

# Apple Taste Test for Young Children



## *Connections to the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards*

An act as simple as tasting an apple can be a huge learning experience for a young child. Apple exploration and taste test activities can touch on all five domains of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. These activities encourage active exploration by using the senses, practicing motor skills, expressing emotion, stating individual thoughts/preferences, following directions, encouraging curiosity, developing math skills, and making predictions. These activities also encourage communication and interaction with and among teachers and children which enhances child (and adult!) brain activity. Here is everything you need to know to do these activities and maximize the learning potential!

First, you will need some fresh, locally grown apples (October is the best time for this in Wisconsin, but they are available into early winter). For just a taste test, you don't need too many, so it can be relatively inexpensive. If possible, get a variety of colors and types.

Here are some options for finding local apples:

- At your grocery store, look for a “local” or “Wisconsin-grown apples” sign or label.
- Ask your distributor if they have any Wisconsin-grown apples available.
- Ask if any of your families have an apple tree and would donate the apples.
- Purchase apples at a nearby farmers’ market or orchard. Ask questions about the grower or orchard so that you can tell the children, ask the apple grower to visit your classroom, or take a field trip to the market or orchard if possible.



## **For Infants/Toddlers**

**Apple Exploration:** Show children the apples. Talk about colors, quantity, and shape and have children touch the apples. Have them dunk the apples in water, do they float? Talk about how they grow on trees right here in our area, and pretend to pick some. Using plush creatures or paper cut-outs and your own sound effects, talk about birds that nest in apple trees (“tweet, tweet”), how bees love the flowers (“buzz, buzz”), and squirrels eat the apples (“yum, yum”) and do these actions together. Sing a song like “Way Up High in an Apple Tree”. Read an apple book such as *Apple Farmer Annie* (also available in Spanish) by Monica Wellington.

### **Taste Test:**

- Ahead of time, purchase local applesauce or make your own (involving the children if you can).
- Give each child a sample to taste. For variety you can add cinnamon

- (let each child add a shake or two if they can) or try applesauce with other cooked fruits added.
- After each spoonful, toddlers can raise their hands if they like it.

**The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards addressed for infants and toddlers are:**

*I. Health and Physical*

- A.EL. 1d Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs. *Eating*
- B.EL. 2 Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.
- C.EL. 1 Uses senses to take in, experience, integrate, and regulate responses to the environment.

*II. Social and Emotional*

- A.EL. 1 Expresses a wide range of emotions.
- B.EL. 1 Develops positive self-esteem.
- B.EL. 2 Demonstrates self-awareness.

*III. Language and Communication*

- A.EL. 1 Derives meaning through listening to communications of others and sounds in the environment.
- A.EL. 3 Follows directions of increasing complexity.
- B.EL. 1 Uses gestures and movements (non-verbal) to communicate.
- B.EL. 2a Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate.
- C.EL. 1 Develops ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory parts of spoken language.
- C.EL. 3 Emergent - Shows appreciation of books and understands how print works. (Infants and toddlers will eventually become aware of print and understand print as they develop.)

*IV. Approaches to Learning*

- A.EL. 1 Displays curiosity, risk-taking, and willingness to engage in new experiences.
- B.EL. 2 Expresses self creatively through music, movement, and art.
- C.EL. 3 Uses various styles of learning such as visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

*V. Cognition and General Knowledge*

- A.EL. 1 Uses multi-sensory abilities to process information.

## For 2-Year-Old Children

**Apple Exploration:** Read an apple book such as *The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree* by Gail Gibbons. Invite the children to look and touch different types of apples. Talk about different words to describe the appearance of the apples (shape, color, feel). Talk about how apples grow here in Wisconsin, and ask if they have seen an apple tree or picked apples. Invite the children to think about what questions they have about apples and trees. Tape red, yellow, and green construction paper apples or apple pictures to "trees" drawn on a white board or chalkboard. Have the children "harvest" the apples into baskets or other containers. Guide the children to sort, count, or use them to make patterns. Ask the children if there are more or less of one color. Sing a song like "Way Up High in an Apple Tree".

**Taste Test** (this could be done as a choice activity for small groups of children):

- Ahead of time, shred or slice different varieties of apples but keep at least one whole to show while children are tasting.
- Have children take a scoop of the shredded apple to put into their bowl or hand out slices. Children can help sprinkle a little cinnamon on top with a shaker or provide a yogurt dip for variation.
- Talk about different words to describe the taste of the apples. Ask them to raise their hands if they like it. Remind the children that it's OK for different people to like different things.

**The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards addressed for 2-year-olds are:**

*I. Health and Physical*

- A.EL. 1d Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs. *Eating*
- B.EL. 2 Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.
- C.EL. 1 Uses senses to take in, experience, integrate, and regulate responses to the environment.

*II. Social and Emotional*

- A.EL. 1 Expresses a wide range of emotions.
- B.EL. 1 Develops positive self-esteem.
- B.EL. 2 Demonstrates self-awareness.

*III. Language and Communication*

- A.EL. 1 Derives meaning through listening to communications of others and sounds in the environment.
- A.EL. 3 Follows directions of increasing complexity.
- B.EL. 1 Uses gestures and movements (non-verbal) to communicate.
- B.EL. 2a Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate.
- C.EL. 1 Develops ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory parts of spoken language.
- C.EL. 3 Emergent - Shows appreciation of books and understands how print works. (2-year-olds will eventually become aware of print and understand print as they develop.)

*IV. Approaches to Learning*

- A.EL. 1 Displays curiosity, risk-taking, and willingness to engage in new experiences.
- B.EL. 1 Engages in imaginative play and inventive thinking through interactions with people, materials, and the environment.
- B.EL. 2 Expresses self creatively through music, movement, and art.
- C.EL. 3 Uses various styles of learning such as visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

*V. Cognition and General Knowledge*

- A.EL. 1 Uses multi-sensory abilities to process information.
- B.EL. 1 Demonstrates understanding of numbers and counting.
- B.EL. 2 Emergent - Understands number operations and relationships.
- B.EL. 4 Uses the attributes of objects for comparison and patterning.
- B.EL. 6 Collects, describes, and records information using all senses.

## For 3 to 5-Year-Olds and School Age

**Apple Exploration:** Read an apple book such as *Bring Me Some Apples and I'll Make You a Pie – A Story About Edna Lewis* by Robbin Gourley. Invite the children to develop a story using a collection of drawings or photos of apples, apple trees, farmers, applesauce, etc. Show the children different types of apples. Before telling them the variety name, have the children come up with their own name for the apple. To spark curiosity, cut an apple vertically and another one horizontally to show children the difference inside. Ask children to think about questions related to apples, how trees grow, what you can make with apples, and more! Sing a song about apples and/or draw pictures of apples and apple trees. Provide materials in the dramatic play area for a pretend apple market stand (pretend apples, small baskets, farmer overalls and hats).

### **Taste Test:**

- Children can wash their hands and then help to wash apples. With supervision, they can use wavy choppers/crinkle cutters to slice apples (slice one side flat for safety, then children can chop with both hands on top of the chopper), help shred apples, or use an apple peeler/corer to prep apples for tasting.
- Before the tasting, get a chart ready for voting by putting a picture of the apple variety and/or the name at the top and places below for writing or tallying the number of votes.
- The children can help to give out one type of apple at a time for tasting. Have the children lift it up and observe the color, smell, and feel of the apple slice. Make predictions. Will it taste sweet or tart and why? Which apple will be the crunchiest? Then on the count of 3, everyone tastes it together.
- Talk about how the apple tasted and the texture using as many different words as possible. You can have the children vote on whether they liked it or wait until the end and vote for their favorite. Remind the children that it's OK for different people to like different things.
- The results can be made into a bar graph to show the different preferences. The bar can be made up of sticker votes or construction paper apples to help make a concrete connection to what the bars mean.



*Mrs. Madson's Head Start Class at Riverview Elementary*

### **BOX OF DESCRIPTIVE WORDS**

Sweet	Sticky	Bland
Sour	Spicy	Nutritious
Tart	Yummy	Juicy
Delicious	Bitter	Crunchy
Squishy	Sugary	Nutty
Crispy	Flavorful	Firm

**The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards addressed for 3 to 5-year-olds are:**

*I. Health and Physical*

- A.EL. 1d Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs. *Eating*
- B.EL. 2 Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.
- C.EL. 1 Uses senses to take in, experience, integrate, and regulate responses to the environment.

*II. Social and Emotional*

- A.EL. 1 Expresses a wide range of emotions.
- B.EL. 1 Develops positive self-esteem.
- B.EL. 2 Demonstrates self-awareness.

*III. Language and Communication*

- A.EL. 1 Derives meaning through listening to communications of others and sounds in the environment.
- A.EL. 3 Follows directions of increasing complexity.
- B.EL. 1 Uses gestures and movements (non-verbal) to communicate.
- B.EL. 2a Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate.
- C.EL. 1 Develops ability to detect, manipulate, or analyze the auditory parts of spoken language.
- C.EL. 2 Emergent - Understands concept that the alphabet represents the sounds of spoken language and the letters of written language.
- C.EL. 3 Emergent - Shows appreciation of books and understands how print works.

*IV. Approaches to Learning*

- A.EL. 1 Displays curiosity, risk-taking, and willingness to engage in new experiences.
- B.EL. 1 Engages in imaginative play and inventive thinking through interactions with people, materials, and the environment.
- B.EL. 2 Expresses self creatively through music, movement, and art.
- C.EL. 3 Uses various styles of learning such as visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

*V. Cognition and General Knowledge - Emergent*

- A.EL. 1 Uses multi-sensory abilities to process information.
- B.EL. 1 Demonstrates understanding of numbers and counting.
- B.EL. 2 Understands number operations and relationships.
- B.EL. 4 Uses the attributes of objects for comparison and patterning.
- B.EL. 6 Collects, describes, and records information using all senses.
- C.EL. 1 Uses observation to gather information.
- C.EL. 3 Hypothesizes and makes predictions.
- C.EL. 4 Forms explanations based on trial and error, observations, and explorations.

## Bonus Activities

- Participate in the Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch! See [www.cias.wisc.edu/applecrunch/](http://www.cias.wisc.edu/applecrunch/) for more information.
- Extend the tasting to family and caregivers during pick-up time and have them vote too!
- Try doing taste tests with other colorful fresh local produce such as tomatoes or carrots.
- To connect these activities to child assessments, see the examples in *A Guide to Using Creative Curriculum® for Preschool to Support Farm to ECE Models* and *A Guide to Using Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos to Support Farm to ECE Models* (both available at: <http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/a-guide-to-using-the-creative-curriculum-for-preschool-to-support-farm-to-ece-models>).



Clockwise from top right: 1) Showing off crunched apples at Hortonville Area School District, 2) Northwoods Orchard Tomah Head Start 3) Picking apples even in the rain at Kidz In Motion

## Questions? Comments? Get in touch!

Contact our farm to ECE team at [wifarmtoece@rootedwi.org](mailto:wifarmtoece@rootedwi.org). Visit our website [rootedwi.org](http://rootedwi.org) for more Farm to ECE resources.

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The logo for 'rooted' features a green leaf icon to the left of the word 'rooted' in a lowercase, sans-serif font.