



Food is a universal way we communicate with one another. At the beginning of the school year, we observed the children's initial interest in baking and cooking. Through different mediums including literature, dramatic play, and cooking the children are developing their communication skills and are able to collaborate with one another to accomplish a task such as, making "cookies" in our bakery.

Multiple learning opportunities are found throughout this current exploration including...

- Turn-taking and working with others.
- Talking to each other as they negotiate roles (ex: making different types of desserts).
- Learning about different types of kitchen tools and their purposes.
- Developing small motor skills as they created different items in their cooking (ex: pizza, cookies, and cakes).
- Using communication skills to work together collaboratively to share ideas with one another.
- Being able to practice problem solving strategies when encountering new situations (ex: measuring while cooking).

Art Imitating Life

More than often children base their creations on prior experiences or anticipated events. The pretend play while exploring the idea of a "bake shop" was shown in the form of having "birthdays." With the materials provided including play dough, pie tins, flour, cookie cutters, and bins the children were able to create their own individual representations of a birthday party.



On the day we were celebrating Zoe's birthday, the children made her a birthday cake and sang "Happy Birthday" while she pretended to blow out the candles which were represented by different kitchen tools.



Pretend Play



Zoe's Birthday Party



Bakery Shop

When we initially saw the interest of cooking and baking we decided to create a "bakery shop" in which the children can create their own sweets for themselves, friends, and family through pretend play. We discussed the different flavors that can be found, types of pastries, and the job of a baker.



This is some of the dialogue the children exchanged during our "bakery shop" play...

Beatrice: *We have to hurry up and make some food.*

Annemarie: *What are you making?*

Beatrice: *I can make chocolate chip cookies. I'm going to put them in the oven. It's oven time! I need to put on gloves.*

Annemarie: *This is my cutter.*

Kai: *I'm making chocolate chip pancakes.*

Hannah: *Look what I'm making a cake!*

Beatrice: *Here Sebastian I made you a cookie!*

Molly: *I made a cupcake. They are for a special party. Maybe we should call my Mom on the phone and ask her what flavor?*

Individual explorations with baking

Abby initially decided she was going to make pies for sale of all different flavors including "mint, strawberry, and chocolate."



Annemarie wanted to make a special cake for her sister Gracie "one that is small so she can eat it."

Michael said that the dough reminded him of pizza dough and said "I work in Nonno's pizza shop!" He explained how to make the dough flat and to put the different toppings on the pizza.



Margaret had the idea to have a birthday by using the pie tin with the play dough as a "cake" and the tools such as, a spatula, as a "candle." The children then proceeded to go around the table singing "Happy Birthday" to one another and blowing out the candles.

Language of Tools



Tools are found in various places and things that we may not think of as "tools" are important for certain jobs such as, cooking. When encountering some of the tools such as, the spatula and rolling pin, the children questioned *what they were or what they were used for*. For example, Hannah saw an icing knife and recalled an experience where her mother used it as a knife. In that example, we learned that a tool can also be used for more than one purpose. Each child also used different words to describe what they thought the different tools were used for.

When asked what a rolling pin was used for some children answered...

Jayden: To roll things out big.

Kai: To make things flat.

While using the rolling pin, Sarah observed that her hand did the same things as the rolling pin by exclaiming "Look my hand makes the dough flat too!"

While identifying the different tools, many children recalled experiences in which they described where they saw the tools before.

Hannah: My mom uses that when she is making a cake in the kitchen. (Pointed to the icing knife)

Michael: My mom uses the spatula when we make pancakes!



Exploring tools through creative representation



Cooking Masterpieces

Since the beginning of the school year we have decided to make Friday's a day where we bake a new food. Initially, we started with muffins and progressed to making smoothies. Creating new foods allows the opportunity to try new things and discover new tastes. Cooking allows a child to enhance their ability to develop or expand basic skills such as, reading recipes, counting or measuring ingredients, and following step by step procedures.

Sharing a meal or a snack is also a way that people communicate with one another by discussing their likes and dislikes.

Some of the cooking that we currently have done includes making...

- Banana Chocolate Chip Muffins
 - Marshmallow Squares
 - Pancakes
- Banana Strawberry Smoothies



Pictures from our cooking adventures



Pre K 2's Motto:

"Teamwork makes the dream work!"



Waiting for our creation to cook is the hardest part!

