

# TUDOR TastEd Year 4 Lesson 1



# See



## Berries and Cherries

### Learning Objectives

**Duration:** 45 minutes - 1 hour

The focus of this lesson is to use our sense of sight to explore soft fruits that would have been familiar in Tudor times (strawberries, cherries, dried barberries). Children use speech and writing to describe the contrasting look of different Tudor fruits. Children also learn about changing patterns of fruit consumption in History.

### Resources

**Equipment:** Colander, chopping board, knife, a reusable or paper plate/napkin for each child.

Buy some fresh strawberries, cherries and dried barberries (these can often be purchased in Asian food shops or in Waitrose; if you can't find them, use dried currants instead which were another popular Tudor dried fruit).

**Preparation:** Wash the fresh produce and store in a food container. and bring to the class along with the chopping board and knife.

Before you start, make sure the children wash their hands.

### Lesson Outline

1. Today we are learning to explore food (and food in Tudor History) with our senses and describe what we see, hear, touch, smell or taste. This is called TastEd.
2. Recap: ask the class 'can anyone tell me what the five senses are?' See, touch, hear, smell and taste. For each sense ask the children which part of the body they use.
3. Explain the two golden rules of TastEd: NO ONE HAS TO TRY, NO ONE HAS TO LIKE anything.
4. Today is about our sense of SIGHT. We are going to use our sense of sight to explore the way that some different Tudor fruits look and we are going to use descriptive language to write about the colours, shapes and textures.
5. Tudors had far less fresh fruit in their diets than we do today, because many of the imported fruits in our supermarkets were not available. No mangoes, no bananas, no kiwifruit or passionfruit or pineapple. They did have citrus fruit but almost all of it was sour, even the oranges.
6. Tudor fruit was very seasonal. There was no fresh fruit at all in the winter, only dried fruit or preserves. Most of the fresh fruit people ate was wild and completely free, like the blackberries that still grow in Britain in the autumn. This meant that fruit was a favourite food for both rich and poor.
7. They ate berries that we have forgotten about such as mulberries, whortleberries and wineberries.
8. Fruit was also grown in gardens. Even if the Tudors didn't have a lot of different varieties of different fruits, they had a lot of types of the same fruit. By 1629 (after Tudor times) there were more than 30 varieties of cherries growing in England. Cherry-feasts and cherry-fairs were held in the summer. We would usually eat cherries at the end of a meal, but in Tudor times they were often eaten at the start of dinner because people feared that raw fruit would give them a stomach ache. Today, we think of RAW fruit as being the healthiest because the vitamins and minerals are intact but the Tudors believed that cooked fruit was healthiest.
9. Introduce the cherries. Ask the class for descriptions of what the cherries look like.

10. Now, strawberries. In Tudor times, these would have been much much smaller than strawberries today. They were a wild woodland fruit whereas now, strawberries are domesticated fruit grown by farmers in polytunnels.
11. Here is a real strawberry. Can anyone tell me what you see?
12. Now, barberries. These are a very unusual fruit in modern Britain. We think of them as being an Iranian or Persian ingredient. They are used in rice dishes in Iran. But in Tudor times, barberries were a very normal fruit and were grown in English gardens. Tudors loved their sweet sour taste and put them in salads or with meat dishes.
13. Here are some real dried barberries. Can anyone tell me what you see?
14. Now distribute plates and fruit and a piece of paper for each person. Ask everyone to write down a description of the look of each of the fruit, trying to use comparatives and similes ('the barberries look like raisins'; 'the cherry is rounder and darker than the strawberry'; 'the barberries look tiny and all the same size, whereas the strawberries are much larger and many .
15. Anyone who wants to can eat the fruit (NB demo to the children that the cherry has a stone and you need to be careful how you bite into it!). Explain that anyone who doesn't want to swallow the fruit can smell it or lick it instead.
16. If you have time, write one more sentence: 'If I were a Tudor, my favourite fruit would be ....because...'. ('If I were a Tudor, my favourite fruit would be strawberries because they are juicy and sweet and red')
17. Share final observations with the whole class. Did anyone try anything new today?

### Word Bank for Sight and Tudor Berries

**Adjectives:** red, crimson, scarlet, purple, black, green, round, heart-shaped, seedy, shiny, spherical, squashy, bright.

**Similes:** like an apple, like a heart, like a speck, like a raisin, like a marble, like a pendulum, like a yo-yo

### Success Criteria

- I can use my sense of sight to explore and talk about different Tudor fruits.
- I can use different words to describe the LOOK of different foods.
- I can talk about what I like and understand that not everyone has the same tastes.

### Curriculum Links

**Communication and Language:** Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events.

Children answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences. (DM pages 21 and 18). ('How does the food taste in combination?')

**Understanding the World:** Children can identify patterns of similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things.

**PSED:** 'Children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others' (DM p. 11).



## School Kitchen

Link to choosing different fresh fruits as part of school lunch ( or maybe eating strawberries at the school summer fete if you have one).

## Reading links

*Food and Drink in Britain* by C. Anne Wilson

This is a wonderful history of British food.

## Historic Recipe

A medieval recipe for strawberries quoted by C. Anne Wilson in *Food and Drink in Britain*:

'Take strawberries and wash them...in good red wine; then strain through a cloth and do them in a pot with a good almond milk..and do therein raisins of Corinth, saffron, pepper, sugar great plenty, powder ginger, canell [cinnamon], galingale; point it with vinegar, and a little white grease put thereto...plant it with the grains of pomegranate, and then serve it forth'.

## Background facts for teachers

Almost all of the strawberries eaten in Tudor England would have been the tiny scarlet wild variety.

Sometimes berries and other fruits were used in a Tudor dish called a 'pottage', in which fruit pulp would be thickened with breadcrumbs or a cereal flour. It was a bit like our porridge. Pottage made from mulberry juice was called a 'murrey'.

Strawberries and cream were considered a huge treat in Tudor times, just as today. A Tudor writer called Andrew Boorde wrote that strawberries and cream was ' a rural man's banquet'

Tudor schoolchildren sometimes had an afternoon snack called 'drinkings' around 3pm. It consisted of a snack of bread with fresh fruit such as apples or cherries in the summer and dried fruit such as figs and raisins in the winter. The children also had a glass of weak beer to drink!

