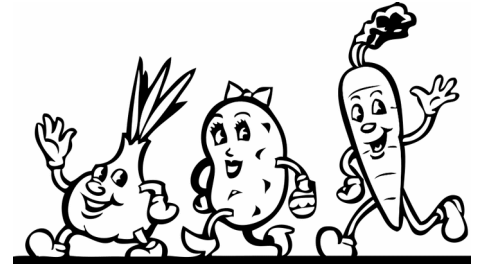


My Peculiar Plant Person

OVERVIEW: What are the parts of plants we eat? In this fun lesson, students explore edible plant parts by making their own Peculiar Plant Person – a creature made up entirely of parts of plants we eat. Make a list of your students' favorite fruits and vegetables and discuss what parts of a plant they are. Then set your students' creativity loose to use this knowledge to create their own crazy plant character.



GRADES: K-5

OBJECTIVES: The student will be able to:

- Identify the six basic plant parts – roots, stems, leaves, fruits, flowers, and seeds.
- Discuss what each part does for the plant.
- Describe how humans eat different parts of different plants.
- Create a character made up of edible parts of plants, using all six basic plant parts.

MATERIALS:

Chart paper to make chart of plant parts that we eat

Paper for plant person

Colored paper, colored pencils, crayons, markers

Optional: copies of seed catalogs

Copy of The Peculiar Plant Person story

PROCEDURE:

1. Review with the students what each plant part does. *Optional:* use the parts of a plant worksheet for illustration.

- Roots soak up water and nutrients from the soil and hold the plant in the ground.
- Stems support the leaves and carry water and nutrients from the roots to the rest of the plant.
- Leaves make the plant's food through a process called photosynthesis.
- Flowers attract pollinators for fertilization and make new seeds.
- Fruit protects the seeds.
- Seeds produce a new plant.

2. With the whole class, create a chart of plant parts we eat, brainstorming edible roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruit, and seeds. (See the chart below for ideas.) Display the chart during the rest of the lesson. Older students may also want to include the categories of bulbs and tubers.

3. *Optional:* Read the story “The Peculiar Plant Person” aloud to your students. Have the students assist you in filling in the blanks of the story.

4. Give each student a blank sheet of paper (as big as you wish) and ask the students to create their own Peculiar Plant Person. This can be a human, animal, or fictional creature. Remind students that their creature must have all six basic plant parts represented and that each part must be edible. Students can draw or color their plant person, use cut out pictures from seed catalogs, or both.

5. Allow students time to show their Peculiar Plant People to the class and explain the plant parts used.

EVALUATION:

Completed plant person.

EXTENSION:

Read *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert. Ask your class to create a vegetable soup that uses at least one of each of the basic plant parts, then make and eat the soup in the classroom.

New Jersey Learning Standards

Science: *K:LS1.C* *1:LS1.A* *2:LS2.A* *3:LS1.B* *4:LS1.A* *5:LS1.C*

Visual Arts: *K-2:1.1.2.D.1* *3-5:1.1.5.D.1*

EDIBLE PLANT PARTS

FLOWERS	FRUITS	LEAVES	ROOTS	SEEDS	STEMS
Artichoke	Apple	Bok choy*	Beet	Bean	Asparagus
Broccoli*	Banana	Cabbage	Carrot	Coconut	Bok choy*
Capers	Berries	Kale	Parsnip	Corn	Broccoli*
Cauliflower	Cantaloupe	Lettuce	Radish	Pea	Celery
Zucchini*	Eggplant	Mint	Turnip	Pumpkin*	Kohlrabi
	Grape	Parsley		Rice	Rhubarb
	Mango	Spinach		Sunflower	
	Peach	Swiss chard			
	Pepper				
	Pineapple				
	Pumpkin*		BULBS	TUBERS	
	Tomato		Garlic	Potato	
	Watermelon		Onion	Sweet Potato	
	Zucchini*				

*These foods fit into more than one category.

The Peculiar Plant Person

Farmers Ben and Kathy Wishwell lived in New Jersey and grew all kinds of fruits and vegetables. They grew corn, tomatoes, peaches, green peppers, and strawberries. Like many farmers in New Jersey, the Wishwells grew more than one type of food. More than 100 fruits and vegetables are grown in New Jersey.

This particular summer, the Wishwells were having a difficult time, because the weather was not cooperating and there was not enough rain. Crops all over New Jersey were suffering because there was not enough water for the plants.

One day, as Kathy was out in the peach orchard deciding whether or not the peaches were ready to be picked, she thought she heard a little voice say, "I wish I could help you."

She said to herself, "I've been worrying about these peaches too much lately. I'm beginning to imagine someone offering to help... I couldn't have heard anything."

Just then, one of the peaches rubbed against Kathy's leg and said, "I WISH that I could help you." Kathy shook her head and looked down. The only thing she saw was a peach that had been knocked to the ground by the wind. She picked up the peach and walked back to her house to get a cold drink.

As she walked back, she felt as if something was following her. Kathy looked around, but saw nothing. It sounded as if something was shuffling behind her. "It must be the rustling of the leaves," Kathy said to herself.

Once again, Kathy started back to the house, and again, she heard the shuffling sound. Kathy walked faster to the house. She finally reached the kitchen and poured herself a large cold glass of water. She put her feet up and closed her eyes.

Kathy heard a soft voice say again, "I wish I could help you." She opened her eyes and what she saw really startled her. The creature was made entirely out of edible plant parts! The face of this creature looked just like a peach. Its arms were made of _____, its fingers and toes were made of _____, and its eyes looked like seeds of _____. This was the most delicious-looking creature Kathy had ever seen. (*Ask the class to suggest plant parts to fill in the blanks.*)

Kathy asked in a very soft voice, "What is your name?"

It said, "I am the Peculiar Plant Person. I help farmers while they work in their fields and orchards. You have been worrying about your crops."

Kathy replied, "You're right. I have been worrying too much. But you look so delicious that for a moment, I forgot about how hard it is to farm."

The Peculiar Plant Person said, "I'd like to help all farmers. I dream about helping farmers feed all the people of the world, even during drought. In my dreams, there will be enough food for everyone and enough water for the crops. Please take my seeds and plant them in your fields. When new plants grow, they will look similar to me. Every part of the new plants will be edible."

Just then, Kathy opened her eyes, "Wow! That was some dream I had. Wait until I tell Ben when he comes home from town!"

She rubbed her eyes and began to take another sip of water. Right beside her glass was a large juicy peach and a small bowl of glistening seeds.

