

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision.

Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Activity: Festive Spiced Cookies

Get into the festive spirit by making delicious, spiced cookies. Providing children with opportunities to explore ingredients, mix and knead dough, and create their own festive cookies. This hands-on activity encourages creativity, fine motor skills, and an appreciation for Christmas traditions.

Learning aims

- Encourage speech and language through descriptive language and introducing new vocabulary
- Develop fine motor skills through mixing, rolling, and cutting
- Enhance sensory exploration by smelling and handling festive spices
- Foster creativity and self-expression by decorating cookies
- Promote early math skills by measuring ingredients and counting cookies.



Resources

- 150g self-raising flour
- 150g plain flour
- 125g butter
- 100g sugar
- Two tsps ground cinnamon
- One egg (beaten).

To decorate

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- Icing sugar mixed with water
- Cake decorations such as sprinkles
- Two large bowls
- Sieve
- Wooden spoons
- Rolling pins
- Letter cookie cutters
- Greased baking trays.



Activity Outline

- Pre-heat oven to 160°C (gas mark three)

Prepare your ingredients

- Support children to measure out the ingredients. Use, model and support children to use mathematical language. For example, heavier, lighter etc.
- Support their use and awareness of number by counting how many spoonfuls etc.

Make the biscuit dough

- Start with sifting the flour and cinnamon together
- In a separate bowl mix the butter and sugar together with a wooden spoon. Encourage children to notice the change in the mixture as they mix the ingredients together, e.g. how the mixture becomes paler in colour and softer in texture
- Support children to add the beaten egg to the butter sugar mix and stir together
- Add the dry ingredients to the mixture. Highlight to the children how the mixture changes as it comes together to form a dough
- Talk about what the children can smell, e.g. the cinnamon. Do they like/dislike the smell?

Cutting out the biscuits

- When the mixture has come together as a smooth dough, support children to roll it out onto a floured surface
- Support their language development by asking them how the mixture feels to them; soft, squidgy, squashy etc.
- Encourage the children to look for the cookie cutter which is the first letter of their name. Then ask them who they would like to make their cookies for and support them to find the first letter of their special person's name, e.g. 'mum', 'dad' etc.

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- Support children to cut out their cookies and place on a greased baking tray
- Ask children where they think the cookies would need to go next to cook. Talk to them about safety and the dangers of hot ovens
- Place cookies in the preheated oven and bake for 15-20 minutes until light brown. Remove from oven when cooked and place on a cooling wire rack.

Decorate your biscuits

- When cool, bring the cookies in to show the children
- Provide a variety of decorations for the children to use to decorate their cookies how they would like to.

Extension activity

- Use different shaped cutters instead of letters enabling children to choose their favourite shape
- Put a hole in the dough before baking and thread string through the hole after baking to hang on the Christmas tree.