

Action Research – Building food technology vocabulary and skills through the home-school link

Project rationale and aims

Food technology was self-identified as an area of weakness in my teaching, partly due to a lack of a suitable kitchen area in school, but also because such lessons tend to be resource and staff heavy and so are given limited curriculum time.

However, during the period of home-learning this year, a good bond was built with parents and a number of children completed and enjoyed food technology baking projects at home.

The aim of my action research project was therefore to increase my Year 1 class' exposure to food technology using a mixture of school and home learning, capitalizing on the strong home-school link.

Project details

Before the project began, all children in the class independently completed a survey to name different fruit and vegetables. Then, each week, for 6 weeks, I ran short sessions in school to name, look at, feel, smell and taste different fruit and vegetables.

After each session a recipe would be sent home using the focus fruit or vegetable as a key ingredient. Children were encouraged to make the recipe at home with their parents and send in pictures to show the class during the next session.

After six weeks, children again completed the survey to name different fruit and vegetables to provide a comparison.



Session focus	Number of children who sent in photos
butternut squash	9
courgette	5
avocado	4
sweet potato	3
tropical fruits	Recipe made with whole class
aubergine	0

Food item	% correct in initial survey	% correct in final survey
avocado	74	86
mango	33	79
sweet potato	15	72
lime	33	59
butternut squash	0	66
pineapple	78	86
aubergine	15	59
courgette	26	45
garlic	37	55
papaya	0	24
kiwi	70	69
mint	22	55
fig	0	38

Outcomes

The in-school sessions were a great success and the children were engaged and enthusiastic each week. The participation at home started well but certainly tapered off as the weeks went by.

The before-and-after survey showed a definite increase in the number of children that could recognise the focus fruits/vegetables at the end of the project.

Going forward, I will certainly use this approach again next year, although in order to encourage more children to complete every recipe at home, I will spread the project over the year, sending one recipe every half term.

