

SPBC Preschool Learning Center
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The Cooking Project



This inquiry began after the children were asking how I made all of their food for lunches since we didn't have a kitchen like they did at home. We are a private center so I go to our local elementary school and pick up lunch each day. I then bring the food to our center and serve it to them on trays. It was amazing to me that the kids knew so little about the preparation of their meals! These questions from my Pre-K students prompted us to begin an investigation!

PHASE 1 of our Investigation: Cooking Attire



We began by talking about what cooks wear. Many of the children talked openly about what their Mommy wore in the kitchen. Most said that their mothers wore aprons to keep “from getting dirty.” (Allison)

We also talked about the things that cooks in kitchens at restaurants wear such as gloves for sanitation, aprons to stay clean, and hair nets to “keep hair on their heads and out of the food.” (Dilynn R.)

PHASE 2 – Question and Answers

The children had so many questions! We decided to map them out by doing a question board. We later researched some of our questions on the internet. For other questions we found it more valuable to ask “experts” like parents, teachers at our center, the Head Cook of our Elementary School Kitchen, recipe books, and the ‘pizza maker’ from Papa Johns.



PHASE 3 – Kitchen Utensils “What are these weird things for?”

When the students were asking questions like “How do you make pancakes?” I would look in a cookbook and we would discuss the steps. When I would explain about using the **whisk** to beat an egg or a **spatula** to flip the pancake on the **griddle**, the children seemed very confused. I quickly realized that the children understood many different types of foods and how combining them created new foods, yet they had very little understanding of the tools used in the cooking or baking process. That led us to talk about, handle and investigate numerous kitchen utensils.

Here I am asking the children what tool I am holding. It was a spaghetti strainer.



PHASE 4 – We want to cook something!

We used to popcorn making demonstration that was used during our previous training. It was very simple for the children to understand and to follow the instructions posted. They really enjoyed their finished product, too!



Joey was amazed at watching it “Pop!”

Allison enjoyed measuring the kernels and oils then dropping the ingredients into the popper.

