled for teachers by nutrition educators. This gives teachers an opportunity to see the curriculum in action in their own environment (the classroom), and tailored to their individual students' needs. It allows teachers to ask questions and imagine how they would carry out their training on their own.

### *Key Components of the Activity*

Key components of this activity were to model a classroom lesson for providers to see the curriculum in action. Farm Fresh of Rhode Island educators presented a classroom lesson that consisted of multiple types of media/exploration of fruits and/or vegetables.

Each in-class presentation included:

- Reading a story about the fruit and/or vegetable
- Completing the “Mystery Box” activity (See lesson plan for description)
- Trying a prepared sample of the “mystery box” fruit and/or vegetable
- Modeling constructive approaches that encourage children to try these foods



## How Activity Helped Accomplish Overall USDA Grant Objectives

This component of the training serves the overall grant objectives by providing support in carrying out nutrition education in the child care environment, which in turn will lead to more meaningful implementation of the curriculum.

This intervention supported two key objectives of the Rhode Island Team Nutrition Training Grant:

### Objective 2

Equip early child care programs throughout Rhode Island with the tools and training needed to create and maintain an environment that promotes health eating practices.

This intervention was a form of teacher training that enables teachers to be able to re-create the training lessons in their classrooms, thereby giving them the tools to maintain an environment that promotes healthy eating practices.



### Objective 3

Increase children's acceptability of vegetables and fruits in CACFP child care centers and family day care centers.

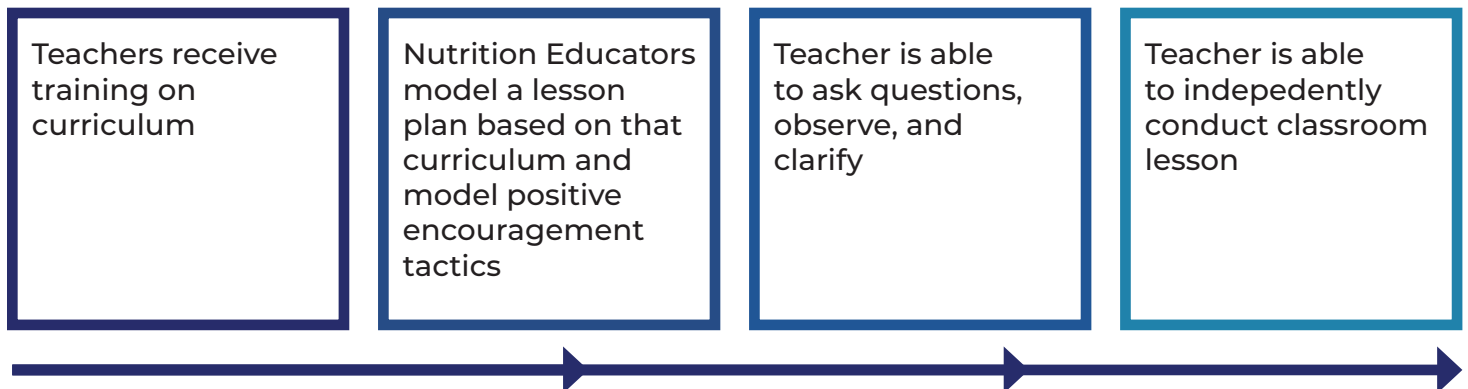
Exposing children to foods in multiple ways (media, discussion, exposition, and food exploration) helps children become more comfortable with trying new foods. Each of these concepts was modeled for teachers in in-classroom presentations. Teachers will be able to use these concepts to expand acceptance of other types of fruits and vegetables.

## Implementation of the Intervention

### Delivering the Intervention in the Field

This intervention was consistently delivered as intended. The only modifications made to these lessons were if the center had asked us to deliver them in classrooms of different age groups, in which case the content was scaled down to meet the learning needs of younger children.

### Intervention Logic Model



## Steps for Implementation

Want to bring more fruit and vegetable exploration into your classroom, model healthful habits, or have your students grow their own food?

1. Check your center's policies about serving food in the classroom and connect with food service about supplying a local fruit and vegetable for student exploration and/or tasting.
2. When talking to food service, you can use the "Eat with the Seasons" and "Local, Seasonal Menu Planning with Grow it! Try it! Like it!" resource in the recipe section of this toolkit to discuss options.
3. Use Farm Fresh Rhode Island's Harvest Calendar <[guide.farmfreshri.org/learn/harvestcalendar](http://guide.farmfreshri.org/learn/harvestcalendar)> to see what produce is currently available and use the guide <[guide.farmfreshri.org](http://guide.farmfreshri.org)> to find nearby local farms to source food from if food service isn't able to source for your class.
4. Look through the Grow It, Try It, Like It curriculum kit for sample lesson plans, activities, and materials. Choose one that best fits your center's regulations, student interests, and available instruction time. The kit provides objectives and full instructions to adapt their curriculum to your needs.
5. Teach away! Share local fruits and vegetables with your students and watch how they respond. What grabs their interest? How do they interact with fruit and vegetables with no pressure to sample?
6. Repeat using another fruit or vegetable or alternative activity! Repetitive exposure to fruits and vegetables in classroom gardens and school activities makes them more likely to try new foods in the future so keep going!
7. Talk with foodservice to see if they can highlight the chosen fruit or vegetable in a couple of different ways throughout the season

## Total Number Served by In-Classroom Activity

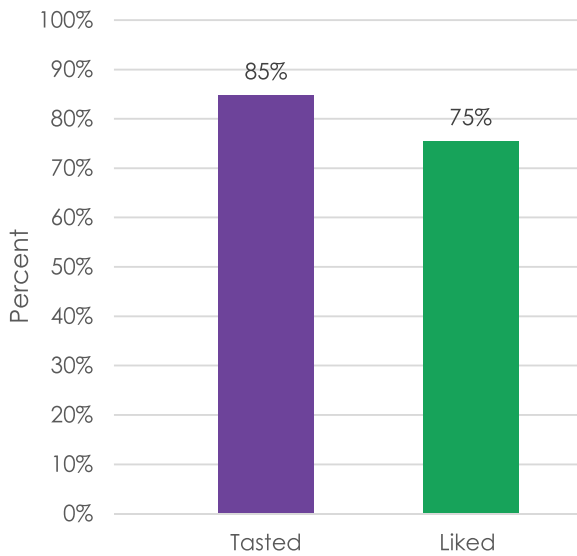
44

Activities

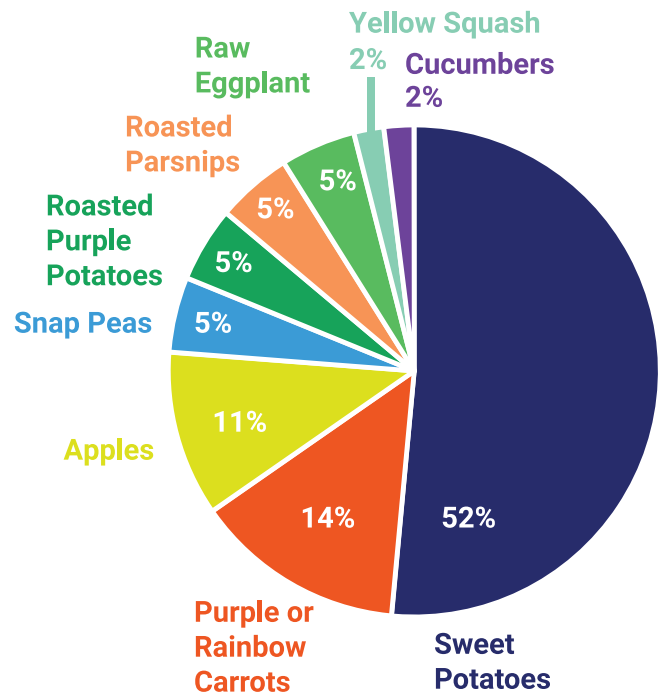
859

Participants

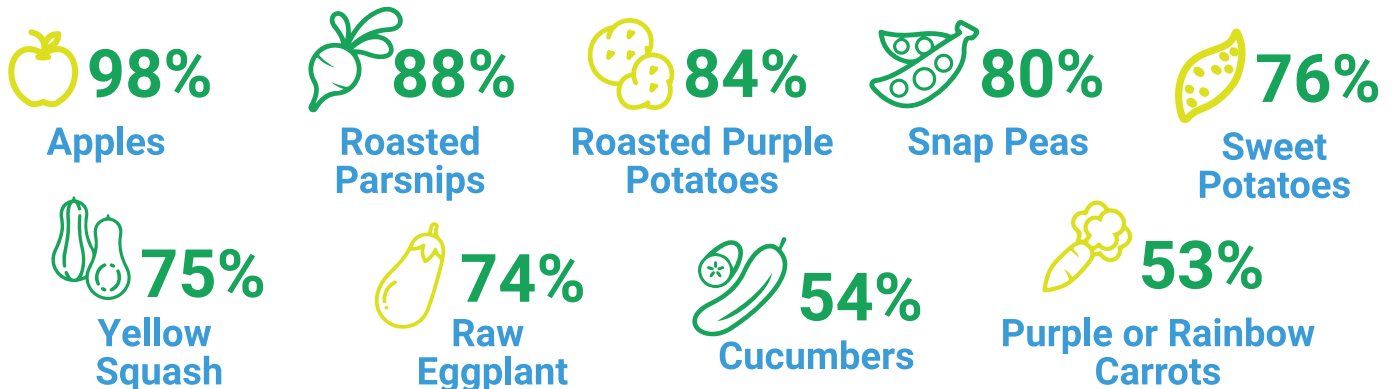
Overall Percentage of Students who Tasted, Liked Sample



Type of Sample Offered



## Percentage of Students who Liked Different Samples Offered





# Pre-k Sensory Food Exploration with the Mystery Box

**Description:** A 30 minute lesson that promotes sensory exploration of fruits and vegetables by reading a story, using the mystery box, and doing a taste test.

## Lesson Objectives

1. Explore topics about food, gardens, farms, and healthy eating through storytelling
2. Introduce new fruits and vegetables to students through tactile engagement and taste



## Introduction and Storybook

1. Chose a storybook relating to fruits, vegetables, farms, gardening, or healthy eating (if you don't have a book, reference the FFRI reading list for a variety of fun options!)
2. Introduce the story by asking students what they know about the subject and tell them what they will learn. (Examples below)
  - For *E-I-E-I-O*: "Has anyone been to a farm before? Yes? What did you see there?" – "We know that Old McDonald *had* a farm, but today we will learn about how he got his farm!"
  - For *Growing Vegetable Soup*: "Who has tried vegetable soup? Did you like it? What vegetables were in your soup?" – "Now we are going to learn how to grow vegetable soup from start to finish!"
3. After reading the story ask students to reflect on what they thought about the story, what they liked, what they learned, etc.

## Mystery Box

1. Bring out the Mystery Box with a fruit or vegetable inside. Tell the students they will each get a chance to reach inside and feel the mystery fruit or vegetable.
  - Remind them not look inside the box or try to take the fruit or vegetable out of the box, and wait until everyone has had a turn to say their guess out loud.
    - "If you have a guess, don't say it out loud! Keep it a secret until every friend has a chance to reach in the box."
  - Ask guiding questions to evoke tactile senses.
    - "Is it hard? Is it soft? Is it squishy? Is it smooth? Is it bumpy?"
2. Sometimes students can be shy about reaching into the Mystery Box. We encourage teachers to try first to help get students engaged.
3. Once every student has had a chance to reach into the Mystery Box, ask the class what they think it is. Then reveal the fruit or vegetable!
4. Remind the students of their tactile senses.
  - "See how smooth/bumpy/hard/soft the skin is?"



## Taste Test

1. Bring a prepared and portioned version of the fruit or vegetable in the Mystery Box, it is up to you to decide whether to cook it or keep it raw.
2. Ask students if they have every tried the fruit or vegetable that was revealed in the Mystery Box. Re-introduce the fruit or vegetable to the students and explain how the sample they will be trying was prepared and what flavors they can expect.
  - Best food safety practices include: have students wash their hands before and after sampling, using gloves when handling the food, and serving it in small individual sampling cups.
3. Acknowledge that trying new things can be hard and even scary, but it is very brave. Emphasize that it is okay if they don't like it, but it is important to try new things and let our tummies decide!
  - We encourage teachers to try the sample first to help calm students that may be scared or intimidated.
4. Give a sticker to the students that taste it, and use the stickers as an incentive for students who are hesitant to try it. Congratulate students for being brave and trying a new food!
  - As an additional fun activity, make a chart with each student's name and each fruits or vegetable that is sampled in class. They can place their stickers by their name every time they try a new food. Post it in the classroom to remind students of their accomplishments and further encourage them to continue trying new things.

## Closing Remarks and Call to Action

1. Hand out coloring sheets of the fruit or vegetable that was sampled in class.
2. The students can work on it in class or take it home to show their parents. Encourage them to talk to their families about the fruit or vegetable they tried in class that day.

## How to Make a Mystery Box

Find a box that will fit a variety of fruit and vegetables and is easy to open and close repeatedly. (If the box is too deep for small children, place a small pillow inside for the fruit or vegetable to rest on) Cut a hole in the top of the box, big enough for small hands but not too large as to allow for sneak peaks. Next, take a tube sock and cut off the toe part. Attach the tope of the sock around the hole using glue or staples, this should create a tunnel for kids to reach into the box and feel inside. Alternatively, glue a square piece of fabric (larger than the opening) on opposite corners. Ta Da, all set!

## Materials Needed

- Storybook of choice
- Mystery Box & fruit or vegetable of choice
- Prepared fruit or vegetable for tasting
- Serving cups
- Gloves
- Stickers
- Fruit or vegetable coloring sheets
- Optional Materials
  - "I tried it" chart

# Classroom Planting Activity

**Description:** A 30 – 45 minute activity where students plant a vegetable or herb that they watch grow in the classroom.

## Lesson Objectives

1. Learn how to grow food and what it needs to survive and thrive

## Introduction

- You don't need a garden to grow food! All you need is some good soil, water, and sunlight.
- Many foods grow well indoors and some can grow all year round.
  - Radishes, lettuce, sunflower shoots, basil, and mint are just some of the plants that can be planted indoors any time of the year.
- Before starting the activity, make sure to read the back of the seed packet for specific information of the amount of water, sunlight, and space each plant needs. For more tips on indoor planting, review the....handout.

## Planting

1. Have students decorate their pots! Encourage them to write or draw the fruit or vegetable they will be planting.
  - You can use store bought pots or paper cups. If using paper cups, poke a few holes in the bottom to allow for water drainage.
2. While the pots are drying/resting, introduce the fruit or vegetable that you will be planting.
  - Show students what the fruit or vegetable will look like once it is fully grown
  - Share fun and nutritional facts about the fruit or vegetable
  - Explain how much water, sunlight, and space each vegetable needs and make a plan with students on how the class will take care of their plants.
3. Once the pots are dry, have students fill 2/3 of the pot with soil.
4. Using a finger, make a few small holes and place one seed in each.
  - The back of the seed packet will indicate how deep the seeds should be planted
5. Cover the seeds with another spoonful of soil.
6. Label the plants by writing the fruit or vegetable and name of the student on a popsicle stick, then insert it into the soil near the edge of the pot or cup.
7. Water and store somewhere with direct sunlight.
  - The soil should be damp but not saturated with water, you don't want the consistency of mud
8. Wait and see how it grows!
  - Have students check their plants every day or every other day and track their progress
  - Once the plants are fully grown, use them in a taste test!



### Materials Needed

- Soil
- Seeds
- Pots/cups
- Popsicle sticks
- Spray bottle or water can
- Markers
- Fruit or vegetable

# Seed Art Activity

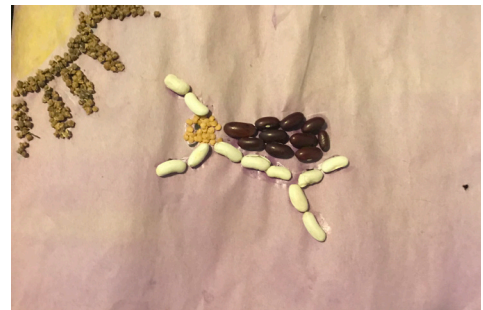
**Description:** Create art using fruit, vegetable, herb, and flower seeds!

### Lesson objectives

1. Interact with many different types of seeds in a creative atmosphere

### Instructions

1. Distribute construction paper, glue, colored pencils/crayons/markers.
2. Put seeds in bowls or cups and label for sharing.
  - Optional: present and discuss the different seeds that the students will be using during the activity.
3. Encourage students to mix drawing, coloring, and seeds to create garden, nature, farm, fruit, and vegetable landscapes!



### Materials Needed

- Variety of seeds
- Construction Paper
- Colored pencils/crayons/markers
- Glue (wet glue recommended)
- Cups or bowls



# Farm to Storybook: Great Reads for Preschool

## English Language Books

- Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert
- A Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds by Jean Richards, Illustrations by Anca Hariton
- From Seed to Plant by Gail Gibbons
- The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle
- EIEIO! How Old MacDonald got his farm by Judy Sierra, Illustrations by Matthew Myers
- Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
- Anywhere Farm by Phyllis Root, Illustrations by G. Brian Karas
- Feast for 10 by Catherine Falwell
- Up, Down and Around by Katherine Ayres, Illustrations by Nadine Bernard Wescott
- The Ugly Vegetables by Grace Lin
- Blueberry Mouse by Alice Low
- Rah, Rah, Radishes! By April Pulley Sayres



## Libros en español

- A sembrar sopa de verduras por Lois Ehlert
  - Arriba, Abajo y Alrededor por Katherine Ayres, Ilustrado por Nadine Bernard Westcott
  - Fiesta para 10 por Catherine Falwell
  - ¡Deliciosas Manzanas! Por Tina Manzanitas, Ilustrado por Farah Aria
  - En el Mercado por Anna Bardaus, Ilustrado by Steffane McClary
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