

Food Play with a Purpose:

Play allows children to explore and interact with food in a fun, low-pressure way, reducing the stress of trying new foods.

Touch

- Finger paint with sauces, whipping cream, pudding, yogurt
- Sensory bins with dry pasta, oats, beans
- “Food surgery”- use fingers or utensils to pull apart foods like bread, peel bananas, cut open grapes

Vision

- Create an underwater scene with blue jello, crushed graham crackers, gummy fish
- Sort same color foods (green and red grapes or apples, m&ms, fruit snacks)
- Color changing experiment- put jelly beans, beets, blueberries, red cabbage, carrots in water to see them change the color

Sound

- Use pretzel rods as drumsticks
- Use beans, dry cereal, crushed crackers to put in containers and make shakers
- Crunch test- use carrots, apples, crackers, more. Crunch them any way and decide which has the “best” crunch

Smell

- Sniff different foods with your eyes closed and guess what they are
- Create scent jars with strong smells like lemon, vanilla, coffee beans and test how far away the child can be and still smell the item.

Taste

- Taste foods that are the same color and talk about the differences (strawberries, tomatoes)
- Blind taste test- use different apples types, flavors of applesauce, or yogurt
- Veggies- taste difference between roasted and raw vegetables
- Fruits- taste difference between frozen and fresh fruit

Pretend Play

- Use a banana as a telephone
- Have a doll or toy sit at the table and have your child feed it
- Fill a toy vehicle up with cereal or a snack and drive it towards the bowl or plate

On the back, write down foods that your child played with and if they liked it, didn't like it, or are not sure.

Food Play with a Purpose:

I TRIED IT AND LIKED IT

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

I TRIED IT AND DIDN'T LIKE IT

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

I TRIED IT AND I'M STILL NOT SURE

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.