

Title: Tasty Tomatoes

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Level: Grades 1-3

Subjects: English language arts, science

AZ Academic Standards: 1.RI.1, 1.RI.4, 1.RL.1, 1.RL.5, 2.RI.1, 2.RL.2, 2.RL.5, SC02-S4C2-03, 3.RI.1, 3.RI.2, 3.RL.1, 3.RL.3, 3.RL.7, SC03-S4C2-01, SC03-S4C2-02

Brief Description: After sharing background knowledge, teacher will read two books, fiction and non-fiction, about tomatoes. Students will get the opportunity to see the inside of a tomato and learn new vocabulary for each part. The lesson is concluded with a tomato salsa tasting party to celebrate their learning!

Objectives:

- ☐ Students will be able to observe and identify the parts of a tomato
- ☐ Students will be able to name foods that are made using tomatoes
- ☐ Students will be able to discuss the life cycle of a tomato, including that it grows on a vine

Estimated Teaching Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

- ☐ Blender
- ☐ Salsa ingredients (you might want to make a double batch for your students... this recipe serves 8 kids)
 - 7 tomatoes chopped
 - 2 tablespoons cilantro
 - 2 tablespoons onion
 - 4 teaspoons of lime juice
 - salt to taste
- ☐ one whole tomato to cut in half for lesson and then chop up to add to salsa
- ☐ chips
- ☐ plates
- ☐ cutting surface
- ☐ knife
- ☐ Book: Tomatoes Grow on a Vine by Mari Schuh
- ☐ Book: I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child

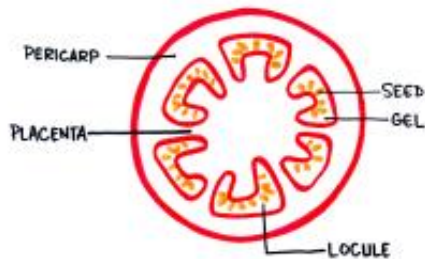
Vocabulary: tomato, fruit, seed, gel, skin, pericarp, vine

Supporting Information:

Parts of a tomato (from headinthegarden.com):

TOMATO

ANATOMY



Getting Started:

- ☐ Have blender and all blender salsa ingredients ready to go before lesson.
- ☐ Also have one tomato, cutting surface, and knife readily available to cut for students to examine in main lesson.

Procedures:

1. Start by asking your students what ketchup, salsa, and tomato soup all have in common. If students don't come up with 'tomatoes' on their own, share that all of these foods are made with tomatoes!
2. Have students share out everything they already know about tomatoes. Accept all responses. Let them know that one common misconception is that tomatoes are vegetables when in fact, they are fruits. Produce is considered a fruit if the part that is eaten contains the seeds of the plant.
3. Cut open a tomato (save for your blender salsa later) and show the students the inside. Go over the anatomy of the tomato: skin, seeds, pericarp, and gel are sufficient for younger students.
4. Tell the students that they will be learning more about this special fruit and even making a fun treat at the end of the lesson to eat!
5. Read Tomatoes Grown on a Vine (How Fruit and Vegetables Grow) by Mari Schuh. Make a point to ask students after the book is read where does a tomato grow? Under ground, on a tree, on a vine... ? Ask students to share one or two more things that they learned after reading the book. Let the kids know that this book was non-fiction, meaning it was real and full of facts and information. Next, they'll hear a funny fiction story about a girl who does not like to eat vegetables. Have them listen for ways that veggies become more fun for her to eat in the story.
6. Read I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child.
7. Have students turn to a friend and tell them one part they really liked from the book.

8. Let the students know they did a great job learning about tomatoes today and that now it's time to celebrate all they've learned with a tasting party!
9. Bring out the blender and all of the blender salsa ingredients. Cover and chop. Serve with chips. It's a party!

Evaluation Options:

- ☐ Have students tell you what makes a tomato a fruit. (it is the part of the plant that we eat that contains the seeds)
- ☐ Ask if they can name other 'fruits'.
- ☐ Teacher can show students a tomato that has been cut open and ask them to identify the parts of a tomato.

Extensions and Variations:

1. Make a class graph with favorite tomato foods (tomatoes, ketchup, tomato soup, salsa, etc).
2. Grow tomatoes with your students. Try growing different varieties to see which grows best in your region.
3. Involve your students in actual research happening right now with tomatoes and space! "Each classroom is sent two packages of tomato seeds. One package contains seeds that have been sent into space or treated in space-simulated conditions. The other package will contain "control" seeds, which have not been in space. Through the Tomatosphere™ project, students will learn how to conduct a scientific experiment and compare the germination rates of the two groups of seeds." Learn more at <http://tomatosphere.org/>
4. Check out this resource for a fun, low maintenance way to grow tomatoes in your classroom:
<https://kidtimes.wordpress.com/2012/03/31/science-saturday-17/>

**Resources:**

1. Tomatoes Grown on a Vine (How Fruit and Vegetables Grow) by Mari Schuh
2. I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato (Charlie and Lola) by Lauren Child

3. Tomatosphere Website: <http://tomatosphere.org/>
4. Classroom Planters Website:
<https://kidtimes.wordpress.com/2012/03/31/science-saturday-17/>