

Herbal Delights

HOW ARE WE CONNECTED?

SUMMER



WHAT'S THE Big Idea?

Interdependence Cycles

Enduring Understandings

- Food comes from nature: from plants and animals.
- Knowing where our food and fibers come from is important to understanding the relationship between humans and the natural world.
- Herbs add flavor to foods.

Objectives

- Children show interest and curiosity in trying different teas.
- Children discover that herbs add flavor to foods and teas.
- Children experiment with different herbs when making tea.

Directions

If you have grown herbs in your school garden, pick them, tie them in a bunch, and hang to dry for one to two weeks in a dry, out of the way, location. If you have not grown any herbs, ask parents if they have any they've grown that they will share. If you cannot get fresh herbs, buy dried herbs in bulk at a health food or grocery store.

1. Have the children crush the dried herbs into bowls with their fingers, using a separate bowl for each herb. Ask the children how the herbs smell, and ask if they can describe something else that might smell like that (i.e., peppermint smells like candy canes, lemon balm like lemons)
2. Ask the children for ideas on how they could use herbs. Have they ever used them at home? Seen anyone in their family use them? Discuss how when herbs are used in cooking they add flavor to our food. They can also add fragrance to soaps or candles. Or they can be used to make tea. It might be helpful to have a basket with some products that have herbs in them.
3. Explain that the children will be making tea with dried herbs. Using a resource, such as *The Complete Medicinal Herbal: A Practical Guide to the Healing Properties of Herbs* by Penelope Ody, talk about how certain herbs can help our bodies in specific ways. For example, chamomile relaxes us, peppermint helps with digestion. Encourage students to think about what herbs they would like to use and why.

Materials

- dried herbs such as peppermint, spearmint, chamomile, or lemon balm (from your school garden, or purchased from a natural foods store or herb store)
- bowls
- sealable tea bags (the ones you iron on one end are ideal)
- iron
- measuring spoons for scooping the herbs into the tea bags
- paper to fold and decorate the tea bag wrapper

Great Teacher
Resources!



The Complete Medicinal Herbal: A Practical Guide to the Healing Properties of Herbs by Penelope Ody. Dorling Kindersley, Inc., NY, NY, 1993.

A Kid's Herb Book for Children of All Ages by Lesley Tierra. Author's Choice Publishing, 2000

Walking the World in Wonder: A Children's Herbal by Ellen Evert Hopman. 2000

Extensions

- Make "Sun Tea." Pick 3–4 big bunches of fresh mint and put in a big glass jar with 5–6 decaf black tea bags (optional). Place in a window in direct sunlight for several hours to brew. Herbal tea bags bought at the store can also be used to make sun tea with a large variety of flavors. Sweeten if desired, and serve it up with a fresh garnish of mint or edible flower for added herbal delight!
- Herbs can be added when making butter or ice cream.



4. Have the children scoop approximately one to two teaspoons of herbs into their tea bags. It is fun if you have a few different herbs for them to create their own special combinations! Work with each student to iron the open end of the tea bag closed.
5. Invite the children to make packages for their tea bag. Cut and fold the paper to create a package for each tea bag, stapling or taping the sides. Decorate the package, slip the bag inside and close with a sticker or tape. Children can take their tea bags home to share with their families.
6. Process and reflect on the experience with the children by engaging in a conversation guided by the discussion questions.

Discussion Questions

- Where did the herbs we used to make tea come from?
- What did they herbs smell like?
- What else have you used herbs for?