

Magnificent muffins

This education programme is all about inspiring children to explore, imagine and create, whilst equipping them with life skills. It provides resources for primary school teachers to deliver activities in the classroom, but volunteers have a unique role to play in bringing practical skills to life. Whether a John Lewis Partner, parent or guardian, by going back to the classroom as a volunteer, you'll put your skills in to action to help inspire pupils.

Workshop activity

Introduction

We want children to enjoy preparing and sharing food, so you're going to be working with a group of pupils to make a batch of fruit based muffins. During the 45 minute workshop you'll talk about the process of making a baked item and how the ingredients work together. You'll weigh and measure together to create a simple but delicious recipe that the children can use again and again at home with their families. Adapt the activity depending on the age and experience of the children using the ideas provided in the differentiation section.

Aims and objectives

- To develop the preparation and cooking skills of a group of children.
- To help the children become confident in baking a simple muffin with variations that they can make again at home and school.

Resources

Muffin making equipment:

Small and large mixing bowls
Measuring jug
Measuring spoons
Wooden spoons
Scales
Ice cream scoop
Muffin tins
Paper muffin cases
Knives
Chopping boards
Wire cooling rack
Timer

Ingredients:

1 egg
120ml milk
4 tablespoons vegetable oil
Fruit e.g. banana/blueberries/apple
200g plain flour
100g light brown sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder

You'll also need:

Basic Muffin Mix Recipe Card, disinfectant spray for cleaning surfaces, Cook & Share 'How to follow a recipe' and 'How to wash up' activity cards, Aprons.

Before the workshop

Action	Time needed
1. Familiarise yourself with the workshop content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have time, why not follow the recipe at home before? (Allow time.) • Organise to purchase the ingredients – if you're a John Lewis Partner, your Community Liaison Coordinator can advise you on the process for this. 	10 minutes
2. Contact the teacher you're liaising with and ask them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To confirm what resources they'll be able to provide (see list above and flag items you don't have). • If you'll have the full 45 minutes available for the session. • Where you'll be running the workshop – you'll need access to an oven, a clean area for cooking and somewhere to wash up. • To select a small group for you to work with (we recommend you work with groups of up to eight children). • If any children have food allergies, and the schools policy for handling this. • If any children have specific needs and need additional support. 	10 minutes
3. Don't forget about logistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If driving, check that there is a car parking space for you to use on the day and remember to check that you know where you are going. • Arrive in plenty of time - schools work to a very tight schedule. • Telephone and confirm the day before that everything is ready for your visit. 	10 minutes

On the day

Action	Time needed
1. Introduce yourself and explain that you are here today to do some cooking with them and that you hope they get involved and have fun.	5 minutes
2. Ask the class how many have baked before (please make a note of this figure).	5 minutes
3. Ask everyone to wash their hands thoroughly and put on an apron.	

Be mindful of allergies:

Some children may have sensitive skin and washing up liquid might irritate this.

Some children may be allergic to latex in which case rubber gloves should be avoided.

Action	Time needed
<p>4. Introduce yourself and the utensils and items you'll be using. Check that the children know the names of the items.</p> <p>5. Explain that you will make a batch of fruit based muffins together. Show the children the fruits you have brought in and check they know the name of each one - cut small pieces off for everyone and ask the children to describe the taste.</p>	5 minutes
<p>6. Hand out copies of the recipe card and read through together.</p> <p>7. Split your group of eight in half, one group can prepare the wet ingredients and the others the dry ingredients (both groups can help with the fruits).</p> <p>8. Weigh and measure the ingredients following the recipe card.</p> <p>9. Ask older children to read through the 'How to follow a recipe' activity card.</p>	5 minutes
<p>10. Support the children in following the recipe and ask questions about the process as you go through such as; How have the ingredients changed? How will they change in the heat of the oven? Why do we add baking powder? What combination of fruits would work best?</p>	15 minutes
<p>11. While the muffins are baking, recap on what you did and start the washing and drying up.</p> <p>12. Ask older children to follow the 'How to wash up' activity card.</p>	10 minutes
<p>13. If you have time, you could eat the muffins together when they have cooled down and talk about taste.</p>	After workshop

How to vary the lesson for different ages and abilities (known as Differentiation)

Age 3-5 With very young children focus on the language of cooking. They will need more support with weighing, mixing and stirring but ensure that each child in the group has a turn at each part of the process. Stick with the basic banana muffin recipe and add one additional fruit and potentially pre-weigh the ingredients.

Age 5-7 Ask children to work in pairs to weigh and measure the ingredients using the scales and spoons with only a little support. They can also choose their fruit and cut it or prepare safely with support. They can mix and stir independently.

Age 7-11 Ask children to work in pairs to choose their fruit and prepare this. They can select, weigh and measure their ingredients.

They should be able to do this independently. Ask questions about the changes that will occur with the ingredients and how the baking powder acts as a raising agent. Can they think of any other raising agents in baking? (Answers include yeast and bicarbonate of soda.) The children can read the 'How to wash up' activity card and wash up independently with support.

Extension ideas/discussion points

- This activity could be repeated with further groups of children so that while one batch of muffins is cooking, another group can prepare the next batch. When the muffins have been baked, eat together as a group. You won't need one muffin per child – cut them into halves for older children or quarters for younger children.

- While eating together chat about what foods the children like to eat at home and what their favourite foods are. Talk about why we should eat a balanced, healthy diet. Encourage the children to try the recipe again at home with their families.

Top tips

- It's tempting to jump in and take over, especially when children are trying something for the first time. Don't forget that you're there to support their learning and only take over if there is any danger.
- Take plenty of water to drink – you won't have time for a sit down or a cup of tea.
- If you are supported by the teacher and/teaching assistant, in a 45 minute session you may be able to work with a few separate groups of up to eight children at a time. Keep a close eye on the time, using a timer if necessary.
- Relax and have fun.

Follow up

If you're a John Lewis Partner:

- Tell your Community Liaison Coordinator how many of the children had baked before and confirm how many children participated in your workshop.
- Can the class you've worked with send in an overview of your session to the programme team? This could be as a poem or in pictures.

