



AUTISM CLASSROOM RESOURCES PODCAST
EPISODE 49: COOKING IN THE CURRICULUM DURING COVID19

URL: <http://autismclassroomresources.com/episode49>

Welcome back to The Autism Classroom Resources Podcast. I am Chris Reeve. I'm your host.

I love cooking in the classroom. It's one of my favorite activities to use with younger students and with life skills students. One of the things I like is that students are motivated by it. Because who doesn't like to eat, right? Another is the number of skills you can build and teach with cooking.

But what about cooking now, as I'm writing and recording this--in the middle of the pandemic? How do you cook in the classroom with virus precautions? Or how do you use cooking as a teaching strategy in distance learning?

In this episode I've got tips that address just those questions. I've got tips about how to cook in the classroom during the pandemic as well as tips for how to incorporate cooking into distance learning.

Why Use Cooking in the Classroom?

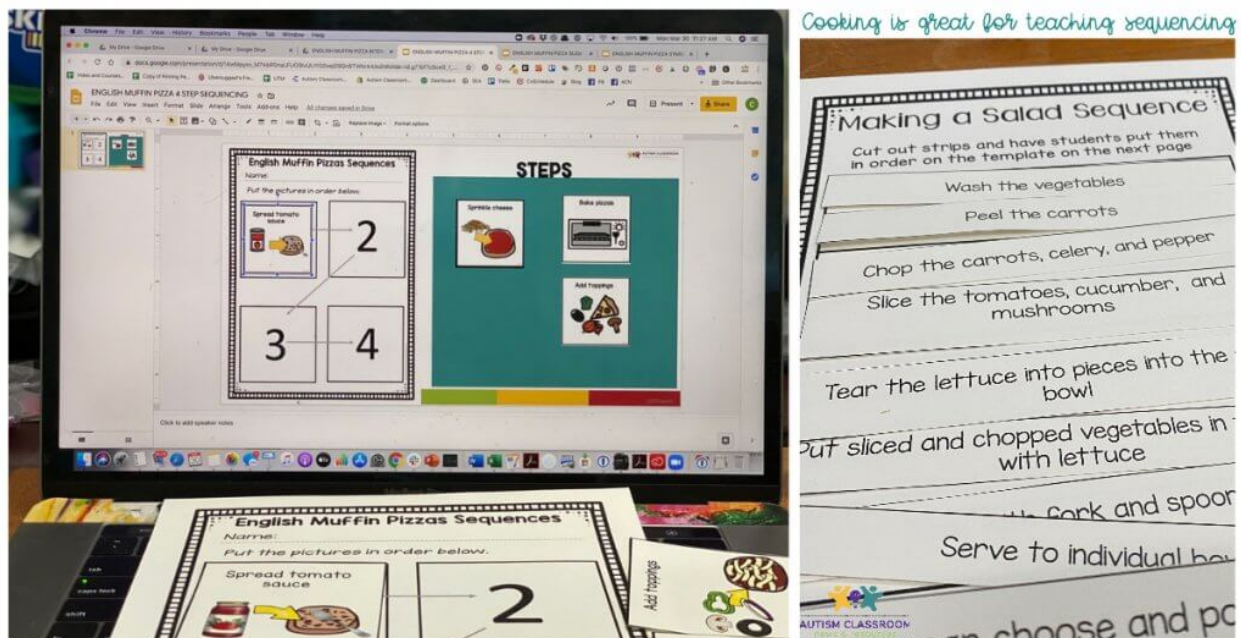
Let's start with why I like cooking in the classroom. First, it is a highly motivating activity for many students (and staff) because you get to eat what you cook. It also takes learning out of the typical sit at a desk and attend and can include more movement and sensory activities. Finally, it's a good life skill for all of our students, regardless of their age.

But the main reason I like cooking in the classroom is the number of skills that you can embed in an activity that students may see as fun. I love anything where students don't realize they are learning. Let's talk for a minute about what skills you can teach with cooking.

Receptive and Expressive Language

One of the main things I love teaching in cooking are language and communication skills. Students can learn vocabulary around food and the kitchen including names of ingredients, processes (e.g., stirring) and tools. You can also teach sequencing, of being able to describe the steps they took in the recipe. They can work on describing tastes and activities they participated in. Being able to talk about an experience they participated in is an important skill for many of our students. And they can work on answering questions about the experience.

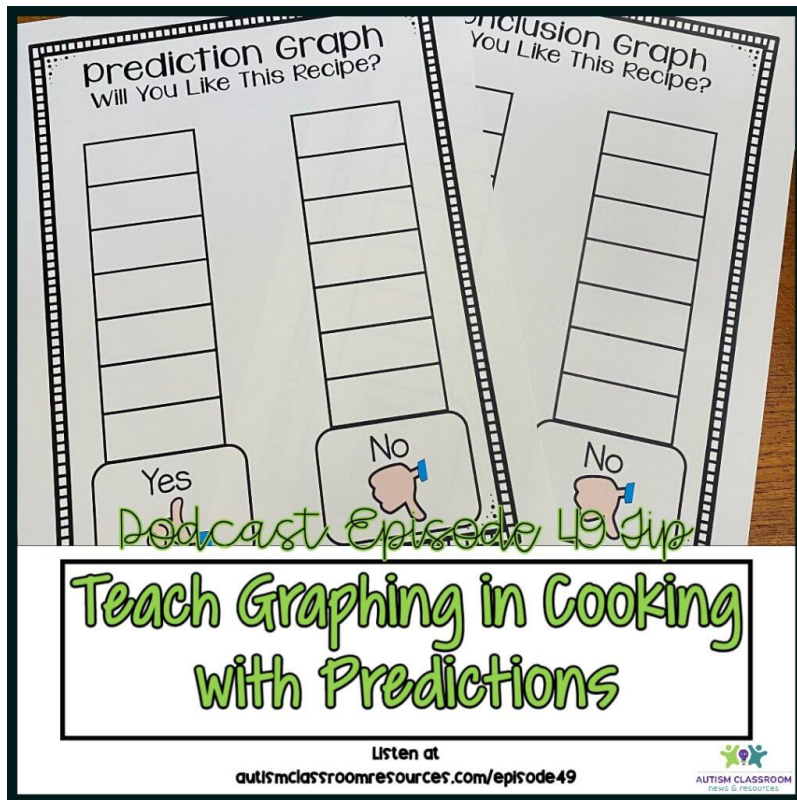
Reading and Literacy



Scroll down to check out the Tossed Salad Unit and the English Muffin Pizza Unit

Functional reading is so important for many of our students. Reading a recipe is one way to incorporate that into the classroom. Sequencing events based on the recipe is another. Reading and following the directions allow you to check for reading (and language) comprehension. You can even include writing activities that go along with the cooking.

Math Skills



Scroll to end of post to links to save time with these resources.

There are lots of math skills in cooking, of course. Counting ingredients and measurement are two kinds of math skills we commonly think about. But you can also build more math by doubling or halving recipes, so students have to multiply or divide amounts. You can have students predict if they will like what they are cooking. They can graph the predictions before and the results after they try the food. Then they can make number sentences from the data.

Motor Skills and Life Skills

And of course there are lots of motor skills that can be practiced from cutting/ slicing, tearing (e.g., lettuce), stirring, beating eggs, tossing salad, opening and closing containers and more. Plus, students can learn to use kitchen equipment like mixers, blenders, stoves and ovens.



Science

There are tons of science goals that can be addressed. Make something with yeast or baking powder and study the chemical reaction. Watch the rise of breads and examine how the amount of yeast or the climate / weather relates to how high it rises. Study the electricity that makes the blender run. Discuss solids, liquids and gas when you boil water from ice.

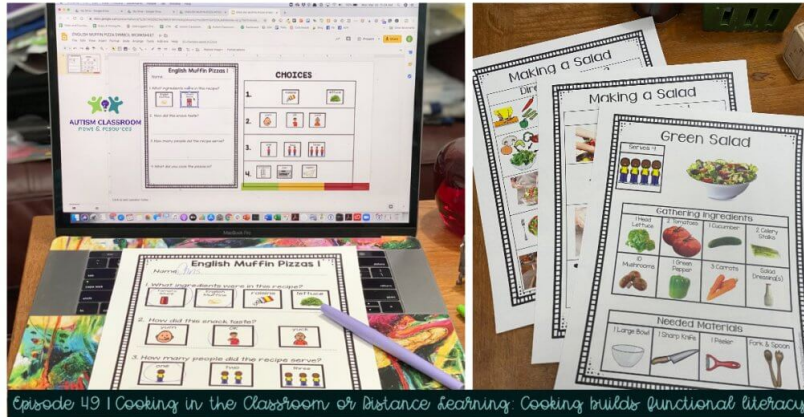
And of course there are lots more goals that can be learned as part of cooking like trying new foods, setting the table, etc.

Cooking in the Classroom (and at Home) in a Pandemic

So, given the amazing things you can teach through cooking, how do you include it in your curriculum safely and effectively? Here are ways you can incorporate into today's classroom or into your distance learning.

Cooking In the Classroom During Covid

The first tip is to choose recipes that can be cooked with each student having his or her own ingredients. While it does limit the opportunity to work on collaboration in group activities during cooking (one goal I really like to address), it prevents germ contamination. And I should say that Tip 1 is really useful in our present situation during the Coronavirus, but it's also helpful with any situations with health concerns in your classroom.



Scroll to end of post to links to save time with these resources.

What does this mean in terms of what you choose to cook? Here are some ideas. Any recipe that a student makes and eats his own item will work. For instance, in my recipe for Tossed Green Salad, I originally was thinking it would be one you could divide up jobs for and have students work together. But, you can still have each student have his or her own vegetables to clean, chop and toss so they eat their own salad rather than a full tossed salad for the group. English Muffin Pizza, another one in my stores, is another one that students can make their own pizza. And the recipe and materials are actually set up that way. Ants on a log (raisins in peanut butter or cream cheese on celery) are another one.

Cooking in Distance Learning with Family

So what if you are teaching at a distance? One of my big tips for cooking is to make the experience last through the week. Because there are so many activities you can do with it, you can spread it out. That works well in distance learning.

Cook with the Family: Follow up in Class

One way to cook in distance learning is to send the recipe home and have the family cook the item. This helps them fit learning into their household routines and integrate learning into everyday activities. When you do this, though, just make sure that you give them specific instructions on what

skills are being addressed and how. Then, you could follow up in your face-to-face video conference with sequencing activities, comprehension and other expansion activities.

Cooking at Home Lesson Plan				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the slide show and have your child say or use his communication board to fill in the blanks. At the end of the book, have the student make a prediction about whether he/she will like the snack. <i>Optional:</i> Have your child ask others in the family if they predict they would like the snack and add the names to the prediction graph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the visuals of the ingredients, have your child locate the ingredients in the kitchen. Have the student point to or name the ingredients when told the name or shown the picture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the recipe (written or picture) by reading it and pointing to the ingredients. Allow your child to taste the ingredients. Ask questions like, "Is it crunchy or soft?" "Is it hot or cold?" Go through the recipe step by step and add the ingredients. Have your child count the number of trapping items as they put them on. Once the pizzas are done, have your child at least taste it. Ask if he/she liked the snack and add it to the conclusion graph and ask family members who participated and add to graph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind your child of the snack made yesterday and talk about how it was made (use the slide show if it would be helpful or review the visual recipe). Have your child complete the comprehension worksheet assigned by his teacher. <i>Optional:</i> Have him review the graph of how many family members liked the pizzas vs. didn't. Compare and contrast how many predicted they would or would not like it vs. how many did or did not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the slide show and then present one of the sequencing activities to your child. Have him / her sequence the events of the cooking activity from the day before.

Episode 49 | Cooking in the Classroom or Distance Learning: Give clear lesson directions to families in distance learning

English Muffin Pizzas
Reviewing Cooking Activity

ACTIVITY: English Muffin Pizzas

OBJECTIVES: receptive / expressive vocabulary for cooking, identifying ingredients, recalling events of an activity with visual supports, sequencing 4 or more steps of a completed activities (with or without visual cues), expressing a prediction of preference, interpreting graphs, compare and contrast data results, create number sentence of data from graph, answer simple questions about the activity and product created.

MATERIALS:
Slide Show of steps of the recipe, Visual recipe (or alternate recipe with cream cheese), Communication board, Preference Graph, Sequencing board and pictures, English muffin pizza worksheet

GRAPHING

- After the students have eaten or tried their snack, have each student use speech on the communication boards to indicate if they liked the snack (if you didn't do this in the cooking activity).
- Compare and contrast the students' responses to their predictions on the previous graph.
- Incorporate graphing activities by having students indicate whether which response was more and less frequent. Have them count each answer. They can also write a number sentence to depict the relationship.

SEQUENCING

- Have students recall how they made the pizzas. Use the pictures as reminders.
- Have them sequence the pictures individually or together to show the steps of the recipe.
- Have them use the sequence to tell the story of what they made and how.
- Optional:* Have them use the pictures and journal what was done in each step.

WORKSHEETS

- Have each student complete the worksheet by circling answers or using a BINSO marker. Or substitute use of AAC and record number answers.


Scroll to end of post to links to save time with these resources.

Cooking in the Class: Follow up at Home

Another way to approach it in distance or hybrid learning is to cook as a group. Have students bring ingredients to the computer or take the device to the kitchen. Then everyone can cook with your direction via video conference. Or for hybrid situations, cook the item in the classroom. Then, send materials home (virtually or in print) for students to complete the follow up activities (e.g., comprehension, sequencing) at home.

Cooking Units

Now, if you are looking for ideas and tools to make all of this work, I've got 2 cooking units in my stores. And they are already distance-adapted and they would work in either situation. Plus, they each include lesson plans to send home with specific goals and steps for families to complete. There is even a week-long lesson plan for each one that can be sent home to help parents pace out their activities.



Each one includes the following and all the interactive activities have been included in print and Google Slides™.

- Lesson Plans for Previewing / Preteaching Cooking Activity, Cooking Activity, Reviewing, and Taking Data
- Communication board tailored to the recipe
- Visual recipes and written recipe cards
- Comprehension worksheets with and without pictures
- Sequencing activities
- And prediction graphs and activities

Grab the Cooking Units at the button in the [Cooking in the Classroom Blog Post](#)