

MEALTIME: MAKING COOKIES

DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

Every child is different, and these are only suggested adaptations and activities. Do what works best for encouraging your child's independent exploration during this daily routine. Consult your pediatrician, physical therapist (PT), and/or occupational therapist (OT) first.



Did you know cooking is a great opportunity to support STEM learning? You can talk about STEM ideas and use STEM words as you prep and cook for mealtimes.

Children can learn about computational thinking concepts, like following a sequence of steps in a particular order, such as a recipe, chemistry, and mathematical concepts, like measuring and mixing ingredients for making cookies. Children can also learn about force and motion as they mix, roll out, and use cookie cutters to cut the dough.

Children learn new things when they practice them in everyday routines. Try one or two of the following activities. With a little bit of practice, cooking activities can become a natural place to talk and learn about STEM. Use these ideas to set up the environment and materials to best suit your child's needs.

ACCESS/ENVIRONMENT

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

- If possible, limit background noise and distractions so your child can be more engaged in the cooking activity
- Place materials within reach in a contained space for easier access
- Place an anti-slip/stabilizing mat below the plates/bowls so they do not move
- Using adjustable height table or adjustable chair if your child needs sit down or rest frequently



Follow your child's lead and interests. Enthusiastically ask your child questions about what they are doing and what they like.



Answer your child's questions. If you do not know the answer, work together with your child to discover the answer.



Encourage your child to participate in the activity as much as possible. Praise your child's efforts and successes.



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ADAPTATIONS

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MATERIALS

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

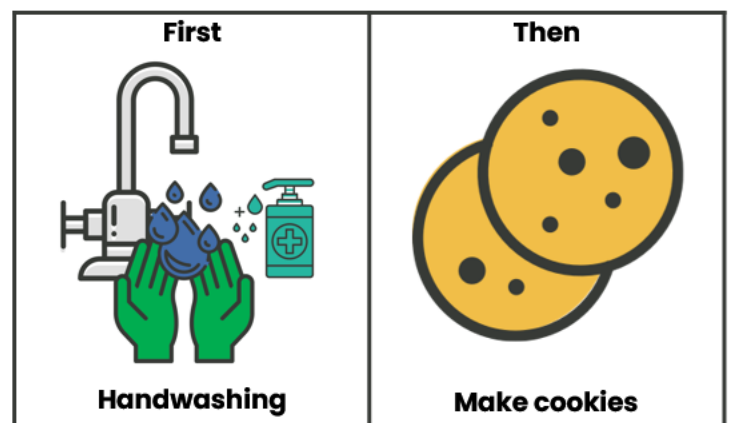
- Have child's assistive technology ready and available, including augmentative & alternative communication (AAC) device
- For easier grasping, adapt the utensils by building up the handles or creating grip straps using household items (e.g., masking tape, pool noodles)

INTERACTIONS/INSTRUCTION

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

Note: Communication may include the use of words, signs, gestures, and different types of cues (e.g., touch, object, movement, visual, etc.)

- Provide hand-over-hand support to help your child explore ingredients and utensils better
- Narrate/sign your child's actions as they interact and experiment with the utensils and ingredients ("Oh, you're scooping with the tablespoon!")
- Adjust the number of steps as needed.
- Use a variety of methods of communication (e.g., sign language, gestures) to meaningfully engage your child
- Use pictures and/or icons to signal next steps and/or each step of the sequence
- Communicate with your child at eye level
- Speak/sign slowly, emphasize keywords, and wait for a response
- Praise your child's efforts (e.g., to try new foods) with words, facial expression, or body language



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VISUAL CUES: FIRST/THEN BOARD USE TO SIGNAL NEXT STEPS

First	Then



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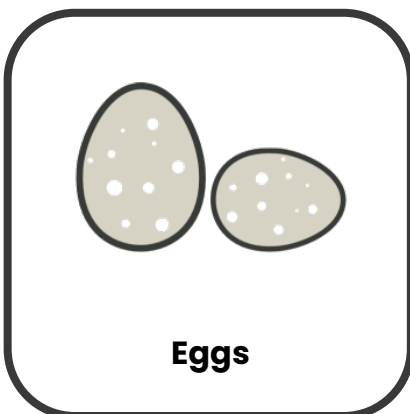
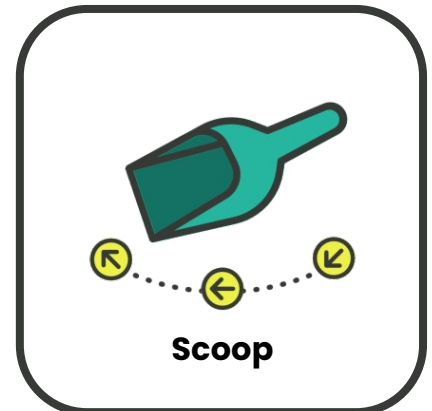
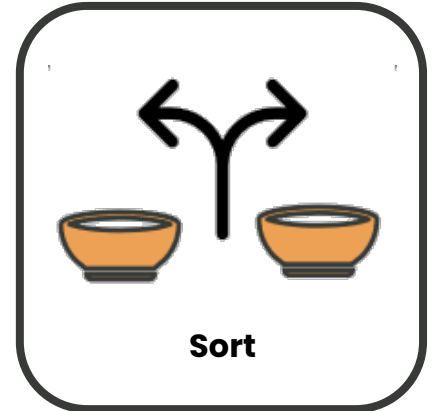
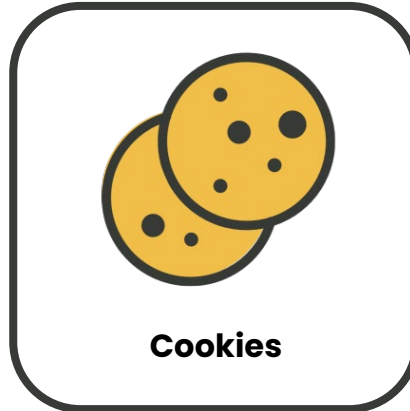
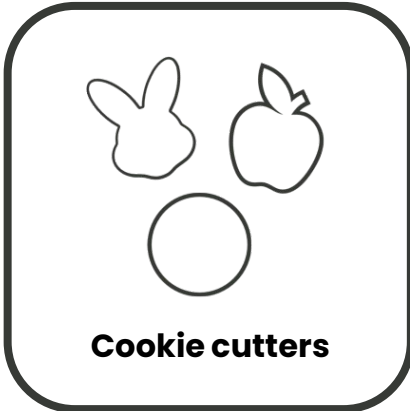
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VISUAL CUES: USE TO PROMPT



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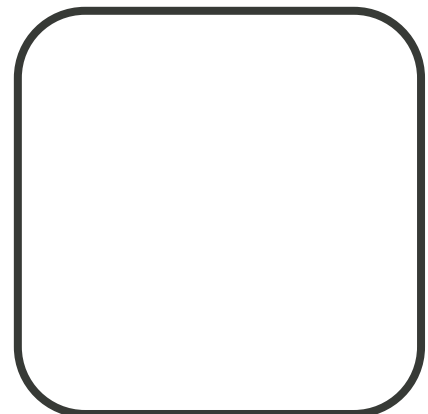
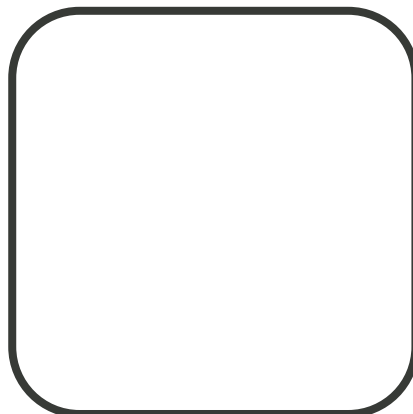
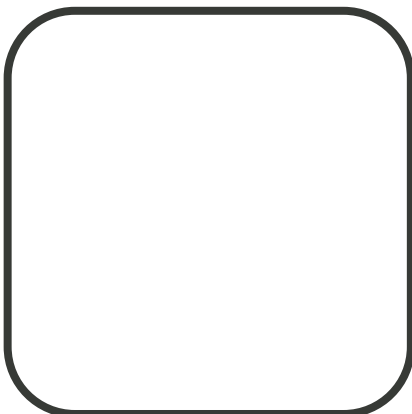
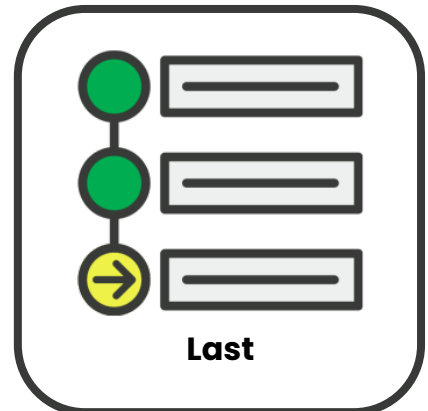
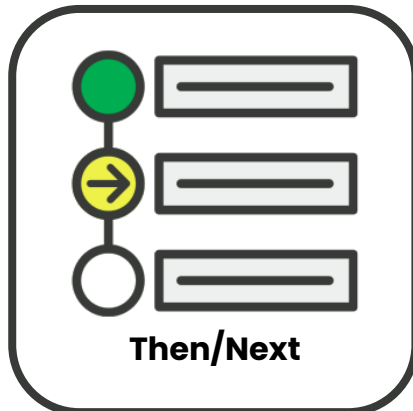
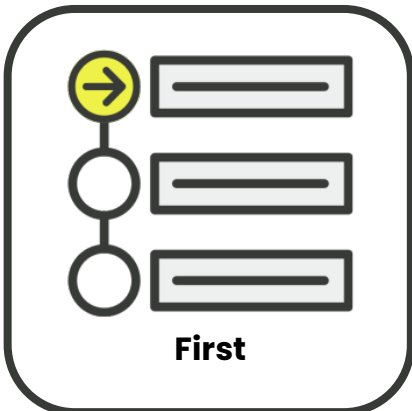
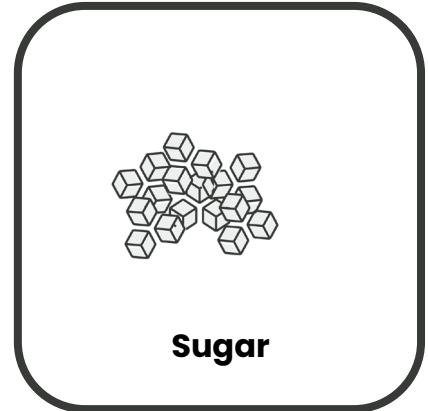
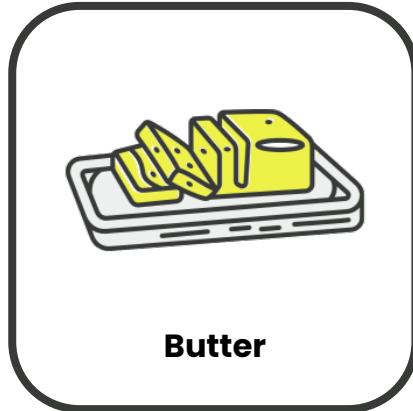
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VISUAL CUE USE TO SIGNAL NEXT STEPS

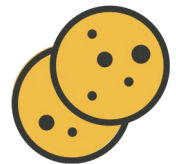


MATERIALS

- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar
- 1 egg (substitute $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of applesauce)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Mixing spoon
- 2 bowls
- Baking sheet
- Cookie cutter(s)
- Rolling pin
- Extras (chocolate chips, sprinkles, frosting, nuts, etc..)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 375F **Adult Supervision required**
2. Mix dry ingredients (flour, baking soda, baking powder, & any extras, like chocolate chips or nuts) in one bowl
3. Stir sugar and softened butter together until smooth in another bowl (You can soften butter ahead of time by placing in a cup that has been warmed by hot water and covering. *OR* You can add it to the activity by having your child roll the butter flat with a rolling pin on wax paper.)
4. Stir in egg (or substitute) and vanilla into the sugar and butter mix
5. Gradually add the dry ingredients mix to the egg/vanilla/sugar/butter mix
6. Roll into 1-inch balls *OR* roll flat and use cookie cutters
7. Place balls/cut cookies 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet
8. Bake for 8-10 minutes **Adult Supervision required**
9. Let cookies cool before adding any extras (sprinkles, frosting)
10. Enjoy!



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EXPLORATION I

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Hand Washer

Description: Help your child recognize that there are **steps in daily routines**. Encourage your child to **follow the steps**. *"First, handwashing, then making cookies."* Use cues to help your child **follow the steps** if needed.

What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to recognize patterns in their daily routines. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Talk about the importance of following steps, a type of **sequence**. *"By washing our hands first, we will know the food we make is safe to eat.."* Ask, *"What do you think will happen if we miss a step?"*

Ask **"What should we do first? Next? Then what? Last?"** It might be fun to do one step out of order (e.g., dry your hands before you turn on the water) and see if your child notices. Having pictures to show each step (turn on water, run hands under water, get soap, lather soap, rinse hands, turn off water, get towel and dry hands) can also be really helpful.





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EXPLORATION II

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Recipe Follower


Description: Help your child recognize that there are **steps in daily routines**. Encourage your child to **follow the steps of the recipe**. Use the recipe cues to help your child **follow the steps**.

What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to explore various ingredients. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Talk about the importance of following a recipe, a type of **sequence**. "By following this recipe, we can make sure we are successful in making a cookies." Ask, "What do you think will happen if we miss a step?"

MATERIALS	DIRECTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour• 1 teaspoon baking soda• $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder• 1 cup butter, softened• 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar• 1 egg (substitute $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of applesauce)• 1 teaspoon vanilla extract• Mixing spoon• 2 bowls• Baking sheet• Cookie cutter(s)• Rolling pin• Extras (chocolate chips, sprinkles, frosting, nuts, etc..)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preheat the oven to 375 Adult Supervision required2. Mix dry ingredients (flour, baking soda, baking powder, & any extras, like chocolate chips or nuts) in one bowl3. Stir sugar and softened butter together until smooth in another bowl (You can soften butter ahead of time by placing in a cup that has been warmed by hot water and covering. OR You can add it to the activity by having your child roll the butter flat with a rolling pin on wax paper.)4. Stir in egg (or substitute) and vanilla into the sugar and butter mix5. Gradually add the dry ingredients mix to the egg/vanilla/sugar/butter mix6. Roll into 1-inch balls OR roll flat and use cookie cutters7. Place balls/cut cookies 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet8. Bake for 8-10 minutes Adult Supervision required9. Let cookies cool before adding any extras (sprinkles, frosting)10. Enjoy!





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EXPLORATION III

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Volume Measurer

Description: Help your child recognize **volume** by **measuring and/or counting how much** of each ingredient is needed to **fill** a mixing bowl. While following the steps of the cookie recipe, encourage your child to measure out and count ingredients needed for making cookies.

What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to recognize patterns in their daily routines. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as math skills.

Talk about the importance of following **measuring out** ingredients for making cookies accurately. Ask, "What do you think the cookies will taste like if we add too much salt?" "What do you think will happen if forget to add the sugar?"

Talk about what **empty and full** looks like. Ask, "Do we need **more**?" If it overflows, say, "Uh-oh, we have too much, we need less."

Choose the container and say, "**How many** is needed?" And have your child **count** as each is filled.





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EXPLORATION IV

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Using the Force

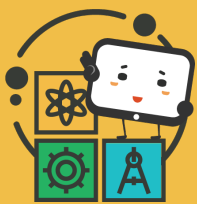
Description: Help your child recognize how **using** a rolling pin **shapes and flattens** the cookie dough. While following the steps of the cookie recipe, talk about what **force and motions** are being used to make cookies.

What My Child Is Learning!

Children learn best by interacting with people and objects. Introduce STEM words, ask questions, and encourage them to explore various ingredients. Help your child make a connection between words and real-life experiences and develop fundamental critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

While rolling out the butter and/or dough, talk about the **force** your child is **exerting** to make the rolling pin **move** and how their action with the rolling pin is changing the shape of the butter or dough.





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ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

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- Have a conversation about what ingredients to have in or on the cookies, then go to a grocery and shop for those ingredients together
- Check out these books about cookies:
 - *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff & Felicia Bond
 - *Who Took the Cookies from the Cookie Jar?* by Bonnie Lass & Philemon Sturges
 - *Milk and Cookies* by Frank Asch

