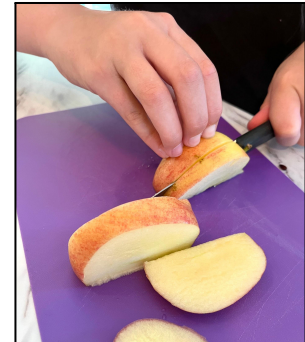


Lesson Plan- Introduction to Knife Skills

Overview

Students will have fun learning knife skills, including safety and proper hand position. This lesson should be done with students who are new to using knives before doing a food preparation lesson.



Approximate Cost: \$40 for 28 students

Lesson Time: 60 minutes

Grocery Shopping List

- Bananas (½ per student)
- Apples (½ per student)
- Playdough or modelling clay

Equipment each student

- Plastic knife (or butter knife)
- Playdough or modelling clay
- Cutting board
- Small paring knife

Teacher Background:

- Review [food safety](#) and [guiding principles](#) for teaching nutrition.
- Review this video for teaching [knife skills and safety from Project CHEF](#)
- ★ **Allergy Alert:** check with parents about food allergies and intolerances before doing food preparation activities.

Before Class:

- Plan classroom set-up. If enough adult helpers are available, divide the class into small groups with an adult at each group. Otherwise, set up a knife skills station with one adult. Small groups can take turns at the station while the rest of the class works on something else.
- Organize equipment listed above
- Pre-portion each - small ball of playdough, ½ apple and ½ banana per student
- Have a projector prepared for the knife skills video.

Lesson Plan - Introduction to Knife Skills



Learning Outcomes

1. Learn about knife safety
2. Develop basic knife skills, including proper handling techniques

Lesson

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Discuss the lesson and ask students if they have used knives before.
- Show the [knife skills video](#) and discuss key techniques and safety messages:
 - Claw method - fingertips are curved in holding the food and thumb is tucked.
 - Place the ingredient flat side down before cutting.
 - Hold the knife handle firmly and close to the blade.
 - Keep knives low and in your personal work zone at all times, no gesturing or pointing with knife in hand.
 - Do not reach across anyone when knives are in use.

2. Stations (20 minutes)

- Start by practicing holding the knife (hand position, sharp side down, etc).
- Practice proper handling and cutting techniques using a plastic knife and playdough. Students can roll playdough in food shapes.
- Next students can clean up and wash hands to prepare for using a real knife and fruit.
 - **Safety Option:** use a "buddy system" - 1 student cuts while the other student is the 'finger watcher' ensuring proper hand positioning.
- ★ Students are invited to eat the food they cut but should **not** be pressured. Food exposure (even without tasting) helps develop acceptance over time. Valuable learning takes place by participating in preparation and discussions about food.

3. Clean up and Reflection (10 minutes)

- Safety note: to avoid injury do not leave knives in the sink of soapy water.
- Teach students and involve them in dishwashing as appropriate.
- Discuss student's experiences - Did they learn something new?