

What's Cookin' in the Classroom? The Three Sisters

Grades: Lower Elementary

Duration: 1 hour

Knowledge Objectives

The students will:

- State how the three sisters help their body.
- Place the three sisters into the correct MyPlate Groups.

Behavioral Objectives

The students will:

- Prepare and eat fun and easy foods using vegetables and fruits

Materials*:

Activity 1:

- A Legend: The Three Sisters
- Native American music and/or drum (optional)
- Corn stalks, strands of beads, and/or pumpkins (optional)

Activity 2:

- Different types of dried Beans
(navy, adzuki, pinto, kidney, garbanzo)
- Corn samples (popcorn, Indian corn)
- 1 Acorn squash
- 1 Pumpkin (if possible) or Picture at the end of the lesson
- MyPlate

Activity 3:

- Electrical skillet (1)
- Hand sanitizer
- serving spoon
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- 3 cups canned Corn kernels
- 1/2 cup Chopped onion
- 2 cups Chopped summer squash
- 2 cups Chopped red bell pepper (about 1 pepper)
- 2 tsp. Ground cumin

- 2 tbsp. Olive oil
 - 1 tbsp. Minced garlic
 - 1 cup Vegetable soup broth
 - 4 tbsp. Chopped fresh cilantro
 - 1/4 tsp. Hot sauce
 - 1/4 tsp. Ground pepper
 - 4 cups Black beans
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*Food amounts based on a class size of 20 students

- Paper plates (one per student)
- Forks or spoons (one per student)
- Three Sisters Activity Sheet (grades 3 and up) OR
- Three Sisters Coloring Sheet (grades K-2) (one per students)

Background:

The Three Sisters are corn, beans and squash. Each plant gives strength and life to the other. Native Americans ate these foods and gained carbohydrates, protein and important nutrients. The Three Sisters nourished the Native Americans. They gained carbohydrates, protein, and vital nutrients from eating these foods. The Native Americans dried and stored these foods for the winter.

In the garden, the three sisters are planted together because each helps the other to grow. The corn grows tall so that the beans can grow around the corn's stalk. The beans also give the soil nitrogen that is needed by the corn to grow. Finally, the squash grows along the ground and keeps the weeds down.

Eating the Three Sisters provides our bodies with nutrients, things that we need for energy and to stay healthy. Sister Squash is rich in carbohydrates, which gives our bodies energy. Sister Squash is also rich in vitamin A. Vitamin A helps keep us to have good vision and healthy skin. When we eat fruits and vegetables that are the color yellow or orange we eat beta-carotene. Our body turns beta-carotene into Vitamin A. Other foods with beta-carotene or vitamin A are: apricots, nectarines, cantaloupe, carrots, spinach, pumpkin and fortified milk.

Sister Squash helps us "glow" by giving us healthy skin and vision.



Sister Corn also gives us carbohydrates for energy. We need energy to walk, run, play basketball, soccer, football, and just about everything we do, even sitting in a chair. Other foods with carbohydrates are: apples, bananas, grapes, raisins, bread, cereal, pasta, rice, oatmeal, pretzels, bagels and potatoes. Sister Corn helps us "go" by giving us energy.



The final sister is Sister Bean. Sister Bean gives our body protein. Protein builds up, keeps up and replaces tissues in our body. It is important for growing. Our muscles, organs and our hormones are made up of protein. Protein also helps heal scrapes and cuts and fight off infection. Other sources of protein are:

chicken, beef, fish, eggs, nuts, cheese, milk and peas. Sister Bean helps us "grow" because she has protein.



Sister Squash helps us GLOW! GLOW! GLOW!

Sister Bean helps us GO! GO! GO!

Sister Corn helps us GROW! GROW! GROW!

References:

Dennee, J . 1995. In the Three Sisters Garden. Montpelier, Vermont: Common Roots Press.

Activity 1: The Legend of the Three Sisters

1. Read : A Legend: The Three Sisters (found at the end of lesson)

You may play Native American music and/ or use a drum during the storytelling. Or you may decorate the room with corn stalks, strands of beads and pumpkins.

2. Ask the students the following discussion questions after reading the legend:
 - How did you feel when the three sisters left one by one?
 - Why do you think the little Native American boy was so interesting to the three sisters?
 - What did you think he was going to do with the three sisters?

Activity 2: Who Are the Three Sisters?

1. Have the student sit in a circle. Explain that in the Native American culture the circle is a symbol of equality, the circle of life and the unity of all living things.
2. Discuss the three sisters and pass around samples of each sister.

Sister Corn

Sister Corn is very tall. She provides support for her sisters. Sister Corn gives our bodies carbohydrates. Our bodies turn carbohydrates into energy. We need energy to run, jump, play basketball, soccer, football and to do just about everything we do! Tell the class that Sister Corn gives us fuel to **GO! GO! GO!**

3. Ask students:
 - Q: Who has ever eaten Sister Corn?
 - Q: How is Sister Corn prepared?
 - A: *Steamed, boiled, popped*

Q: What does Sister Corn help us do?

A: *Go, Go, Go*

Q: Sister corn belongs to which two groups?

A: *Grains and veggies*

Sister Bean

Sister Bean grows up and around the stalk of Sister Corn. There are many different types of Sister Bean: navy beans, black beans, pinto or kidney beans and garbanzo beans which are also called chick peas. Pass around different kinds of beans. Tell the class that Sister has a lot of protein, which helps our bodies **GROW! GROW! GROW!**

Q: Who has eaten Sister Bean?

Q: What kind of Sister Bean did you eat?

Q: How was Sister Bean prepared?

Q: Can anyone tell me what Sister Bean helps us do?

A: *GROW! GROW! GROW!*

Q: Which food group does Sister Bean belong to?

A: *Protein Group*

Sister Squash

Sister Squash grows on the ground near Sister Corn and Sister Bean. She is very important to both her sisters because her large leaves cover the soil to hold in water and keep down weeds. Sister Squash is rich in Vitamin A. Vitamin A keeps our eyes and our skin healthy. There are many different

types of squash such as acorn squash, butternut squash, spaghetti squash pumpkin and zucchini spaghetti. Tell the class that Sister Squash gives us Vitamin A to **GLOW! GLOW! GLOW!**

Q: Who here has eaten Sister Squash?

Q: Which kind of Sister squash did you eat

A: May vary but can include butternut, acorn, pumpkin, zucchini or green squash, yellow summer squash.

Q: How was it cooked?

Q: What does Sister Squash help us do?

A: *GLOW! GLOW! GLOW!*

Q: Which food group does Sister Squash belong to?

A: *Vegetable Group*

Activity 3: Let's make Succotash

1. Pass out the coloring sheet to K-3 grade students. Pass out the activity sheet to students in grades 3-8.
2. Give each student a drop of hand sanitizer in her/his hand.
3. Prepare the succotash letting students take turns helping you prepare the recipe. Students should complete the worksheet as the succotash is being prepared.

Succotash

Yield: 20, 1/2 cup servings

Nutrition per serving: calories 98, percent fat calories 16%, sodium 127 mg, cholesterol less than 1 mg.

Ingredients:

- 3 cups canned corn kernels
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped summer squash
- 2 cups chopped red bell pepper (about 1 pepper)
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 cup low-fat chicken broth
- 4 tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 tsp. hot sauce
- 1/4 tsp. ground pepper
- 4 cups black beans

Directions

1. Warm Skillet
2. Put corn, red pepper, onion and cumin in skillet (Let the students take turns measuring ingredients and adding them to the skillet.)
3. Cook in 1 tsp. of oil for 5 minutes until vegetables are slightly blackened.
4. Add summer squash, olive oil, and garlic.
5. Cook the vegetables another minute
6. Reduce heat to medium-high
7. Add broth and remaining ingredients
8. Cook 3-5 minutes or until heated through, stirring frequently.
9. Give each student a paper plate and a fork or spoon. Pass out homage succotash for students to taste.



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Evan Swigert - wikicommons

A Legend: The Three Sisters

Once upon a time, very long ago, there were three sisters who lived together in a field.

These sisters were quite different from one another. The littlest sister was so young that she could only crawl. She dressed in green. The second sister wore a bright yellow dress. She liked to run through the field as the sun shined and the wind blew in her face. The third sister was the oldest sister. She was very tall and had long, yellow hair. She wore a green shawl and tried to keep her younger sisters out of trouble.

There was only one way the sisters were alike. They loved each other very much. They were sure they would never be able to live apart.

One day a stranger came to the field where the three sisters lived. He was a Native American boy who stood straight as an arrow and was as fearless as an eagle. The three sisters were very interested in the little Native American boy. They watched him fit his arrow in his bow, saw him carve a bowl with his stone knife, and wondered where he went at night.

Late in the summer one of the three sisters disappeared. It was the youngest sister in green, the one that could only crawl. Her sisters were very sad, but she did not return.

Once more the Native American boy came to the fields of the three sisters. He came to gather reeds at the edge of a stream nearby to make arrow shafts. The two sisters who were left watched him and saw his moccasins leave prints in the earth that marked his trail.

That night the second sister, the one who dressed in yellow, disappeared. She left no mark because she set her feet in the moccasin tracks of the little boy.

Now there was only one sister left. She stood tall and straight in the field and bowed her head in sorrow. She was alone in the field. The days grew shorter and the nights were colder. Her green shawl faded and grew thin and old. Day and night she wished for her sisters to return to her. She tried to call for them but her voice was low like the wind.

One day when it was the season of the harvest, the little boy heard the crying of the third sister. He felt sorry for her, and carried her to the house of his father and mother. Oh what a surprise awaited her there! Her two sisters were in the house of the little Native American boy. They were safe and very glad to see her. They had been curious about the boy, and they had gone home with him to see how and where he lived. They had liked his warm house so well they had decided to stay with him through the winter. And they were doing all they could to be useful. The little sister in green, not quite grown up, was helping to keep the dinner pot full. The sister in yellow sat on the shelf drying herself, for she planned to fill the dinner pot later. The third sister joined them, ready to grind meal for family. And the three were never separated again.

Every child of today knows these three sisters and needs them just as much as the little boy did. For the little sister in green is the bean. Her sister in yellow is the squash, and the oldest sister with the long yellow hair and the green shawl is the corn.

Three Sisters Activity Sheet

NAME: _____



1) Draw a line to match the sister to what it does to help to have a healthy body.

Sister Corn

GLOW

Sister Bean

GO

Sister Squash

GROW

2) Can you think of other Go, Grow, Glow food you eat or will eat at home?

GO Foods (grains/carbohydrates)

GROW Foods (Protein)

GLOW Foods (vitamin A)



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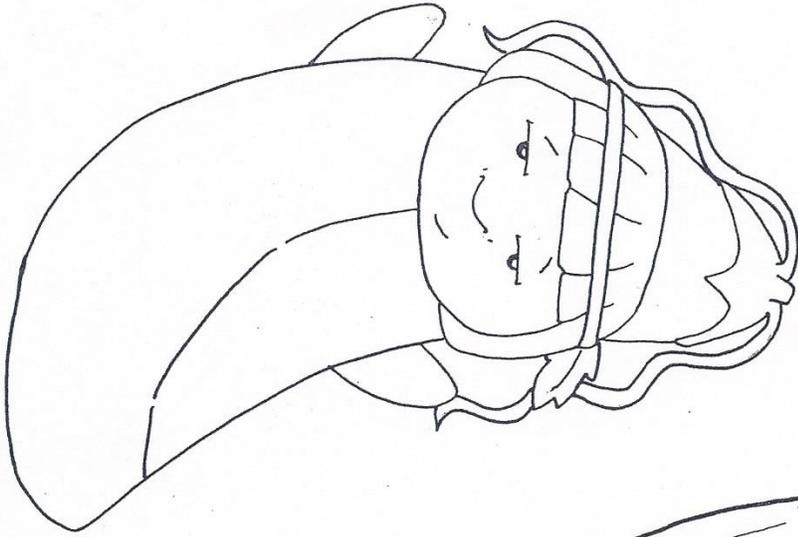
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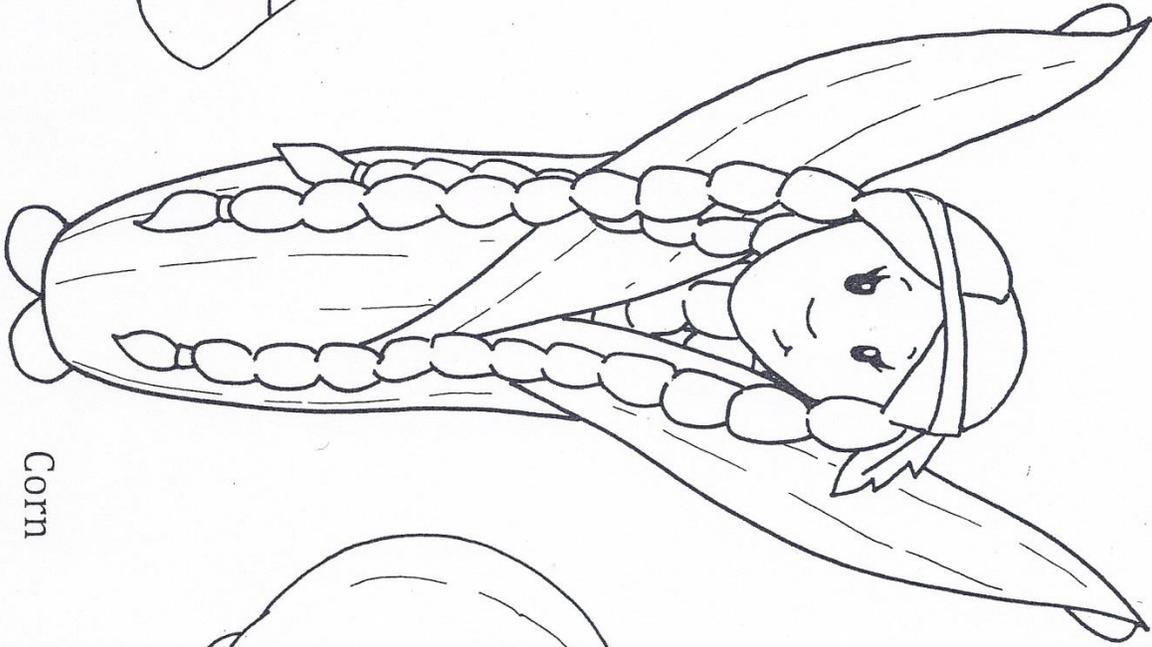
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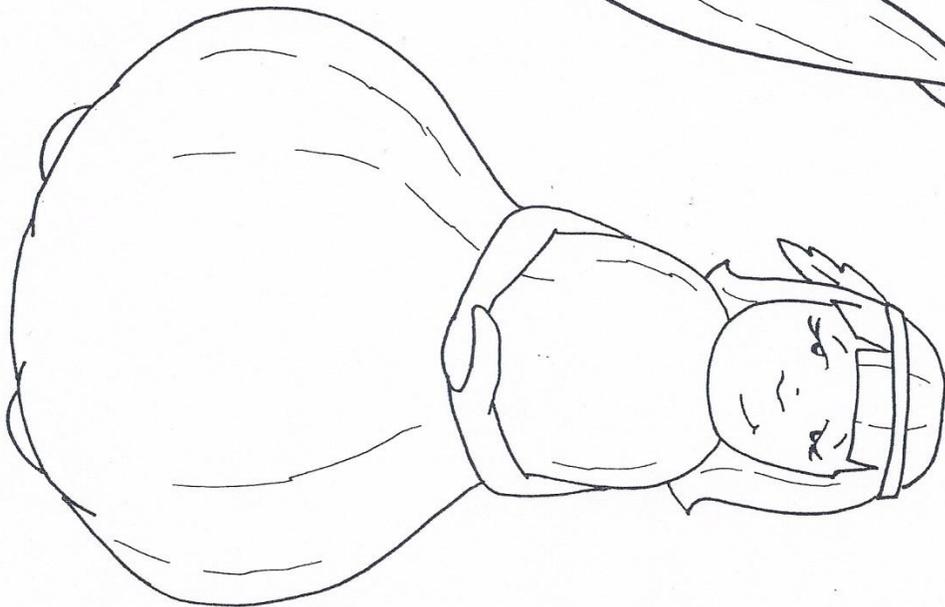
NAME: _____



Bean



Corn



Squash

Adapted from "The Three Sisters" of What's Cookin' in the Classroom



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