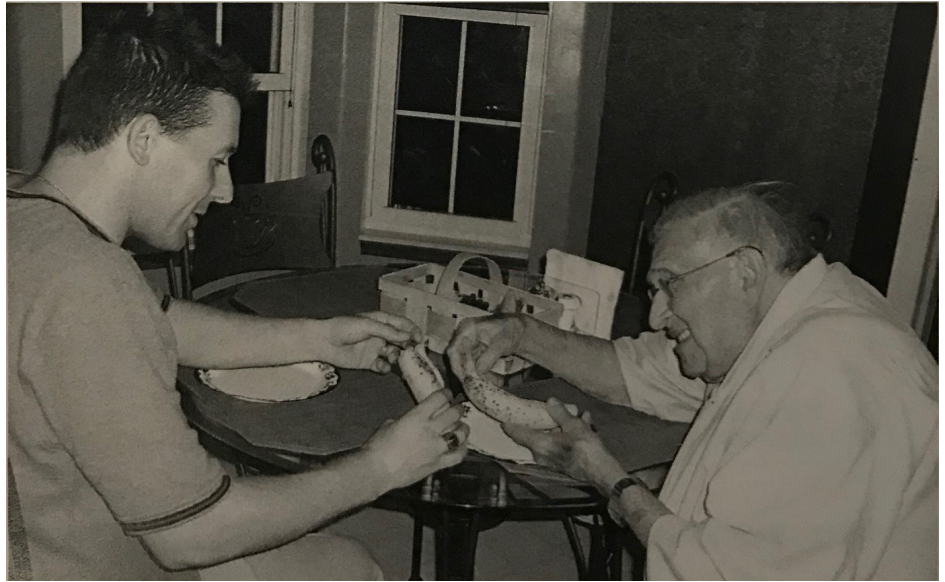


Getting a person with dementia to help prepare food is a good way to promote eating and swallowing skills. The sight and smell of food being prepared can stimulate interest in tasting the food, and can access memories surrounding dining, cooking and baking. In this activity, we present several different examples of food preparation. These can be presented one at a time if the presence of too many items is distracting. Also, the activity can be paced across several sessions.



Ideally, the foods chosen should match those that the participant likes, though it's alright to encourage trying something new. Preparing food and eating it is often times a social activity, where two or more people gather to talk and enjoy one another's company. Therefore, we encourage the presenter of the activity to demonstrate the preparation of the food for the participant and join them in eating the end result.

Food preparation as described in this activity plan also could be used with pairs of participants, with each one completing different steps or with one resident preparing the food while the other resident observes. Both participants can then eat the results together. Be sure your hands are clean and that all participants have been able to clean their hands before handling food products.



ATTENTION: Before conducting these activities with participants, be sure that they have no medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, food allergies, swallowing difficulties, etc.) that would prohibit the use of these foods and food preparation materials

PURPOSE

- Promote interest in eating
- Promote the development of gross and fine motor skills
- Promote eye-hand coordination
- Reinforce skills necessary for everyday living, such as self-feeding

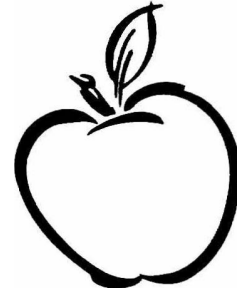
MATERIALS

- One tray
- Basket to hold food and food preparation items
- Graham crackers, a plastic jar of smooth peanut butter, 2 bananas, 2 seedless oranges, 2 small (single serving) plastic containers of applesauce, a plastic shaker with a small (single serving) amount of cinnamon, 2 paper napkins
- 2 spoons for eating apple sauce

- 2 paper plates and 2 paper napkins
- 2 butter knives to spread peanut butter and cut a banana
- 2 forks
- A trash receptacle

SETUP

- I. Put the tray in front of the participant.
2. Put the basket within easy reach of the participant.



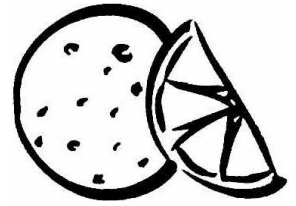
INSTRUCTIONS

APPLESAUCE SEASONING

1. Take out one of the paper plates and place it in front of you. Ask the participant to take out the other paper plate and place it on the tray in front of them, providing assistance as needed.
2. Take out one of the paper napkins and unfold it. Place the napkin on your lap. Ask the participant to take out and unfold the other paper napkin and place it on their lap.
3. Take out one of the containers of applesauce and place it on the paper plate in front of you. Invite the participant to take out the remaining container of applesauce and place it on the paper plate in front of them.
4. Demonstrate opening the container of applesauce for the participant. (This usually involves pulling a tab to tear off a sealed strip of foil or plastic.) Have the participant open the other container. Provide assistance as needed.
5. Lift your container of applesauce to your nose and demonstrate smelling it. Invite the participant to smell their applesauce.
6. Ask the participant to remove the shaker of cinnamon from the basket.
7. Pick up the shaker of cinnamon and demonstrate shaking the cinnamon onto your applesauce. Ask the participant if they like cinnamon, and if no negative response is given, invite them to shake some cinnamon on the applesauce (demonstrate with a shaking motion, if necessary).
8. Invite the participant to smell the applesauce now and ask if the cinnamon makes it better.
9. Take out one of the spoons from the basket. Invite the participant to do the same.
10. Demonstrate stirring the cinnamon into your applesauce with your spoon. Invite the participant to do the same, if they wish.
11. Ask the participant if they would like to eat the applesauce now or prepare some more food and then eat. (Follow the lead of the participants. You can always come back to this activity to prepare other food items.)
12. Whenever the applesauce is eaten, show the participant the trash receptacle and place your empty container in it. Ask the participant to follow by putting their empty container in it, as well. (If you can recycle the empty container, be sure to have an appropriate place to put the empty container for that purpose.)

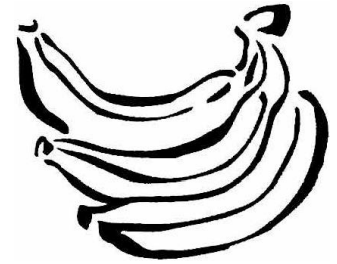
ORANGE PEELING

1. See Step 1 under Applesauce Seasoning.
2. Take out one of the oranges and place it on the paper plate in front of you. Invite the participant to take out the other orange and place it on their paper plate.
3. Break open the skin of your orange and start to peel it. Pick up the participant's orange, break open the skin, and start to peel it. (If the participant is physically able, encourage them to break the skin and peel the orange on their own.)
4. Return the orange to the participant. Invite them to finish peeling their orange as you continue peeling yours.
5. Demonstrate disposing of the peel from your orange into the trash receptacle. Ask the participant to likewise dispose of their peel.
6. Lift your orange to your nose and smell it. Ask the participant to smell their orange and ask if it smells nice.
7. Break off a wedge of your orange and put it on the paper plate in front of you.
8. Ask the participant to break their orange apart. Offer assistance, as necessary.
9. Pick up one of the orange wedges from your plate and eat it. Invite the participant to taste one of the wedges from their plate.
10. Continue eating the orange wedges until they are gone or the participant expresses that they're finished.



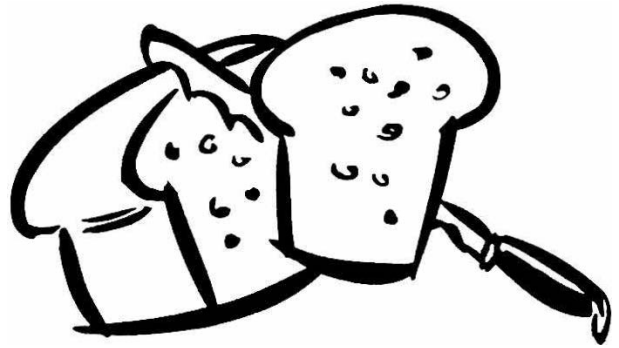
BANANA SLICING

1. See Step 1 under Applesauce Seasoning.
2. Remove one of the bananas from the basket and place it on the paper plate in front of you. Invite the participant to do the same.
3. Break open the peel of your banana. Pick up the participant's banana and do the same to theirs.
4. Return the participant's banana. Invite the participant to finish peeling their banana as you finish peeling yours.
5. Demonstrate disposing of the banana peel into the trash receptacle. Have the participant dispose of their peel.
6. Remove one of the butter knives from the basket. Ask the participant to remove the remaining knife from the basket.
7. Demonstrate cutting a slice of your banana with the knife. Invite the participant to cut a slice from their banana. (If they need guidance on where to slice, you can draw "lines" on the banana with chocolate syrup.)
8. Continue to slice the rest of your banana. Ask the participant to finish slicing the rest of their banana.
9. Eat the banana slices together or save them to put on top of graham crackers with peanut butter as described below.



PEANUT BUTTER SPREADING

1. See Step 1 under Applesauce Seasoning.
2. Remove one of the graham crackers from the package in the basket and place it on the plate in front of you. Invite the participant to remove a graham cracker from the package and place it on their plate.
3. Instruct the participant that you are now going to break your graham cracker in half. Demonstrate breaking your graham cracker into two pieces and putting it on your plate. Ask the participant to then break their cracker into two pieces.
4. Ask the participant to remove the jar of peanut butter from the basket and place it on the tray next to their plate.
5. Start opening the lid of the peanut butter.
6. Invite the participant to finish opening the lid.
7. Pick up one of the butter knives and put some peanut butter on it. Invite the participant to do the same.
8. Spread the peanut butter on one of your pieces of the graham cracker.
9. Invite the participant to take the knife and spread some peanut butter on one of their pieces of the cracker. (You may also now place the reserved slices of banana on the cracker, if you wish.)
10. Take a bite from your cracker and invite the participant to take a bite from theirs. Continue eating the graham cracker half.
11. Demonstrate putting peanut butter on your remaining graham cracker. Invite the participant to spread peanut butter on his remaining half of cracker. Eat the crackers together.
12. Invite the participant to help you wash the used utensils. (If plastic, have them wipe off the utensils and put them in the recycle bin.)



EXTENSIONS

- Work with other foods, such as pouring milk on cereal, slicing canned pears, spreading butter on toast, etc.
- Use a melon scoop to make melon balls.

HORIZONTAL PROGRAMMING

- Ask the participant to make snacks for others and to help serve them.
- Have the participant identify different scents from jars.

VERTICAL PROGRAMMING

DOWNWARD EXTENSION

- If necessary, you may have to help with some of the physical aspects of food preparation. However, it is important to let the participant do as much as they can.
- Use premixed and precut tubes of cookie dough or biscuits and have the participant place cookies or biscuits on a cookie sheet.
- Use large-handled utensils to make it easier for the participant to grip. (Check with occupational therapists for sources of these restorative devices.)
- Let the participant tear lettuce for salad, or rub fresh herbs in their hands.

UPWARD EXTENSION

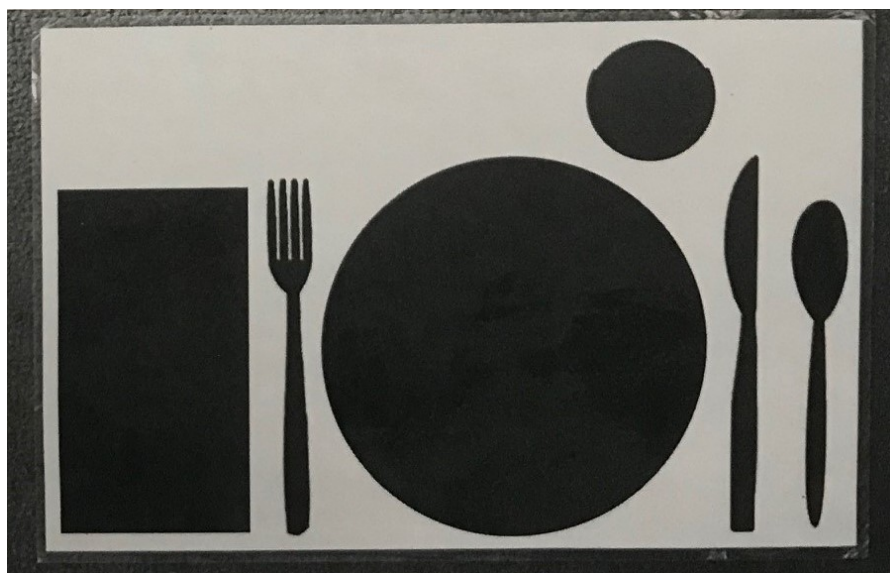
- Have the participant set up for meals using a placemat template.
- **GROUP ACTIVITY:** Set up teams to follow recipes to make a dish, such as a fruit salad, with each person in charge of a different step.
- Have participants plan a menu for a special dinner.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

P: Participants cannot manipulate or hold materials.

S: Pair these persons with participants who can manipulate things and have them work as a team.

S: Be their hands and ask their advice as to where to place items, where to cut the banana, etc.



From "Montessori-Based Activities for Persons with Dementia, Volume 1"
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