



Mise en Place and Knife Skills Lesson Plan

Participants will gain hands on experience in mise en place and essential knife skills for school meal preparation.

Instructor preparation time

60 - 90 minutes

Total instruction time

90 minutes

Photo: 2021 Montana Cook Fresh Leadership Institute



2.1 Mise en Place and Knife Skills Lesson Plan

Lesson Goal

Participants to gain hands-on experience in mise en place and essential knife skills for school meal preparation.

Learning Objectives

Objective 1: Participants will outline the benefits and basic steps of mise en place.

Objective 2: Participants will demonstrate correct knife grip and guiding hand position.

Objective 3: Participants will execute six basic knife cuts.

Objective 4: Participants will select appropriate cuts for specific food items.

Total Lesson Time

Instructor preparation time: 60 – 90 minutes

Total instruction time: 90 minutes

Professional Development Learning Codes

Culinary Skills (2130)

Equipment/Supplies

This supply list is for a class of approximately 20 participants and 1 instructor; adjust accordingly

Item	Quantity	Use/Notes
Aprons	21	
Hats/hair nets	21	
Gloves	1 (100 count) box medium 1 (100 count) box large 1 (100 count) box extra large	
Cutting boards	21	1 per participant + 1 for instructor
Knife set	1	Demonstration of types of knives
Chef's knives	5+	For participants without own knife sets
Paper towels (damp)	21	Place under cutting boards
Bowls/aluminum pans	11	Collect chopped produce to use in recipes
Signs/labels for each station (food item and how it should be cut)	6	
Onion	11	½ onion for each participant + 1 for instructor
Garlic	3-4 heads	1-2 cloves for each participant + 1 head for instructor
Parsley	1 bunch	1 handful of a variety of herbs for each participant + instructor
Cilantro	1 bunch	
Basil	1 bunch	
Kale	2 bunches	2 leaves for each participant
Sweet potato	21	1 sweet potato for each participant + 1 for instructor
Bell peppers	11	½ for each participant + 1 for instructor
Celery	11	½ stalk celery for each participant

Carrot	21	1 carrot for each participant + 1 for instructor
Butternut squash	1	Instructor demonstration only
Pineapple	1	Instructor demonstration only
Melon	1	Instructor demonstration only
Kiwi	2	Instructor demonstration only
Additional produce to practice knife skills will come from recipes		

Montana Cook Fresh Resources

- Montana Team Nutrition, Six Basic Knife Cuts (2014)
- Montana Team Nutrition, Montana's Healthy School Recipe Roundup Cookbook, Sloppy Joe on a Roll (2013)

Suggested Resources

- Indiana Department of Education, Sizzling School Lunches, Chili Roasted Sweet Potatoes Recipe
- Iowa State University Extension, Mise en Place Handout (2010)
- Iowa State University Extension, Workstation Set Up (2010)
- Iowa State University Extension, Types of Knives Handout (2010)
- Maryland Department of Education, Cook Smart Bootcamp, Kale Pesto Recipe (2014)
- Maryland Department of Education, Cook Smart Bootcamp, Production Planning Checklists (2014)
- Maryland Department of Education, Cook Smart Bootcamp, Knife Skills Handout (2014)
- Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Kidchen Expedition: A Farm to School Cookbook, Kale and Quinoa Medley Recipe
- Project Bread, Let's Cook Healthy School Meals Cookbook, White Bean Dip Recipe
- Vermont FEED, New School Cuisine Cookbook, Sweet Potato and Black Bean Salad Recipe

Instructor/Staff Roles

- Lead instructor
- Rotating assistant 1
- Rotating assistant 2

Lesson Plan

Topic	Activity	Materials	Time
Lesson preparation for instructor and 1-2 assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash counters and set up a workstation for each participant. • Wash all produce and distribute between the workstations and instructor demonstration station. • This lesson pairs well with the Cooking Projects Lesson. Each food item for cutting is associated with the following suggested recipes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ White Bean Dip ○ Lentil Hummus ○ Roasted Vegetable Wraps ○ Sweet potatoes and Black Bean Salad ○ Chili Roasted Sweet Potatoes ○ Kale Pesto 	Set up the participant and instructor workstations so that each person has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damp paper towel • Cutting board • Chef knife • Paring knife • Vegetable peeler • 1 carrot • 1 stalk celery • ½ onion • ½ red or green pepper • 2-3 leaves basil • 1 garlic clove • 1 sweet potato • 2-3 leaves kale 	60 – 90 minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kale Quinoa Medley ○ Sloppy Joe on a Roll <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If this lesson is completed as a standalone, determine the use of the food items beforehand to minimize food waste. Amounts of food cut at participant stations will vary based on the size of the class and if the Cooking Projects Lesson will be completed after the Mise en Place and Knife Skills Lesson. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Folder of handouts, one for each participant and one for instructor to refer to ● Optional items for instructor to demonstrate cutting: Winter squash, pineapple, melon, kiwi, butternut squash 	
Basic steps of mise en place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain what mise en place is and why it is useful for school nutrition programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Step 1: Plan your work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples of production planning ○ Ask class for examples of what tools they use to plan ● Step 2: Prioritize work ● Step 3: Collect tools and equipment ● Step 4: Collect ingredients ● Step 5: Prep ingredients ● Step 6: Set up workstation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Efficient workstation set up ex. Assembly line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Iowa State University Extension, Mise en Place Handout (2010) ● Maryland Department of Education, Cook Smart Bootcamp, Production Planning Checklists (2014) 	10 minutes
Mise en place with knife work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to select the correct knife for the task ● Preparing your workspace ● Proper posture and position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Iowa State University Extension, Types of Knives Handout (2010) 	5 minutes
Knife grip and guiding hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Correct knife grip ● Correct guiding hand position ● Participants practice correct grip and guiding hand position – instructors and assistance circulate to correct and give feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maryland Department of Education, Cook Smart Bootcamp, Knife Skills Handout (2014) ● Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition: Mise En Place and Knife Skills videos (2009) 	5 minutes
Demonstration and practice of six basic cuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diagonal and bias cuts – celery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor demonstrates cut with celery ○ Participants practice at stations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Celery used for dippers for White Bean Dip ○ Instructor and assistants circulate and correct/give feedback ○ Assistant collects prepared produce in separate bowls ● Oblique or roll cuts – carrot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor demonstrates cut with carrot ○ Participants practice at stations: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Montana Team Nutrition, Six Basic Knife Cuts List (2014) ● Refer to workstation set up list above 	60 minutes (about 10 minutes per type of cut)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carrot used for Kale and Quinoa Medley, and/or dippers for White Bean Dip ○ Instructor and assistants circulate and correct/give feedback ○ Assistants collect prepared produce in separate bowls ● Chiffonade –kale and basil <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor demonstrates chiffonade cut with kale and basil ○ Participants practice at stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kale used for Kale and Quinoa Medley and/or Kale Pesto) ○ Instructor and assistants circulate and correct/give feedback ○ Assistants collect prepared produce in separate bowls ● Mince – Herbs (parsley/cilantro) and garlic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor demonstrates garlic preparation and mincing of herbs ○ Participants practice at stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Garlic used for Kale Pesto, Sloppy Joe, Kale and Quinoa Medley and/or White Bean Dip) ○ Cilantro used for Sweet Potato and Black Bean Salad ○ Parsley or Mint used for White Bean Dip ○ Instructor and assistants circulate and correct/give feedback ○ Assistant collects prepared produce in separate bowls ● Julienne/batonnet – Sweet potato and bell pepper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor demonstrates cuts ○ Participants practice at stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Batonnet (¼ inch cut): Sweet Potato used for Chili Roasted Sweet Potatoes ○ Julienne: Green bell peppers, red bell peppers, and carrots used for Roasted Vegetable Wraps ○ Instructor and assistants circulate and correct/give feedback ○ Assistants collect prepared produce in separate bowls ● Dice – onion, sweet potato, and bell pepper 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor demonstrates onion preparation and sweet potato dice ○ Participant practice at stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Onion used for Roasted Vegetable Wraps and/or Sloppy Joe ○ Sweet potato (¼ inch dice) used for Sweet Potato and Black Bean Salad ○ Bell pepper (¼ inch dice) used for Kale and Quinoa Medley ○ Instructor and assistants circulate and correct/give feedback ○ Assistants collect prepared produce in separate bowls ● Special Items for instructor demonstration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winter squash, pineapple, melon, kiwi, butternut squash 		
Wrap up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage participants to practice the techniques learned in the workshop at work and home to get proficient in knife skills. ● Review handout folder so participants know what is in them. Answer questions. 		10 minutes

Notes

Participants may be instructed to provide their own knife sets from their school kitchens, or the instructors may provide knife sets for the participants depending on the instruction space. Provide instructions on this to participants at least a week before the training so they can procure a knife set if they are bringing their own. If participants are bringing their own knife sets, be sure they bring the appropriate knives. This lesson pairs well the Cooking Project lesson plan to provide a full day of training. Please refer to the Virtual Delivery Best Practices on page 62 for more information on how to adapt this in person culinary lesson into a virtual lesson.