Activity

Harvest Prints

Overview
Using fruits and vegetables as stamps, students create prints and patterns to reinforce the lesson that fruits contain seeds.

Grades: PreK–K
Sliced fruits and vegetables make unusual stamps. Let students use produce to make realistic prints. After the prints dry, children will revisit the concept that fruits contain seeds.

Materials
- fruits and vegetables
- tempera paint
- foam trays
- white construction paper
- markers

Preparation
Cut cross sections of apples, peppers, carrots, potatoes, oranges, and other fruits and vegetables that produce clear prints. Place some sections that still contain seeds on paper towels and label. Prepare other sections for printing: Remove
seeds from fruit. Place these fruit and vegetable sections on trays. Pour tempera paint into separate trays, matching the natural colors of fruits and vegetables as closely as possible. Set up several stations with printmaking supplies so that children can work in small groups.

CAUTION: Remind students that the fruits and vegetables they are using to make prints are not for eating.

Teaching the Lesson
1. Demonstrate how to lightly press a fruit or vegetable section into paint and then press on paper and lift up to make a print.
2. Let children make their own prints, dipping fruits and vegetables in paint that best matches their natural colors.
3. When the prints dry, have children study the corresponding samples on the paper towels that still contain seeds and draw the seeds on their fruit prints. (The prints made with vegetables will not have seeds.) This will reinforce children's understanding that only fruits have seeds.
4. Stack bottles to display, or arrange them along a chalkboard ledge.

Activity Extension
Let children make more fruit and vegetable prints, using whatever colors they like. This is a good opportunity to add patterning extensions, letting children start patterns for other children to continue. You can do the same, using fruits and vegetables to start patterns for students to continue. (You can make copies of them after the paint dries to make a class set of patterns to play with.)

Literature Connection
Share Lunch by Denise Fleming (Henry Holt, 1992), the story of a hungry mouse who eats nine fruits and vegetables and leaves little stains that have everyone guessing. Begin by reading the story. Together, write a sequel that introduces the hungry mouse to some new fruits and vegetables. Using the fruit and vegetable stamps, have students work in groups to illustrate and write pages for a class book. One child can draw a
mouse on the page, another can use a fruit or vegetable to make a print, and a third can write or dictate the text.
Before putting pages together, decide on the order in which the mouse will eat the fruits and vegetables. Have children use their fingertips to smudge the colors of each previous fruit or vegetable on the mouse (like the mouse in the book).
Brainstorm a title for the sequel (perhaps someone will recommend Dinner), and add a colorful cover.

Subjects

Cooking, Arts and Crafts, Reading, Science, Writing, Plants and Flowers, Colors