



Eating the Alphabet

By Lois Ehlert

A great alphabet book about fruits and vegetables, this book also includes colorful illustrations of a variety of fruits and vegetables. Including a glossary of all the foods shown, the book provides both the history and geography of where the different fruits and vegetables come from.

BEFORE READING:

- Show the children the front of the book. Ask them to guess what the book is about.
- Ask the children to name the different fruits on the front cover and the different vegetables on the back cover.

WHILE READING:

- Stop at any time if there is something you or the children would like to talk about.
- Ask them questions so that they can connect what is happening in the book to things they already know about. Try some of these ideas:
 - ⇒ What is your favorite fruit?
 - ⇒ What kinds of vegetables do you like to eat?
 - ⇒ Where do you get fruits and vegetables?

AFTER READING:

Spend some time talking about the story. Ask the children things like:

- ⇒ What fruit or vegetable starts with the same letter as the first letter in their own names?
- ⇒ What fruit started with the letter P?
- ⇒ What fruit or vegetable had they never seen or heard of before?

Read this book several times to the children. Hearing the same story again and again helps them learn new words and understand the ideas they hear better. Each day, pick a different activity to do with the children after reading “Eating the Alphabet.”

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MATH AND SCIENCE

Head to the kitchen and pull out fruits and vegetables that you may have (fresh, frozen or even in cans). Ask the children to group them by color, texture or by size. You can also do this with pretend fruit and vegetables.

READING READINESS

Look for the letter in the book that is the same as the first letter of each child's name. Show them what the upper case looks like and how it is different from the lower case letter. Ask them to find the other letters of their names and offer help if they need it.

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Move like fruits and vegetables. Walk like a tomato, hop like broccoli, roll like an apple or bend like a banana. Make up silly moves for how you think different fruits or vegetables might get from one place to another.

MOTOR SKILLS

Let the children help you prepare fruits and vegetables for a snack or a meal. Ask them to help you by peeling a banana or an orange. They can also separate an orange into sections, scoop seeds out of a melon, or use a butter (dull) knife to cut small pieces of ripe fruit, such as bananas, melons, peaches or pears.

THINKING SKILLS

Using the glossary at the back of the book, notice which things are fruits and which are vegetables. Ask the children to tell you why something might be a fruit, and why another might be a vegetable. For things that are both fruit and vegetables (such as avocado, eggplant, jalapeno, okra, pepper and others) ask them why they think they might be both.

ART

Paint with fruits and vegetables. Use celery stalks and dip the leafy end into paint to make paintbrushes. Use potatoes or apples sliced in half with shapes cut out of them or carrots dipped in paint for stamping.

PRETEND PLAY

Pretend you are chefs preparing a special salad with lots of different fruits and vegetables. Ask the children what you should put in your salad and why. Have them pretend to peel, chop, or prepare the salad with you. Ask them where you should eat your salad and what you need to eat it with.

