

## How to Learn Through Play

This is an example of how using what we have at home can be integrated into many subject areas across all ages from preschool upwards.

These activities are completely optional and may suit your children or not. There is absolutely no pressure to do any of these but I think some children might like to carry out the hands on ideas etc.

Some activities are targeted more towards the junior end of the school but having children of different ages together gives the older pupils opportunity to mentor the younger ones and perhaps take responsibility for planning work and correcting it. It allows older children to reflect on their own learning. This in itself is a great learning opportunity for children.

By using a thematic approach, the children can come up with their own ideas which link in with the theme/topic. You would be surprised all the activities that can lead on from a simple start.

The images I have inserted below are to give you examples of the kind of work that can be done around this topic. Even if you don't have a printer, get some blank sheets or copies and let the children design the tasks around the ideas given.

You can also make them harder or easier as necessary, providing less help, making the numbers bigger, asking the children to explain the problems in their own words, asking them to come up with their own problems. Do what works for your children.

We set up a shop at home. The key is to go 'all in' by making it as realistic as possible by displaying prices, special offers, using a cash register, hand sanitiser and even Covid-19 signage. The children took part in planning this as well as using their writing (1<sup>st</sup> class) and pre-writing skill (pre-school).

We used real money and had great fun. When we're finished with it all, we'll put the coins in the Trócaire box! You can put prices on the items that are suitable for the class level e.g. under 20c for infants etc.

I took part in the play time too. We took turns being the shopkeeper and customers. We tried to write our shopping lists and get the best value for money.

It's a great opportunity to chat about real life circumstances. What would I need to go shopping? What jobs does the shopkeeper do? Practice manners – please may I have? Do you have ...? Thank you, you're welcome, have a nice day etc. It's also a chance for younger children to realise where food comes from i.e. the production of food from field to fork etc.

Also you could chat with them about the different types of shops e.g. butchers, shoe shop, book shop, chemist, supermarket, greengrocers, etc.

For older pupils and avid readers, you could chat about the different shops in popular children's books e.g. Raj's Newsagents in Billionaire Boy by David Walliams, Ollivanders in Harry Potter books, Mr Magorium's Magic Emporium or my favourite Bill's Candy Shop stocked high and wide with Wonka bars and goodies from Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

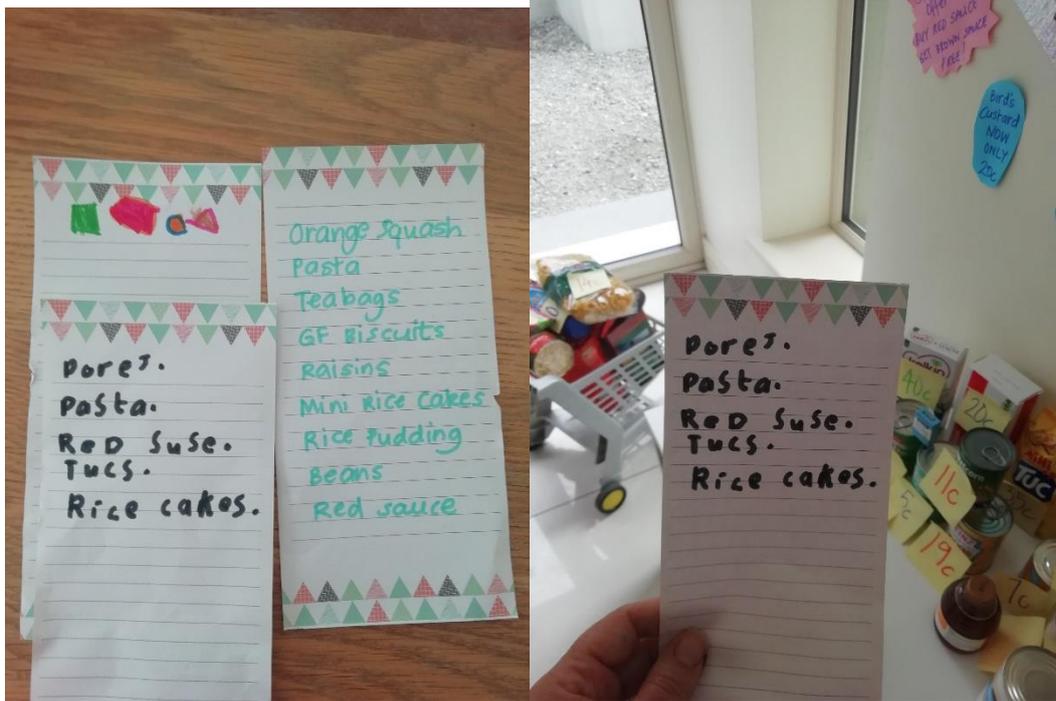
Children could read these books or create artistic representations of these magical shops by drawing, painting, collage (using old magazines/newspapers) or construction making use of recyclable materials (toilet roll inserts, cereal boxes, margarine tubs, egg cartons, etc.) The only thing stopping them is their imagination!



The children wrote their shopping lists.

This can be in many forms

1. Pictorial (for pre-schoolers and infant classes)
2. Attempted spellings using the phonics they have learned so far
3. Copied from the items in the shop



As you can see, items may be drawn to represent the list or alternatively written by sounding out the words or copied from the items themselves.

You could also use something premade (Twinkl etc.).

Activity One

**Shopping List**

- Grapes
- Pineapple
- Pizza
- Cheese
- Pasta

Activity Two

**Shopping List**

- Flour
- Butter
- Chocolate
- Jam
- Sugar
- Eggs

Activity Three

**Shopping List**

- Sausages
- Beans
- Toothpaste
- Potatoes
- Sweets

Activity Four

**Shopping List**

- Tuna
- Cream
- Rice
- Butter
- Yoghurt
- Garlic

Activity Five

**Shopping List**

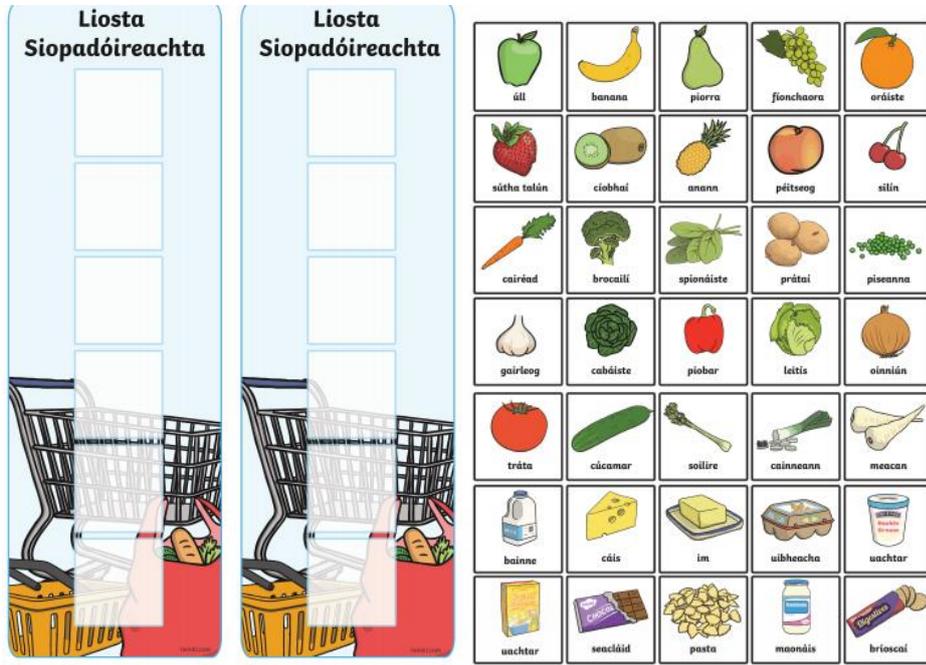
- Pet Food
- Tomato
- Eggs
- Bread
- Juice

Activity Six

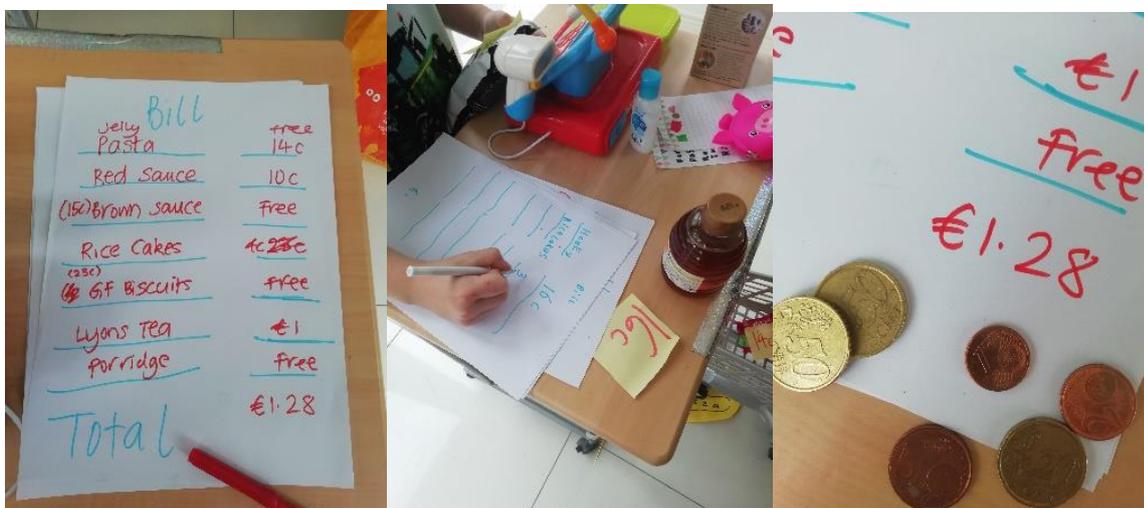
**Shopping List**

- Milk
- Crisps
- Bacon
- Ice Cream
- Apple

You could also use something like below, in English or as Gaeilge.



We used real money. You can practice paying for items using the correct amount and also by giving change. The shopkeeper has to make up the bill and calculate the change. A good opportunity for writing, addition and subtraction. To make it fun- make sure you make it as realistic as possible- by pretending not to know the customer, or greeting a regular customer and engaging in small talk. Children will respond to this and become more deeply engaged if they think it's a game.



You can give illustrated worksheets to younger children.

### Going to the Shop

2c

3c

1c

4c

5c

=

=

=

=

=

=

You have 10c. What could you buy? Draw what you would buy in the box.

### Money

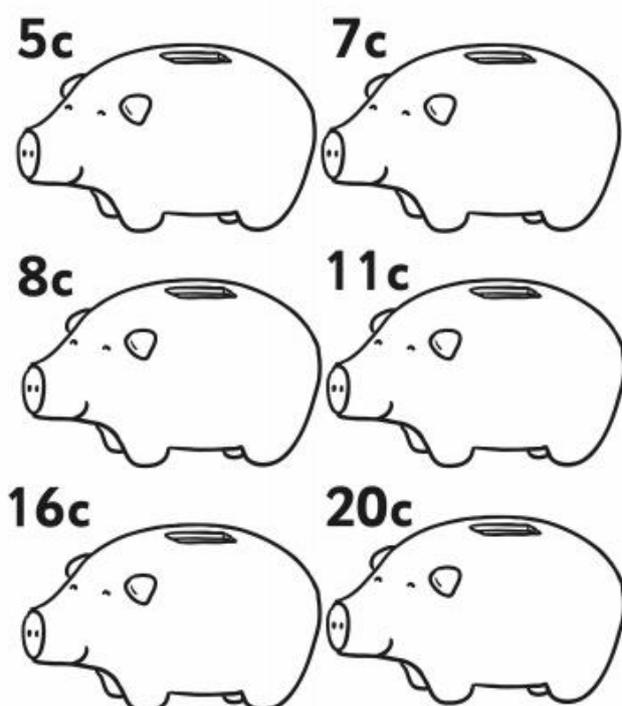
Kieran has 9c. What can he buy?  
Colour in 'Yes' or 'No' to show whether he has enough money.

Item	Price	Item	Price
luggage bag	7c	towel	4c
pillow	2c	ice cream cone	6c
swimming trunks	3c	muffin	2c
travel book	2c	sun cream	4c

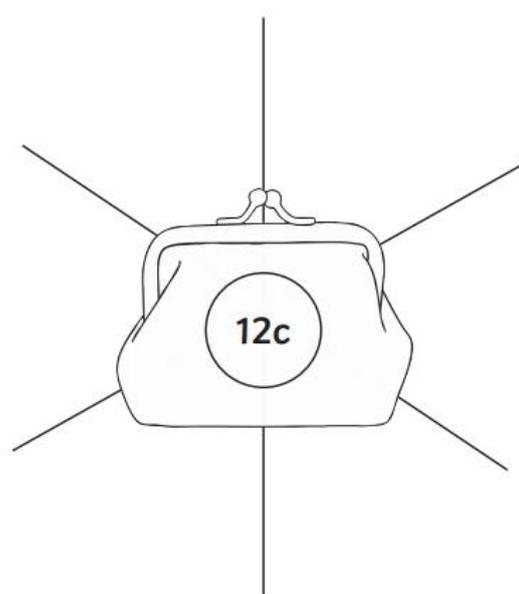
	+		=	Yes	No
	+		=	Yes	No
	+		=	Yes	No
	+		=	Yes	No
	+		=	Yes	No
	+		=	Yes	No

You can budget for items in the shop and see if you have enough money too.

You can also find different ways of making the same amount with different coins.



Can you find different ways to make the same amount as the money in the purse?



This can all be used as part of learning through play for infant classes (Aistear). Role play the shopkeeper and the customer. They can also use their learned skills of creating items from junk art (recycled materials e.g. milk cartons, cereal boxes, etc.) They can make small world constructions of a supermarket/street of shops/different types of shops etc. using Lego or Duplo blocks.





You can compare coin values with pictorial and written representations of coins. Preferably start with real coins and then move on to pictures and then to numerical representations e.g. 5c, 10c

Write in the correct symbol (< > =) to make the calculations below correct.

	11c
	16c
18c	
11c	
14c	
	13c
	18c
	12c

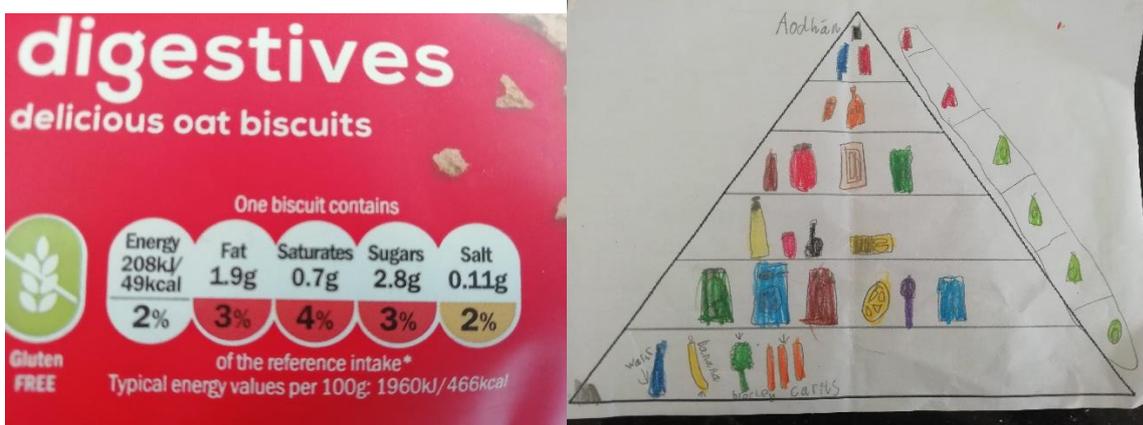


You can use the shop items to order them from cheapest to dearest and vice versa.

You can also order them according to weight – from heaviest to lightest or in ascending weight order. Younger children could feel which is heavier, or use a balance scale to compare. Some may have difficulty with the idea that size doesn't always equal weight.

You can incorporate healthy eating by examining the food labels e.g. sugar/fat/salt content.

You can create a food pyramid based on this then either in an illustration form or a physical form by placing the items in rows according to where they would be on a food pyramid.



For older children, you can give them a budget and use an Argos catalogue to select items within the budget. This could be, for example, furniture and soft

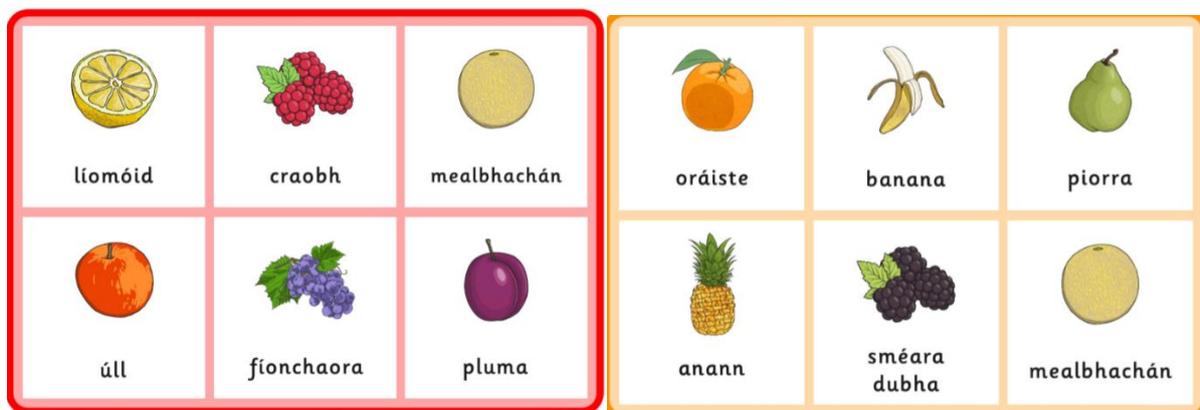
furnishings to decorate their bedroom, toys for their birthday, presents for Granny and Grandad who are cocooning etc.

You could also give them problems using sale items or discounts (buy one get one free etc) and ask them to take account of these factors. Make it real life as if they were shopping for these items and ask them to work out how much things cost when discounts etc are applied.

You can incorporate Gaelge into these activities as well by naming the items in the shop, writing labels (using a physical dictionary or checking online if unsure <https://www.focloir.ie/>). Play simple oral language games e.g. chuaigh mé go dtí an siopa agus cheannaigh mé úll, banana, briosaí, srl.

You can make up bingo cards using the words for foods etc in Irish – get the children to draw and write them or use websites e.g. Twinkl (free at present) if you so wish. You can practise asking “An maith leat...?” “Is maith liom/ní maith liom/is fuath liom/is aoibhinn liom.” You could make a mat for the smaller ones to put the items on with a smiley face/sad face/traffic light colours. Pupils could also create their own wordsearches to practice their vocabulary based on the theme.

They can practice counting in Irish too – “cé mhéad?” (how much?) or “cén praghas atá ar an pasta?” (what price is the pasta?) – “fiche cent an praghas” (the price is 20c) and so on.





You could use the food items to create recipes using procedural writing steps. Or google some recipes/use cookbooks you already have and allow the children to make the items. Great practice weighing and measuring (and cleaning up!) adding time intervals on to the time now- ("It's ten past four, we need to bake it for forty-five minutes, what time will it be finished at?").

For older children, recipes can also be used to talk about where our food comes from, how it gets to our tables, and perhaps how much farmers get paid for producing it. Fair trade could also be discussed (and linked back to the Trócaire box).

**Fair trade** is a way of buying and selling products that allows the farmers to be paid a **fair** price for their produce, and have better working conditions. **Trade** is 'unfair' when farmers receive very low income and have poor conditions while the companies that sell their products make lots of money from them.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

You will need:	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Instructions

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First, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

--	--

Then, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Some hands on activities could include:

- Create a healthy plate of food across the food groups (pictures, crafts or actual plate)
- Bake scones, cakes or biscuits
- Help cook a meal as a family
- Make your own jam
- Make a fruit salad
- Host a tea party for your family (or dolls and teddies)
- Paint or sketch a bowl of fruit
- Create a healthy eating poster

Children could also be encouraged to do some projects across the SESE strand (History Geography and Science).

For example, in history older children could research The Great Famine and prepare some work on that. Even some simple comprehension questions could

be researched and then used as a basis for designing a project around the topic. Cloze procedures are useful comprehension tools also.

## The Great Famine Question Sheet

Use your knowledge of The Great Famine to answer the following questions.

1. When did The Great Famine take place?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is meant by the term 'absentee landlord'?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why were potatoes so popular in Ireland at the time?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What disease affected the growth of potatoes?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which year is considered the worst year of The Great Famine?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What was a 'soup kitchen'?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What was a 'coffin ship'? Why do you think they were called this?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## The Great Famine

Word Bank					
speakers	million	west	crop	emigrate	fungus
disease	population		relied	coffin ships	

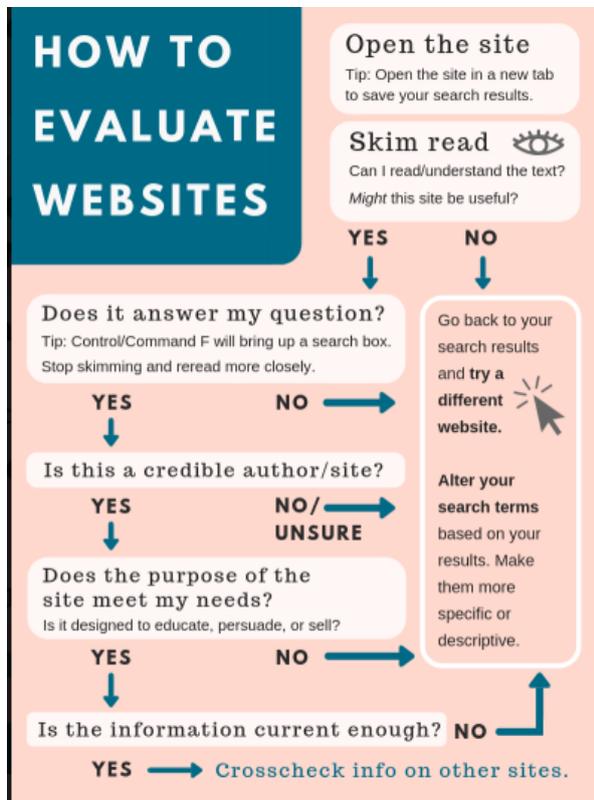
The Great Famine took place in Ireland in the mid-1800s. A \_\_\_\_\_ that presented in the form of a \_\_\_\_\_ called blight caused it. This fungus caused the potato \_\_\_\_\_ in Ireland to fail, leaving the majority of people starving. This was because most people \_\_\_\_\_ on potatoes to live as this was their only source of food. Disease and hunger continued in Ireland until 1851. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Ireland was greatly reduced as a result of \_\_\_\_\_ famine. More than one million people died and more than one and a half \_\_\_\_\_ people emigrated. Thousands died on \_\_\_\_\_ used to bring people away from Ireland. The \_\_\_\_\_ of Ireland was worst affected. The number of Irish \_\_\_\_\_ deceased from four million to under two million by 1851. Families were torn apart as younger members were encouraged by parents to \_\_\_\_\_ to a better life.



For geography, children could (having perhaps cooked some pasta or rice for lunch) research and prepare a fact file about Italy or China using the titles below as a guide. They can draw pictures, print photos (if possible) and rewrite the information found in books or online in their own words. Ask the children to word it simply and rephrase it rather than copy and paste it from the internet. Always encourage children to surf safely and consider the credibility of websites and information.

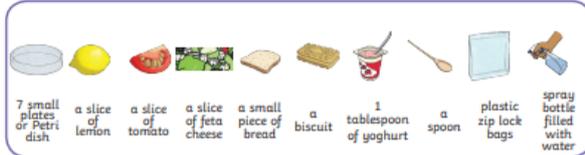
Science experiments are widely available online using the simplest of ingredients. Remind children to make the test 'true' by only changing one variable at a time and keeping everything else constant. Children could also record their work by demonstrating their ability to do procedural writing (a list of steps like the recipe) or they could draw a pictorial representation of the steps involved. Alternatively, they could video or photograph their work - this would involve writing a script, inserting stage directions, timing their script and presenting to the camera. Making a video like this would be a real motivation for some children, and help them to engage and persevere with their learning.

If you are making a video like this, please remember to share it responsibly to school or family, not on-line.



## Food Fungi Science Experiment

**You will need:**



**Steps:**

1. Place the lemon, tomato and feta cheese onto separate plates.
2. Spoon the yoghurt onto a plate.
3. Place the piece of bread on a plate.
4. Break the biscuit into a piece that fits onto a plate.
5. Place each food sample into a zip lock bag and spray the same amount of water inside each bag.
6. Seal the bags and place the food samples in a warm indoor spot for five days.
7. Leave one plate empty to be your control plate.
8. Observe the food daily.

**Safety Note:**

Remember to only look at the food. Tasting or touching is not safe and can make you very sick.

**Explanation:**

The tiny cells of mould are called spores. Mould spreads by releasing minuscule spores that travel through the air. They move from food source to food source and multiply when they land on something suitable to eat. Mould can come in a range of colours, including green, black and blue. It grows very well in warm conditions. This is the reason why it grows quicker when food isn't refrigerated. It also enjoys wet conditions which is why in some food, like fruit, it grows better. You should have found that more mould grew on the slice of tomatoes than the piece of bread. Mould should have grown the least on the biscuit as it has a hard-baked surface.

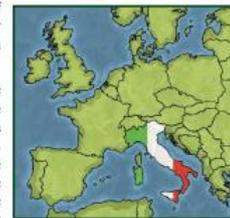
## China

Use non-fiction books and the Internet to find out information about China.

<b>Capital City:</b>	<b>Country Flag:</b>
<b>Population:</b>	
<b>Language Spoken:</b>	<b>Bordering Countries:</b>
<b>Location of Country:</b>	<b>Famous People:</b>
	<b>Famous Landmarks:</b>
<b>Famous Landmarks:</b>	<b>Popular Food:</b>
<b>Popular Food:</b>	<b>Popular Activities or Sports:</b>
<b>Traditions:</b>	<b>National Anthem:</b>
<b>Other Interesting Facts:</b>	

### Where in the world is Italy?

Italy is a country in the south-east of Europe. It has borders with four other countries: France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia.



Italy is easy to spot on a map because it is shaped like a high-heeled boot. The boot looks like it is kicking a ball which is actually one of Italy's 350 islands, Sicily. Italy has a very long coastline (4722 miles long) and sits within the Mediterranean Sea. The Italian Alps are in the north of the country and, believe it or not, there are three volcanoes in the south: Vesuvius, Etna and Stromboli. Vesuvius famously erupted in AD 79 causing devastating death and destruction to nearby cities.

#### Did You Know...?

The colours of the Italian flag represent three different virtues:

green = hope  
white = faith  
red = charity

### What Is the Weather Like in Italy?

Most people consider Italy to be a hot summer holiday destination, although there are also popular ski resorts in the mountainous regions in the north. Central Italy has a milder climate with similar temperatures all year round. Southern Italy has very hot summers and mild winters and as a result, more than 52 million tourists visit Italy each year.



<https://www.fooddudes.ie/food-dudes-fun-at-home/> has now introduced lessons and games for Food Dudes at home to encourage healthy eating of fruits and vegetables.

## Sensory Activity

For our first week of Food Dudes Fun at Home we will be tasting fruit and vegetables and describing them using our senses. It is important to taste different types of fruit and vegetables many times as it can take up to 10 tries to acquire a taste to something new. There is also a fun game for the whole family to get involved.

### Instructions

#### Part 1: A game for the whole family!

1. Set up a mystery box at the top of the room with one hole in it for someone to put their hand into, without seeing what is inside.
2. Place a fruit or vegetable inside the box whole or cut in half.
3. Designate one person at a time to come up and put their hand into the box and describe what they feel.
4. Everyone else can ask questions to investigate what is inside the box.
5. Arrange for a selection of fruit and vegetables to be placed in the box.

**Materials required:** a cardboard box with one hole in it, a selection of fruit and vegetables.

**Examples of fruit and vegetables that can be used:** kiwi, banana, blackberry, a peach, broccoli, celery, mangetout, green beans. (any fruit or vegetable would be suitable for this exercise).

**Example questions:**

- ✓ Is this a fruit or a vegetable?
- ✓ What does it feel like?
- ✓ Is it hard/ soft?
- ✓ Is it smooth or lumpy?
- ✓ Is it rough on the outside?
- ✓ Is it wet or dry?

Once players have guessed correctly, they can further investigate the fruit and vegetables based on the five senses. Here are some more questions they can ask.

- ✓ What colour is it?
- ✓ Is it round/ long/ big/ small?
- ✓ What does it smell like?
- ✓ Does it smell sweet/ sour/ bitter/ refreshing/ earthy?

## Part 2: Tasting Fruit and Vegetables using your Senses

1. Choose one fruit and one vegetable and prepare it for the child to eat. Examples:
  - ✓ Red pepper and melon
  - ✓ Cucumber and orange
  - ✓ Carrots and strawberries
2. Encourage children to use all of their senses when tasting the fruit and vegetables.
3. Using the sensory activity sheet below, children can draw the fruit and vegetable they have chosen at the top of the sheet. Children can then describe the sensory characteristics of the fruit and vegetable and write them on the activity sheet.

Choose one fruit and one vegetable to use for this exercise and draw them into the two boxes at the top.

### Remember:

- ✓ If you don't have a printer you can complete this exercise in a copy book.
- ✓ If you don't have fresh fruit or vegetables in the house you can use frozen or tinned or complete it based on memory. Describe the last fruit and vegetables you remember eating!

	Fruit	Vegetable
<b>Remember: It is important to listen whilst eating!</b>		
<b>I see</b> 		
<b>I smell</b> 		
<b>I feel</b> 		
<b>I taste</b> 		
<b>I hear</b> 		

Name \_\_\_\_\_

- Q1. Name 2 types of fruit with pips.  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
- Q2. Can you remember what pip fruits the Food Dudes have brought you before?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q3. Name and draw three types of berry.  

- Q4. Citrus fruits often have a thick skin on the outside, what is this skin called?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q5. What type of weather or climate do these fruits commonly grow in?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q6. An apricot is an example of what kind of fruit?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q7. Name two other kinds of fruit in this family.  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
- Q8. The following is also known as a stone fruit, what is it called?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_ 

- Q9: Last year, the Food Dudes brought you cucumber and peppers, what do these vegetables have in common?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q10: What do we call them?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q11: Name another type of vegetable from this category.  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q12: Match the vegetable to the correct group.
- |                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Garlic          | Leafy     |
| Spinach         | Bulb      |
| Cauliflower     | Bud       |
| Brussel Sprouts | Flowering |
| Parsnip         | Root      |
- Q13. Why do we call parsnips, carrots and turnip root vegetables?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q14. True or False: Root vegetables are commonly grown in Ireland.  
 True  
 False
- Q15. What do plants need to grow, that makes it hard to grow many crops in Ireland?  
Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
- Q16. True or False: The Food Dudes recommend that you eat 5-7 portions of fruit and vegetables every day?  
 True  
 False 

## Fruit and Vegetable Science Quiz

This week on Food Dudes Fun at Home, we have a fruit and vegetable science quiz for children to print out and complete, or complete in copy books. This quiz is suitable for intermediate and senior cycle children. Make sure to watch our Food Dudes video on categories of fruit and vegetables before completing the quiz, to find some hints!

### Instructions:

- ✓ The following resource can be printed for children and completed individually or with other family members. If you don't have a printer, children can write the answers into their copy books!
- ✓ Pupils can answer the questions and colour the pictures on the activity sheet provided.
- ✓ Quiz answers are provided below.

### Quiz Answers:

- Q1. Apples, pears, grapes.  
Q2. The Food Dudes have brought apples and grapes before.  
Q3. Types of berries: Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries.  
Q4. The skin of citrus fruits is called the rind.  
Q5. Citrus fruits grow in hotter climates/ sunny/ tropical/ humid weather.  
Q6. An apricot is a stone fruit.  
Q7. Other stone fruits include: peaches, nectarines, plums, cherries, mangoes.  
Q8. An avocado is also known as a stone fruit.  
Q9. Cucumbers and peppers both contain seeds.  
Q10. Vegetables with seeds are called "fruit vegetables". We call them "fruit vegetables" because they are technically a fruit, they develop from the flowering part of the plant.  
Q11. Tomatoes/ aubergines /eggplant are examples of "Fruit Vegetables".  
Q12. Garlic-bulb vegetable, spinach-leafy vegetable, cauliflower-flowering vegetable, brussel-sprout-bud vegetable, parsnip-root vegetable.  
Q13. They are called root vegetables because the root of the plant is the part we eat. E.g. the part that grows underground.  
Q14. True, root vegetables are commonly grown in Ireland.  
Q15. Plants need light or sun for energy to grow.  
Q16. True, 5-7 portions are recommended per day.

Don't forget to share your work online and use the hashtag #FoodDudesFun



There are many things children of all ages can do with a simple idea. Make it fun, relevant to real life and enjoy it. You would be surprised the amount of learning that can be gleaned from the most basic thing. Work together and get the best for your family and the current situation. Biggest thing is NO PRESSURE!

Hopefully this plan has been of some help to you. Don't hesitate to contact me [aodowd@breens.ie](mailto:aodowd@breens.ie) at any stage and let me know how you're getting on with school at a distance or if I can be of any further help at all.

A final word from Harry the cat – keep up the social distancing .... Just don't try to eat the signs!



Photo credits:

[www.twinkl.ie](http://www.twinkl.ie) (worksheets)

[www.kathleenamorris.com](http://www.kathleenamorris.com) (identify reliable websites)

[www.fooddudes.ie](http://www.fooddudes.ie) (healthy eating)

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