

Mystery Recipe Lab

Summary

A pre-assessment activity for the students by giving them a mystery recipe (from a cookbook that they don't know exactly what they are making) at the beginning of the semester to see how well they read and follow the directions before any actual teaching instruction is given.

Main Core Tie

Food And Nutrition

[Strand 2](#)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 90 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Materials

Book:

"Cook-a-Doodle-Do" by Susan Stevens Crummel and Janet Stevens. ISBN 0-15-201924-3.

Ingredients needed for each individual unit of four students:

3 tbs. butter or margarine

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup + 1 tbs. flour

1 egg

1/2 lemon

1/8 tsp. baking powder

powdered sugar

bottled lemon juice

Background for Teachers

Read the book: "Cook-a-Doodle-Do" to the class. Talk with the students how important it is to work together as a team. This will be important as they work together in small groups in this class.

Explain the Mystery Recipe Lab. This recipe came right out of the Better Homes and Garden Cookbook. It is somewhat confusing as it identifies two amounts of sugar and flour. The salt is listed in the directions, but not in the list of ingredients. It is a two part recipe as it bakes twice in the oven to cook the two layers. I give this recipe to prepare within the first week to see how well the students working in a group can read and follow the directions from what previous cooking experience they have had. I have the students half the recipe and that includes the pan size as well. They have to think this through. They also have to think how the time and length of cooking is affected when a recipe is halved.

Usually, after they have put their first layer into the oven, I will stop the class and explain about pan sizes, showing the original pan called for in the recipe and if it is halved, which pan would be the closest to use, etc., explain how the food item is still cooked at the original temperature and the cooking time should be the same if they make the proper adjustments for the pan size.

I place powdered sugar on my supply table to see if they know the difference between granulated sugar and powdered sugar. If they read the recipe completely, they will note the powdered sugar goes on after they have come out of the oven and not used for the sugar in the recipe.

I also put whole lemons for them to juice and to grate the rind as both are called for in the recipe. But to complicate things more, I put bottled lemon juice and usually the student will use the juice from the bottle instead of juicing the lemon. The students will learn from this lab and will talk about it all semester long.

Student Prior Knowledge

This lab will show to the teacher what understanding and experience the student has in reading and following a recipe. Great opportunity for classroom discussion.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The students will work together as a team within their new unit, reading and preparing a recipe and following the directions as outlined.

Instructional Procedures

Read the book aloud to the students showing the pictures. Open for discussion how this book relates with the Foods Class.

The teacher will have for the students the necessary ingredients and equipment to prepare this mystery recipe either in their unit or from a supply table. The teacher will hand out the Lab Instruction Sheet and read aloud to the class. Give ample time for the preparation of the recipe, clean-up and eating.

As the students are preparing the recipe, the teacher can walk around and identify items they observed to be used in a classroom discussion given at the end of the class for a learning experience.

Attached is a list of items that I have recognized as a problem or learning opportunity for classroom discussion at the completion of the lab experience.

Authors

[DEBRA PAULL](#)