

COOKING CLASS MENTALITY & APPROACH

By Heather from A Love for Special Learning

Purpose

- Increase independence and interdependence
- Engage in activity of daily living
- Meet a basic need through preferred food

Logistics

- Review the recipe in their seat (independently or as a class)
- Find and Start- Give each student a unique item to find in the kitchen, something they may need for a future recipe or something they will need for the lesson at hand, show a staff member, then begin cooking
- Students had a 'set' place in the kitchen they would also cook, kind of like their desk seat
- Ipad recipes- each slide was a step with periodic STOP signs in the recipe for students to ask for a 'quality control check' of their recipe (could also be printed for use at home and easy to make quick changes for everyone)
- First step is to set their table, then find the ingredients, then cooking
- Support staff stood at the perimeter of the kitchen taking data and interrupting if safety or an irreversible issue was about to occur
- As students finished they would begin eating
- Each student was given a clean-up task, putting away leftovers, cleaning counters, clean table, sweep, do dishes, collect and charge ipads, etc

Perks

- Cook the same meal 2 times in a row, increase independence and decrease leftover waste
- With 1.5-2 hours to cook, the cooking steps were never rushed, only the eating and cleaning up!
- Find out what cooking appliances families felt comfortable with their student using and limit cooking to only those
- Purchased pre-cut or pre-cooked food frequently!
- Used common household items, such as a serving spoon or table spoon instead of measuring spoons/cups
- 'Tastes good' is different for everyone, let them experiment, reflect with them while they eat, and course correct next time
- Teach tricks and safety, like using a plate to help carry a hot bowl to the dinner table, purposely leaving moldy cheese for students to find and determine it isn't good before using in their meal