

How to Pick the Best

Grades 3-5

English Language Arts, Visual Arts



Objectives

Students will learn where common fruits and vegetables are grown and learn how to choose the best quality.

Vocabulary

firm—having a solid or compact texture

produce—fresh fruits and vegetables

ripe—ready to pick or harvest

wilted—limp due to lack of moisture or too much heat

Background

Walk into the produce section of your grocery store any time of the year, and you will find a variety of **fresh** fruits and vegetables. Modern shipping and storage methods make it possible for our local grocers to carry all kinds of produce year round. These foods come to us from many different places—watermelons from Texas; tomatoes, peaches, lettuce, and strawberries from California; oranges and avocados from Florida, blueberries from Michigan, potatoes from Idaho, green grapes from Chile and bananas from Ecuador. Oklahoma-grown fruits and vegetables are available in some locally owned grocery stores when they are in season. Farmer's markets are another place to buy locally-grown produce while it is being harvested..

The best thing about fresh produce is how good it tastes and how good it is for you. But how can you determine quality without tasting? That peach or tomato can be beautiful, but not have good flavor.

Most fresh fruits and vegetables should be **firm** and heavy for their size. Look for bright color and glossy skin without cuts, bruises or soft spots. If you see produce that is limp, shriveled or **wilted**, it means that the fruit or vegetable has lost moisture through its skin while it is stored or displayed. That is why some grocery stores have sprayers that mist the produce to keep it from drying out.

Another thing to look for is deterioration. Produce can decline rapidly during shipping and when it is on display in the grocery store. Many fingers may handle that peach or those grapes before you get to them. You need to touch produce to judge its quality, but you should be considerate of others by handling it carefully. Rough handling causes spoilage and waste.

Fruit that looks good usually tastes good, but fine appearance does not always insure fine quality. Sometimes a very attractive fruit may not taste good. On the other hand, a fruit with poor appearance due to poor color or superficial blemishes may be delicious.

How to Pick the Best (continued)

Most produce tastes better and costs less when it is in season. Produce grown locally usually tastes better. Produce shipped from long distances must be harvested before it is **ripe** and may not taste as good as produce allowed to ripen on the tree or plant before harvest. The nutritional value of produce also decreases when it is stored for a long period of time.

Additional Reading

Ada, Alma Flor, *Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English*, Harper Collins Espanol, 2001

Cohen, Soraya, *Fun at the Farmers' Market*, Terra Firma Press, 2019

Cummings, Becky, *My Magical Foods*, Boundless Movement, 2020

Ehlert, Lois, *Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables From A to Z*, HMH Books for Young Readers, 1996.

Gibbs II, Vernon D., Gray, Stephen T., *When Good Fruit Goes Bad*, Cuzos Publishing and Media, 2020

Gourley, Robbin, *Bring Me Some Apples and I'll Make You a Pie: A Story about Edna Lewis*, HMH Books for Young Readers, 2016

Hawkins, Linda J., *Alexander and the Great Food Fight*, Heart to Heart Pub, 2005

Perez, L. King, and Robert Casilla, *First Day in Grapes*, Lee & Low, 2014

Rockwell, Lizzie, *Good Enough to Eat: A Kid's Guide to Food and Nutrition*, Harper Collins, 2009

Websites

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/fruits>

<https://agriculture.okstate.edu/departments-programs/hla/research-extension/youth/index.html?Forwarded=www.hortla.okstate.edu/outreach/youth>

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_2_County_Level/Oklahoma/

https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/45951/12368_err55.pdf?v=0

How to Pick the Best

Activity 1

Grades 3-5 Teacher Resources and Standards

Activity 1: Pick the Best, (English Language Arts)

1-2 50 minute class periods

Students will learn about fruits and vegetables and complete comprehension and vocabulary activities. They will use that new information to write paragraphs and compare different fruits and vegetables. Students will develop posters to advertise fruits and vegetables.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

Activity 1: Pick the Best (English Language Arts)

3.3.R.6	Students will distinguish fact from opinion in an informational text
4.3.R.6	Students will distinguish fact from opinion in an informational text and explain how reasons and facts support specific points.
5.3.R.6	
3.3.W.3	Students will write an opinion about a topic and provide relevant evidence as support in multiple paragraphs with transitional words and phrases.
4.3.W.3	Students will write opinion essays that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• introduce a topic and state an opinion• incorporate relevant, text-based evidence to support the opinion• use sentence variety and word choice to create interest• maintain an organized structure with transitional words and phrases
5.3.W.3	
3.4.R.5	Students will acquire new grade-level vocabulary, relate new words to prior knowledge, and apply vocabulary in various contexts.
4.4.R.5	
5.4.R.5	

Materials:

- **“Frayer Model Example”**
- Activity 1 Worksheet 1a **“Frayer Model”**
- Activity 1 Worksheet 1b **“Frayer Model Pictures”**
- Activity 1 Reading Page 1 **“Pick the Best”** (4th grade reading level)
- Activity 1 Worksheet 2 **“How to Pick the Best 3 - 2 - 1”**
- Activity 1 Worksheet 3 **“Facts and Opinions about Fruits and Vegetables”**
- Activity 1 Worksheet 4 **“Opinion Statement”**
- Assorted fruits and vegetables
- Paper or poster board
- Crayons, markers, etc.

How to Pick the Best

Procedures

1. Read and discuss background information and vocabulary. Have students work in groups of two or three to complete Activity 1 Worksheet 1a **“Frayer Model”** for one of the vocabulary words. Discuss and have students share their definitions, facts, examples and non-examples for their assigned word. Alternately, have students use Activity 1 Worksheet 1b **“Frayer Model Pictures”** to illustrate each section. Use the **“Frayer Model Example”** for ideas.
2. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
 - Hand out copies of Activity 1 Reading Page 1 **“Pick the Best”**.
 - Students will read **“Pick the Best”**
 - Have students complete Activity 1 Worksheet 2 **“How to Pick the Best 3-2-1”**
 - Students will identify words they do not know and use appropriate resources to find the definitions.
3. Students will use information from the background and the reading page to complete Activity 1 Worksheet 3 **“Facts and Opinions About Fruits and Vegetables”**.
 - Students should decide whether a statement is a fact or opinion.
 - After deciding whether the statement is fact or opinion, students will write a statement that is the opposite (opinion if the statement is fact; fact if the statement is opinion)
 - Remind students that opinions often include descriptive adjectives
4. Have each student write an opinion statement about a fruit or vegetable using Activity 1 Worksheet 4 **“Opinion Statement”**.
 - Students will state an opinion
 - Students will find at least three facts that support that opinion
 - Students will write a summary statement that includes the opinion and facts that support the opinion.
 - The summary can be written on another sheet of paper if more space is needed.
5. Show students the fruits and vegetables you have brought.
 - Students will describe each item out loud.
 - Students will select one or two of the fruits and vegetables and write paragraphs describing them in as much detail as possible.
 - Students will write paragraphs comparing and contrasting two or more of the fruits and vegetables.
6. Divide students into groups, and assign a fruit or vegetable to each group.
 - Students will develop posters or advertisements to persuade others that their fruit or vegetable is best.

Ag in the Classroom

For more lessons and resources, please visit www.agclassroom.org/ok

Title

Activity 1 Worksheet 1a: Frayer Model



Name: _____ Date: _____

<u>Definition</u>	<u>Facts or Characteristics</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

<u>Examples</u>	<u>Non-examples</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Title

Activity 1 Worksheet 1: Title



Name: _____ Date: _____

<u>Definition</u>		<u>Facts or Characteristics</u>
<u>Examples</u>		<u>Non-examples</u>

How to Pick the Best

Activity 1 Reading Page 1: Pick the Best



Name _____ Date _____

Read the following information about selecting the best fruit or vegetable. As you read, use the following strategy to help you understand the text:

P- Predict what you will learn

B- Box in the title

I- Is this fact or opinion

E- Evidence found to prove it is Fact or Opinion

C- Circle words you do not know

S- Stop as you read, what do the words mean

K- Key details

T- Tell a friend what you read that's important

HOW TO PICK THE BEST FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Think about red, juicy strawberries. In Oklahoma, strawberries get ripe in May. To eat strawberries in the winter, your grandparents had to make jelly or freeze them. Today you can buy them at the grocery store all year long. How can that be?

Stores get food from many places. Most apples come from Washington. Many oranges come from Florida. Some bananas come from Ecuador. Almost all green grapes come from Chile.

Some foods are grown in Oklahoma. You can buy peaches, strawberries and watermelon in stores when they are in season. Farmers' Markets sell food grown in your area.



When fresh food comes from far away, it is picked before it is ripe. This helps stop bad spots, or bruises from forming. Produce picked before it is ripe may not taste as good. Ripe food has the best taste. Ripe food must be eaten soon after it is picked.



Think about strawberries from California. They are shipped more than 1,500 miles to Oklahoma. We pay for the strawberries and the cost to ship them. Food grown near you tastes better and may cost less.

How can you pick the best fruits and vegetables? Look at the outside. Is the color bright? Is the skin or surface smooth? Does it have bruises? Are there cuts or holes? Is it firm? Does it seem heavy for its size? Is it soft or wilted? How does it smell? Strawberries, peaches and cantaloupe should smell sweet. Food that is damaged or too ripe might smell bad.

How to Pick the Best

Activity 1 Worksheet 2: How to Pick the Best 3 - 2 - 1



Name: _____ Date: _____

After reading “Pick the Best”, complete this page.

3 Key details I learned as I read:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2 New words I found as I read:

1. Word: _____
Definition _____

2. Word: _____
Definition: _____

1 Thing I want to know more about:

How to Pick the Best

Activity 1 Worksheet 3: Facts and Opinions About Fruits and Vegetables



Name: _____ Date: _____

A fact is something that is true and can be proven. It does not change, no matter who says it.
Opinion is something that someone thinks or feels. It may change from person to person.

Read each statement below about fruits and vegetables.

Decide if it is a fact or opinion and color in the circle under the "Fact" or "Opinion" column

Then think about the opposite!

If the statement is an opinion, write a fact about the topic on the line below the statement

If the statement is a fact, write an opinion about the topic on the line below the statement.

Statement	Fact	Opinion
1. Peaches are grown in Oklahoma.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Farmers' Markets sell locally grown fruits and vegetables.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Florida oranges are better than California oranges.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Ripe strawberries are delicious	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Produce that is shipped from far away is picked before it is ripe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Pretty fruits and vegetables taste the best.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. The best apples come from Washington.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How to Pick the Best

Activity 1 Worksheet 3: Facts and Opinions About Fruits and Vegetables

ANSWER KEY



Name: _____ Date: _____

A fact is something that is true and can be proven. It does not change, no matter who says it.
Opinion is something that someone thinks or feels. It may change from person to person.

Read each statement below about fruits and vegetables.

Decide if it is a fact or opinion and color in the circle under the "Fact" or "Opinion" column

Then think about the opposite!

If the statement is an opinion, write a fact about the topic on the line below the statement

If the statement is a fact, write an opinion about the topic on the line below the statement.

Statement	Student statements will vary. Examples of correct answers:	Fact	Opinion
1. Peaches are grown in Oklahoma.		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Peaches grown in Oklahoma taste the best, are the juiciest, etc..		
2. Farmers' Markets sell locally grown fruits and vegetables.		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Food from the Farmers' Market tastes better than food from the store.		
3. Florida oranges are better than California oranges.		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
	Florida is the leading producer of oranges; Oranges are grown in Florida.		
4. Ripe strawberries are delicious		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
	Ripe food should be eaten soon after it is picked.		
5. Produce that is shipped from far away is picked before it is ripe.		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Ripe food tastes the best.		
6. Pretty fruits and vegetables taste the best.		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
	Smooth skin and bright color are signs of quality in produce.		
7. The best apples come from Washington.		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
	Washington grows most of the apples sold in the US.		

How to Pick the Best

Activity 1 Worksheet 4: Opinion Statement - Fruits and Vegetables



Name: _____ Date: _____

State an opinion (something you believe) and find three facts that support your opinion.
Write a summary statement that includes your opinion and supporting facts.

Topic:

Opinion (A sentence that gives your opinion on the topic)

Supporting Fact #1

Supporting Fact #2

Supporting Fact #3

Summary Statement (2-3 sentences)

How to Pick the Best

Activity 2

Grades 3-5 Teacher Resources and Standards

Activity 2: Fruit and Veggie Art, (Visual Art)

1 50 minute class period

Students will use a variety of fruits and vegetables to create original art.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

Activity 2: Fruit and Veggie Art (Visual Art)

- 3.VA.CP.2.1 Explore and invent a variety of art-making techniques and approaches.
- 4.VA.CP.2.1
- 5.VA.CP.2.1 Experiment and demonstrate developing skills in multiple art-making techniques, methods, and approaches through practice.
- 3.VA.P.3.1 Engage in art-making, applying knowledge of art-related vocabulary, materials, techniques, skills, and tools/technology.
- 4.VA.P.3.1 Explore and experiment with materials and techniques to expand personal interests and skills.
- 5.VA.P.3.1 Experiment and invent multiple art making techniques and approaches through practice.

Materials:

- Activity 2 Project Page “**Fruit and Vegetable Prints**”
- A variety of fruits and vegetables (use those that have been cut or handled in previous activities)
- Plain paper or solid color fabric
- Water based paint
- Coated paper or plastic disposable plates
- Sharp knife

Procedures

1. Using the instructions on the Project Page, “**Fruit and Vegetable Prints**”, students will create prints on paper or fabric.
2. Display prints in the hall and have students from other classes try to guess which fruits and vegetables the prints came from.

How to Pick the Best

Project Page: Fruit and Vegetable Prints

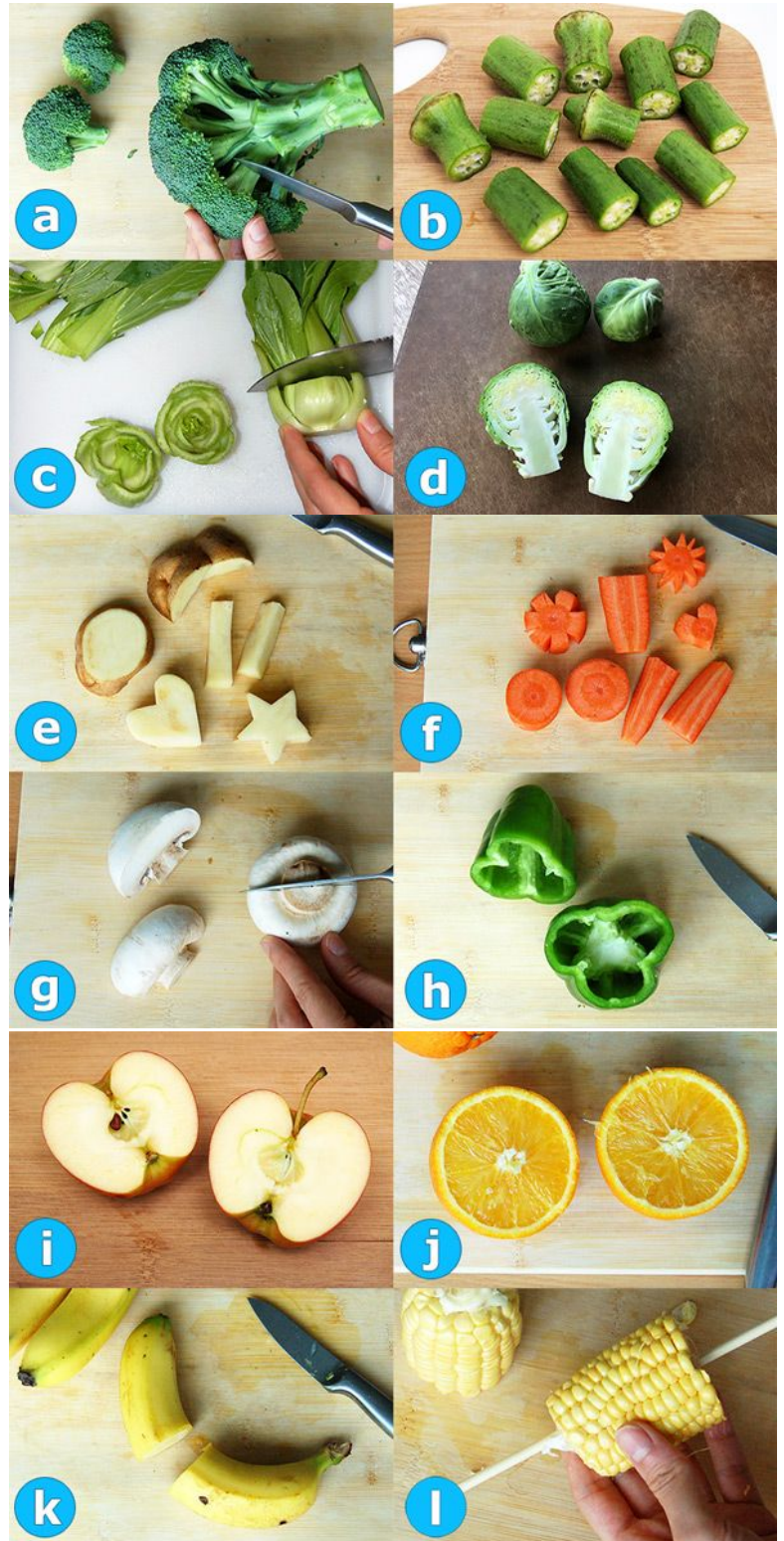


Vegetables and fruits can be used to make prints on paper or fabric.

- Paper or fabric
- Tempera or poster paint
- Vegetables and fruits
- Sharp knife
- Acrylic or fabric paint
- Plastic plates or trays

Prepare vegetables and fruits

- Broccoli and cauliflower** - separate into individual florets
- Okra** - cut into 1 inch long pieces
- Bok choy** - trim off the base, save it and use the rest (leaves/stems) for cooking
- Brussel sprouts** - cut in half, either crosswise or lengthwise
- Potato** - slice into quarters, wedges or cut into specific shapes such as a flower or star
- Carrot** - same as potato
- Mushroom** - slice button or any round mushrooms in half
- Bell pepper** - slice crosswise in half, remove the seeds
- Apples and pears** - cut lengthwise in half
- Oranges and lemons** - cut crosswise in half
- Banana** - cut in half or cut crosswise into 2-inch long pieces
- Corn** - cut in half and as an option skewer with a stick to make a handle



Source: firstpallet.com

<https://www.firstpalette.com/craft/fruit-vegetable-prints.html>

How to Pick the Best

Project Page: Fruit and Vegetable Prints



Put different colors of paint in shallow plates or containers. Use tempera or poster paint if you are printing on paper. For fabric, go with acrylic paint or fabric paint. Add some water but do not water down too much. Mix well.



Dip a fruit or vegetable in one color of paint, making sure that the bottom is evenly-coated with paint.



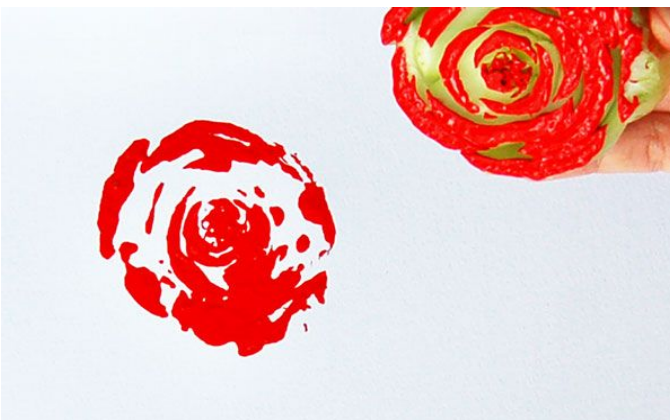
Lift the fruit or veggie from the paint and gently shake off any dripping or excess paint.



Press the painted side of the fruit or vegetable firmly onto the paper or fabric.



Lift the fruit or vegetable from the paper to check out the colored print.



Wipe the paint off the vegetable or fruit before dipping in paint again. Experiment with different vegetables to create patterns.

