

COMPOSING A TACO

Age: 3 and up.

Aims of the Exercise:

Practical Aims:

Food prep. To make a delicious taco to eat and to make one for a friend. To curb grouchy low blood sugar with some protein and vegetables.

Developmental Aims:

Refining motor skills, satisfaction with being able to independently make a meal/snack.

Preparation of the Child:

Wet work skills from practical life area, food prep works like carrot cutting, cracker dressing and sandwich assemblage. Cloth folding. Make sure there are no food allergies in the class.

List of Materials:

The books *Dragons Love Tacos* (also available on Youtube and very silly) or *So You Want to Grow a Taco?* (a more serious story about the origins of our food.) A package of GMO-free corn tortillas, dry bean mix/can of beans/some pre-prepared mushrooms/freeze dried mushrooms, warm water in a small pitcher, shredded cheese, shredded lettuce, and a slice of tomato or avocado. A tray, apron, cutting board, medium sized mixing bowl, small bowl containing freeze-dried beans, two or three other small bowls containing other assorted ingredients ideally matching in color or matching the color of the food they contain, sponge, hand towel, dry spoon, wet spoon, whisk, and plate. An egg timer or hourglass.

Presentation:

1. At circle time, read the story *So You Want to Grow a Taco?* and present to the class a brand new work which is going to be in the food preparation section of the Practical Life area.

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2. Ask questions of the children afterwards about if they like tacos and what they like to have inside of them.
3. This is a one person work.
4. First, get up and wash your hands melodramatically and thoroughly.
5. Then remove the items on the tray onto a table.
6. Put the apron on.
7. Take out the plate.
8. Remove one tortilla from the plate with finesse and flair to make it obvious you have taken only one. Say “one tortilla.”
9. Then, take the dry spoon and scoop on table spoon of bean powder into the little bowl. Say “one scoop of beans.”
10. Put the dry spoon down, back into the dry bean bowl.
11. Go to the sink and fill up the little pitcher with water.
12. Empty the little pitcher into the bowl with the scoop of beans.
13. Mix the bean powder and water with the whisk.
14. Put the timer or hour glass on for one minute or according to the instructions on the packet of beans, and patiently wait and watch it.
15. Use the wet spoon to scoop the reconstituted beans onto the tortilla. Spread the beans so they make a flat layer on the tortilla.
16. Take one handful of shredded cheese and sprinkle it very carefully on top of the beans already on the tortilla. Try not to make it too full, or it will be hard to fold over later. Say “one handful of cheese.”
17. Wipe your hands on the hand towel.
18. Take one handful of lettuce and sprinkle it on top of the already placed cheese. Say “one handful of lettuce.”
19. Wipe your hand on the hand towel.
20. Take one slice of tomato or avocado or both and place it on top. Say “One slice of tomato.”
21. Wipe your hand on the towel.
22. Carefully pick up the less full side of the taco and carefully fold it over.
23. Pick the whole thing up in two hands and say with noticeable glee on your face “Taco!” and enjoy eating it demonstrably!
24. Wash your hands and face in the sink.
25. Clean up the work in the same order you took it out after washing the dishes you used and drying them with a towel.
26. Fill up the water pitcher for the next person and make sure there are enough ingredients for the next person to make a taco, too.
27. Sweep under the table and wipe the table down, leave no taco traces behind.
28. Or, start again and make a taco for a friend!
29. Drink a glass of water (because hydrating is great modeling.)
30. Remember to compost your scraps!



Control of Error:

Is the taco holding together? Is it delicious? The smallness of the pitcher, spoon, and bowl. 1 tablespoon of bean powder/mushrooms/tvp, 1 tortilla, 1 slice of fruit, 1 small handful of cheese. All the children must remember is the number 1.

Points of Interest:

Sound of the beans reconstituting, the clicking of the whisk against the bowl, the smell of all of the foods, the taste of them going together. Serving the taco to a friend in a polite manner.

Language:

“Taco”, “avocado” “tortilla”, “Mexico” (maybe), “plate”, “bowl”, “beans”, “cheese”
“spoon”, “slice.”

Variations:

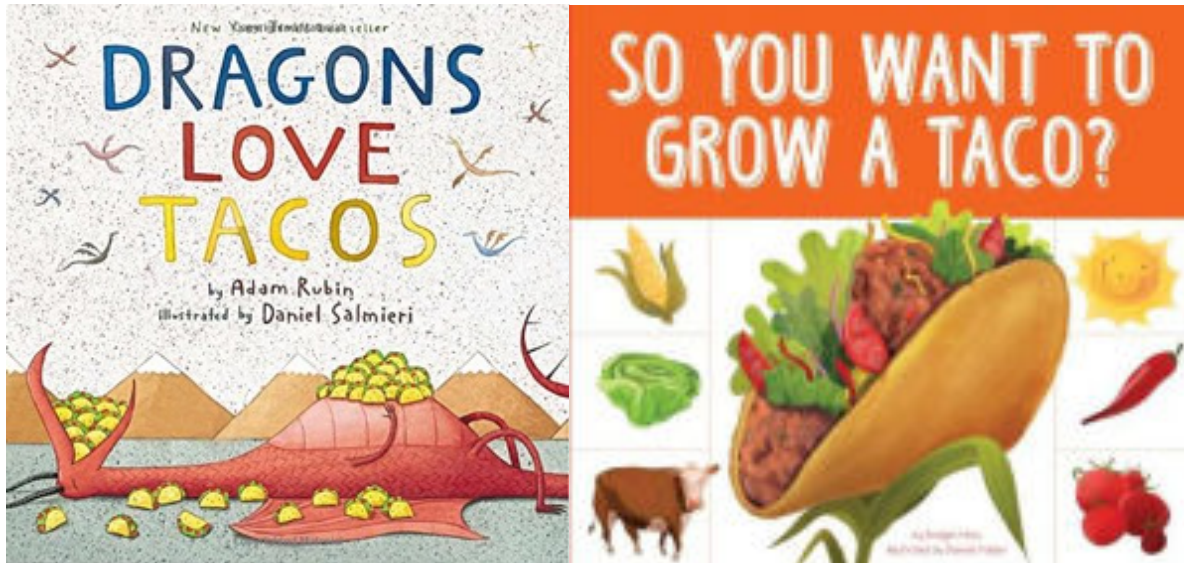
Use a can of beans or soak some and cook ‘em in a big old crock pot! Use chili! Make salsa! Make guacamole! Make a tamale! Make curtido and add that on top! Or pickled veggies! Or make a pizza bagel or toast in a similar way.

Extensions:

Make a taco for a friend. Learn about Mexican indigenous cuisine and culture through books and video, write a story about the taco-making-experience, make a play or draw a picture about tacos and where the ingredients came from, make three-part-cards or sorting work of the various ingredients that should/shouldn’t be in tacos.

Size of Group: The whole class, a small group, an individual.

Source of Exercise: My brain. Tacos are frequently what I am thinking about. And the books



If they prove challenging to come by, there's always this:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUTmRJqwI_c

Source of Material: The grocery store.

Additional resources:

[Simple Cortido recipe from fermentationrecipes.com:](http://fermentationrecipes.com)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Fermentation time: 3 days

Yield: 6 cups

Ingredients:

- 1 head green cabbage, cut into 1/8" ribbons
- 1 1/2 T sea salt
- 1 medium onion sliced in thin ribbons
- 1 large or 2 med carrots grated
- 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and diced
- 1T dried oregano (I'm sure fresh would be better)

Directions:

1. Slice the cabbage into very thin ribbons approximately 1/8" wide

2. toss in a large bowl with the salt and let sit for 30 minutes or so until it begins to sweat.
3. add the onion, carrot, jalapeno and oregano and mix together
4. place in a fermentation vessel (I prefer a 1 gallon glass wide mouth cookie jar)
5. use your fist to compress the mix into the bottom of the vessel
6. place a weight directly on top of the mix (I use a 1/2 gallon jar filled with water). The point of this is to continue to further extraction of liquid from the veggies.
7. Within 8-10 hours, there should be enough extracted liquid in the container to cover the veggies completely. I usually add enough water to make sure the veggies are covered by an inch of liquid.
8. cover the vessel with a cloth to keep dust and other unsavories from getting inside
9. leave for 3 days and taste it.
10. refrigerate to slow the continued fermentation

[Simple guacamole recipe from paleoleap.com:](http://paleoleap.com)

Quick and Easy Guacamole Recipe

This recipe make about **2 1/2 cups**.

Ingredients

- 3 medium avocados or 4 small ones;
- 1 firm tomato, finely diced;
- 1/2 white onion;
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro;
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon or lime juice;
- Optional salt and pepper to taste.

Preparation

1. Open the avocados and scoop out the flesh. An easy way is to cut it length-wise around the pit and than using a chefs knife strike the pit and then twist the knife so you can easily remove the pit and scoop out the flesh.
2. Mash the flesh with a fork, it can still have hard parts, follow your preference.
3. Stir the other ingredients.

4. Enjoy right away or store in the refrigerator. A trick is to put a plastic wrap that touches the guacamole so it doesn't brown because of contact with air.

Simple Pico de Gallo recipe from inspiredtaste.com:

Makes approximately 2 cups

You Will Need

1 1/2 pounds tomatoes, chopped

1 medium onion, chopped (about 2/3 cup)

1 to 2 jalapeño or serrano peppers, finely diced (seeds and membranes removed for a milder salsa)

1/2 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro leaves

Juice of 1 lime

Salt to taste

Directions

Add the tomatoes, onion, cilantro, diced peppers and lime juice to a bowl. Generously season with salt — start with 1/2 teaspoon and go from there. Set the salsa aside for 30 minutes. Mix and serve.