



Cooking

Adventures in Reading:

Family Literacy Bags from Reading Rockets

Contents:

- Two books - one fiction, one nonfiction
- Parent information sheet
- Three activity sheets
- Bookmark
- Parent survey

for teachers and librarians



This Reading Rockets Activity Packet is designed to support reading activities at home. We've chosen a fiction and nonfiction book about cooking and baking, appropriate for a first or second grade level, and included related activities to encourage some hands-on fun and learning. Just assemble the packet in a two-gallon zip top bag, and send home with your students.

Reading Rockets carefully chose books that are widely available and appealing to young readers. The titles selected should be available in your school library. If the two featured titles are not available, or you prefer another title, feel free to substitute books related to the theme. You'll find a list of suggested alternative titles included in the bookmark.

The featured books are *Easy as Pie* by Cari Best and the nonfiction book *How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?* by Chris Butterworth. *Easy as Pie* tells the story a young boy, Jacob, who sets out to bake a peach pie to celebrate his parents' anniversary. Jacob is inspired by television personality Chef Monty who blends into his recipes great lessons for life — such as the importance of following directions, doing your best to fix unexpected difficulties, always leaving a workspace as orderly as you found it, and persistence. *How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?* illustrates the path food travels from the farm, to the market, to our homes, and finally, to our plates at home and in lunchboxes for school. Understanding “where our food comes from” can encourage healthier food choices.

The activities are designed to encourage further exploration and learning at home:

- Creativity Activity: a hands-on craft project
- Imagination Activity: encourages imaginative play, writing, or drawing
- Get Real Activity: focuses on real-world experiences for parent and child
- Bookmark: lists both the featured titles and additional titles

Putting it all together

Print out copies of the parent information sheet, the activities, the survey, and a master for making bookmarks. Cut the bookmark page into strips. You may wish to print the activity pages and bookmark on card stock for durability.

Into a two-gallon zip top bag, place:

- Two books — one fiction and one nonfiction
- Parent information sheet
- Three themed activity pages
- Bookmark
- Survey for parents

Send the packet home with your student. Encourage parents to keep the parent information sheet, the activities, and bookmark, and return the books and survey to you.

Let reading rockets know what you think of the family activity packets by e-mailing us through our website: www.readingrockets.org/sitecontact. Click on “Family Literacy Bags”

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Welcome

Dear _____

Exploring new ideas and enjoying books with you sends a powerful message to your child: Reading and learning are fun, and happen everywhere — not just at school. This Reading Rockets Activity Packet about _____ was created to help you and your child enjoy reading and learning together.

Start your learning adventure by reading some books with your child about this popular topic. Then explore the topic with three activities. Enclosed you'll find what you need:

- Two books to share with your child
- Three related activities
- Bookmark with a list of other books to extend the fun, if you wish
- Short survey to tell me if you enjoyed using the packet

The simple steps on the back explain how to use the packet.

The bookmark, this parent information sheet, and the activities are yours to keep.

When you've finished with the materials, please return the books and the completed survey to school in your child's backpack. Please return the Reading Rockets Activity Packet by _____.

I hope you'll enjoy reading and learning together!

Teacher signature

To learn more about children's books, reading with your child, and information about helping kids become confident readers, please visit www.ReadingRockets.org

ADVENTURES IN READING!

Instructions

How to use your Reading Rockets Activity Packet

Getting ready

1. Before you read the books to your child, be sure to read them yourself. One book is fiction — a “make believe” story. The other book is nonfiction, or informational and true. Reading the books first will give you the “inside scoop” to the twists and turns of the story, the interesting information inside, and the parts of the books that will appeal most to your child. Being prepared will also help you remember personal anecdotes about your family life that are relevant to the stories. Sharing those personal stories will enhance the experience of reading together.

2. Next, read the three activities to see which of them you think your child will enjoy most, and which one you have the time and materials on-hand to do right away. Be prepared! After you read one (or both) of the books with your child, he or she may want to do an activity right away.

Start the fun

3. When you know you’ll have at least enough time to read and talk about one of the books, grab your child and a book, and dive right in. If you start with *Easy as Pie*, talk about the cover of the book with your child. Can they guess what it’s about? Can your child describe a time when he cooked or baked something? Read the book to your child. Take time to ask and answer questions, explore the pictures, and wonder what will happen next. Read it again, if your child asks you to. Then, try the other book or one of the activities.

4. When you read a nonfiction book, take a moment to explain to your child the difference between the two types of books. *Easy as Pie* told a make-believe story, but *How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?* is filled with facts about the real world. The information in nonfiction books can answer lots of questions.

5. Feel free to pick and choose from the activities, or alter the activity to suit your child’s interests. Save one for a rainy day or for when you have company visiting. Read the books again over the next few days and try different activities. Most important: have fun!

When you’re done...

Keep the bookmark, the activities, and this page. Complete the survey and return it with the books to your child’s school. Visit a library and look for some of the other books on the bookmark. Make the most of the excitement the books create, and try some hands-on learning or make-believe fun. Exploring new ideas along side you lets your child see you learning — and reading — too, and gives your child personal experience to support his or her growing knowledge.

Tips for reading nonfiction books with kids:

- *Wonder out loud.* As you are reading, or afterward, talk about facts you find interesting or questions you have.
- *Show your child how to use the table of contents, section headings, index, and word list (glossary) to find the answer to a specific question.*
- *Don’t be afraid to jump around,* reading pages that especially interest your child. You don’t have to read a nonfiction book straight through.

Tips for reading fiction books with kids:

- *Take your time and talk about the story with your child.* Ask your child questions.
- *Explore the pictures with your child.*
- *Read with expression.* Change your voice or how fast you read to create excitement. *Ham it up!*
- *You don’t need to read every word.* Keeping your child interested is the goal.

making a still life come alive



A still life is a painting or drawing of things that cannot move on their own. The artist has control over the things she decides to paint and arranges the items in any way she chooses.

For your still life, select a few fruits or vegetables. Feel free to also include a vase, or bowl, or a tablecloth. For your first piece of art, include just a few items.

Supplies

- Objects to paint:
A few fruits and/or vegetables
Other simple but visually interesting objects such as a bowl, vase, towel, tablecloth, book, or candle
- Surface to draw or paint on:
Paper, chalkboard, or a sidewalk
- Materials to use:
Paint, crayons, chalk, pencils, or watercolors

Getting started

When painting or drawing here are some things to think about:

- Line: We draw making lines. There are all sorts of lines; thick and thin, straight and curved, and broken lines.
- Shape: Wherever the ends of a line meet, a shape is formed.
- Space: There is positive and negative space. Draw a large circle. Draw a smaller circle inside the large one. Color in the area between the two circles. That area is the positive the space; the empty space in the center is the negative space.
- Color: If you really look closely at the objects in your still life, you will see lots of colors. An apple, for example, can have different shades of red, yellow, and green — all in the same piece of fruit! You can make any color by mixing the three primary colors: red, blue, and yellow.
- Texture: You can observe texture by looking at the surface of an object. The texture of a husk of corn looks and feels different than the skin of a banana; the surface of an egg looks and feels different from the surface of a head of broccoli. Those differences are differences in texture.



Paul Cezanne, Still Life with Apples (1890)

making a still life come alive



- **Composition:** How will you arrange the objects in your still life? What will be placed forward, toward the front? What is taller and what is shorter? If you draw a line down the center of your drawing paper, which objects are on the right, and which are on the left? Try a variety of compositions, and then choose one to draw or paint.

Arrange your objects and look closely at the colors, shadows, and shades of color. Notice how the colors change on the object. As you make your work of art, continue to look at your objects. Give your artwork a title when you are done, and sign your name — just as famous artists do!

Here's a website that shows how to do a simple pencil and watercolor still life.

<http://www.artprojectsforkids.org/2008/07/watercolor-still-life.html>

And if you need inspiration, here's another website that has lots of examples of beautiful, vibrant drawings and paintings from kids as young as three years old. <http://www.kidsdidit.com/KDI-Fruit&StillLife.shtml>

If your child wants to experiment further with making art, you might try some of the interactive tools (like "Collage Machine" and "Brushster") at the Art Zone, a website created by the National Gallery of Art.

<http://www.nga.gov/kids/zone/zone.htm>

kids in the kitchen



Children love to bake, and baking offers many learning opportunities: reading and understanding a recipe, following the directions, measuring, carefully mixing, pouring, paying attention to time, observing the science of baking, and experiencing all of Chef Monty's rules including being patient since, as Chef Monty says: "A pie is ready when it's ready, and not one minute before."

So many pies and so little time

Decide on the sort of pie you want to bake. This is not a simple decision since there are all sorts of pies, from all over the world. There are sweet pies that use fruits, and there are a savory pies that use meats, and vegetables, fish and all sorts of spices. There are small individual pies like *samosas* from India, *calzones* from Italy, and *empanadas* from Latin America. There are deep-dish covered pies such as the American favorite, chicken pot pie and England's version, called shepherd's pie. Some small pies are fried and some are baked. Some have a very thin and flaky crust like *spanakopita*, also called Greek spinach pie.

A season and a reason. . . to bake

Consider baking a pie with fruits and vegetables that are in season. Summer fruits are different from fall; winter vegetables are different from spring. If there is a farmer's market in your area, why not bake a pie with fruits and vegetables you can purchase directly from a farmer. And if you go to the farmer's market, be sure to talk with the farmer. Ask what sort of pie they bake with their produce. Ask them what fruits and vegetables they will be bringing to the market as the seasons change.

To help you decide what sort of pie to bake, consider if there is a special reason to bake pie. Is there an upcoming holiday or birthday? Is a special guest coming to visit? Considering the occasion might help you choose what sort of pie to bake.

Ready, set, start cooking!

1. Assemble all the tools you will need before you begin: bowls, spoons, measuring cups and spoons, rolling pin, pie pan, etc.
2. Gather up all the ingredients listed in the recipe: flour, eggs, fruit, butter, salt, spices, etc.
3. You might want to talk a bit about where each of the ingredients comes from. There is an index in *How Did This Get in My Lunchbox?* that can help you find that information for some foods.
4. Follow the recipe exactly (cooking is a science, after all!) including preheating the oven and keeping track of how long the pie needs to bake.
5. Tell your child that you will help and will do the tasks too dangerous for children, such as taking the hot pie out of the hot oven. As Chef Monty says: "A baker can always use a little help."
6. Eat, share, enjoy!

kids in the kitchen



Online resources about baking with kids

Videos of a bread baking class for middle school children, from King Arthur Flour.

<http://www.kingarthurfour.com/baking/life-skills-videos.html#movie2>

Learn how to make a lattice top pie (you can practice with paper strips).

<http://www.tasteofhome.com/Videos/Desserts/Video--Lattice-Topped-Pies>

Video of how to make pie dough <http://www.kids-cooking-activities.com/kids-cooking-lessons-jr-5.html>

Online resources about gardening and growing food with kids

Kids Gardening, from the National Gardening Association <http://www.kidsgardening.com/>

Meet the Greens, a PBS Kids show about sustainability and green living <http://meetthegreens.pbskids.org/episode4/urban-sprouts2.html>

IMAGINATION ACTIVITY : COOKING

3, 2, 1 action! create your own cooking show



From Easy as Pie: "At the end of a long, hard day of school, Jacob sat down to watch his favorite TV show, Baking with Chef Monty."

Supplies

- Large empty boxes
- Bowls, spoons, butter knives, measuring cups, pie pans, colander, rolling pin, and other safe kitchen tools and supplies
- Construction paper or white poster board
- Colored markers
- Pencil and paper
- Tape

Getting ready for the show

Build a simple "set" out of the large empty boxes. You'll want to assemble a stovetop, oven, refrigerator, table, and counter space.

Think up a name for the show and make simple, colorful signage with the construction paper or poster board

Let your child choose what dishes to make and create the menu for the show. You can help by asking a few questions to jumpstart your child's thinking:

Are you making breakfast dishes? What are you going to call the dish? What ingredients will you need? Are you baking a dessert for someone special? Will you give that dessert a special name?

Have your child write up the menu on a piece of paper — this is a great way to encourage writing.

Chef Monty has his "Baking Rules." Work together with your child to create your own set of baking rules.

Showtime!

Assemble all the kitchen supplies and start the show! Don't worry about a script or making everything flow just so — this is just for fun. Being an enthusiastic audience member will inspire your child to enjoy performing and explaining all the steps and cooking tips to you.

If you own or can borrow a simple video camera, record your cooking show and share with others. You can even use your cell phone to record the video, if your phone has that feature.

Your child may also want to watch some cooking shows on TV with you. PBS has some great ones — check your local station's program list. Ask your child: Which ones do you like? Why do you prefer some cooking shows to others?

If your child shows interest in learning more about cooking and baking, you might want to explore the Spatulatta website, chock full of recipes, tips, and video demonstrations of basic skills. <http://www.spatulatta.com/spatulattacookbook>



COOKING



Featured Books

Fiction

Applesauce Season por por Edén Ross Lipson, ilustrado por Mordicai Gerstein

Cook-A-Doodle-Do por Janet Stevens y Susan Stevens Crummel

Easy as Pie por Cari Best, ilustrado por Melissa Sweet

Little Pea por Amy Kruse Rosenthal y Jen Corace

Mean Soup por Betsy Everitt

Nonfiction

Bean Appétit por Shannon Payette Seip y Kelly Parthen, con Carisa Dixon

How Did That Get in My Lunchbox? The Story of Food por Chris Butterworth, ilustrado por Lucia Gaggiotti

The Kid's Multicultural Cookbook por Deanna F. Cook, ilustrado Michael Kline

Read, Steady, Spaghetti: Cooking for and with Kids por el célebre joven cocinero, Sam Stern

Sopa de frijoles (Bean Soup) por Jorge Argueta, ilustrado por Rafael Yocktengkeng

Reading Adventure Packs
from Reading Rockets



READING ADVENTURE PACKS

Parent Survey

Parents: Cut out the bookmark for your child to keep. Return the survey to your child's teacher, along with the book(s).

Tell us about your experience with the activities:

- Easy and fun to do
- The directions were difficult to understand
- My child enjoyed the activities

Did talking about what you were reading, and the activities help your child to learn? (on a scale of 1 to 5)

1 2 3 4 5

(did not learn much)

(learned a lot)

Would you like to try another "read and learn together" activity with your child?

- yes
- no

What kinds of things is your child interested in?

Your name (and your child's name)
