

Gather Around the Table + Recipe for Mini Pizzas

What's this lesson all about?

The dinner table is a place of community. Eating together gives us the opportunity to talk, laugh and share. Taking time out to catch up and talk lets us truly connect. Learn why cooking together and sitting down to share a meal is so important- plus, a recipe for a real crowd-pleaser: mini pizzas.

LEARN ABOUT IT

The power of sharing a meal

You may think that sitting down to share a meal is important so everyone gets food in their bellies, but there are many other benefits. Sharing meals does more than feed each person physically- it also feeds them emotionally. Shared meals allow conversations to take place.

No matter what's on your plate, when you eat together, you'll appreciate having the opportunity to find out what's going on in each person's life.

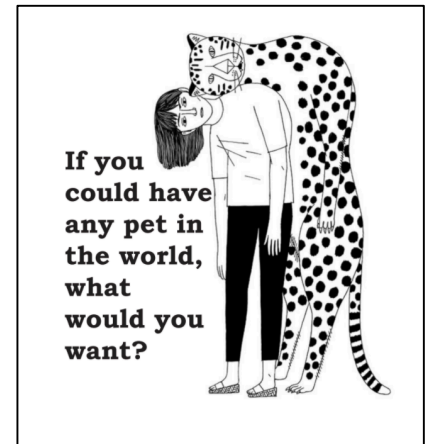
The power of cooking together

No matter your age or skill level in the kitchen, everyone can help make a meal come together! Even setting the table is an important job. Cooking together with others can be a fun way to spend time together, and you might also find that some of the best conversations happen as you're preparing a meal.

What do we talk about?

One of the biggest conversation challenges families have is getting past "How was your day?" Here's a few ideas to get the conversation flowing (you can download a set of conversation cards on the Food Explorers Club lesson page).

- If you could design your own school, what would it look like?
- What are the most interesting things about you?
- What's one of your favorite jokes?
- What's your first memory?
- If we all lived in a zoo, what animals would we be?



FOOD FOUNDATION STANDARDS: Food is Fun, Food is for Sharing

This lesson meets the following Indiana State Academic Standards: 4.RV.1, 5.RV.1, 6.RV.1, 4.SL.1, 5.SL.1, 6.SL.1, 4.SL.2.1, 5.SL.2.1, 6.SL.2.1, 4.SL.2.3, 5.SL.2.3, 6.SL.2.3, 4.SL.2.4, 5.SL.2.4, 6.SL.2.4, 4.SL.2.5, 5.SL.2.5, 6.SL.2.1, SEPS.1, SEPS.2, SEPS. 8, 4.PS.3, 5.PS.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.3.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.3, 5.4.6, 5.5.1, 5.5.5, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.6.5, 5.7.1, 5.7.2, 8.1.1, 8.3.2, 8.4.1, 8.4.2, 8.4.3, 8.4.4, 8.5.1, 8.5.3, 8.5.4, 8.5.6, 8.6.2, 8.6.5, 8.7.3

FOOD IS FUN! FOOD IS FUEL. FOOD IS FROM THE EARTH. FOOD IS FOR SHARING!

Gather Around the Table + Recipe for Mini Pizzas

BE A FOOD EXPLORER

WATCH: Food feeds the soul. To the extent that we all eat food, and we all have souls, food is the single great unifier across cultures. But what feeds your soul? Check out this TED Talk.

Click this link: <https://ideas.ted.com/what-americans-can-learn-from-other-food-cultures/>

WONDER: What is it about eating that brings us closer together? Has sharing food always been part of the human story?

Click this link: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/foodfeatures/joy-of-food/>

TRY: Games can bring a whole new sense of fun to dinner. Whether you feel you've hit a dinner rut, want a break from "serious conversation," or simply want to bring more joy to the table, games work wonders.

Click this link: <https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/4week-program/support/games-and-activities/>

MAKE:**Mini Pizzas**

This recipe makes eight mini pizzas or 5-6 servings, plenty for sharing. Make sure you have a grown-up to help you while cutting and cooking with heat.

Ingredients

- Choose your base: 4 English muffins, 8 pita breads, 4 naan breads cut in half, or 8 pieces of whole wheat toast
- 1 1/2 cup pasta sauce or pizza sauce
- 1 8oz block of mozzarella, jack or your favorite cheese (you can also use a bag of shredded cheese)
- Choose your toppings:
 - Any toppings you like, including:
 - 1 package sliced pepperoni
 - 1/2 lb ham, diced,
 - 1 chicken breast or 2 chicken thighs, cooked completely, diced or pulled,
 - 1/2 red onion,
 - 2 tomatoes,
 - 1 bell pepper (green, red, or yellow)
 - 1/2 can black or green olives,
 - 4 button or cremini mushrooms

Materials

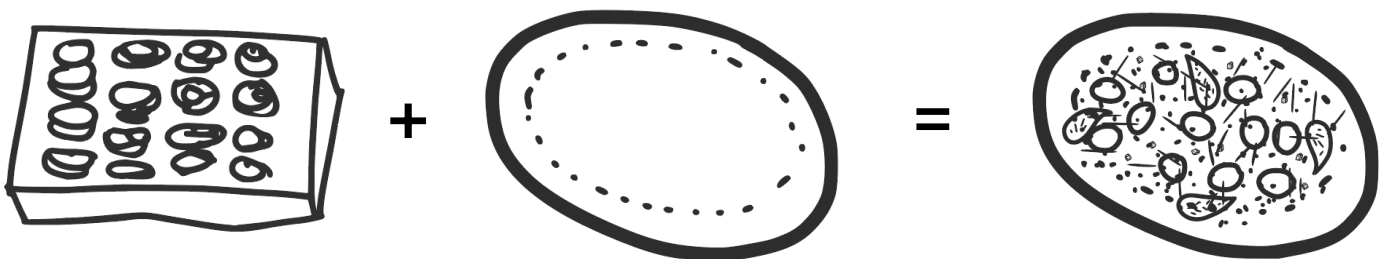
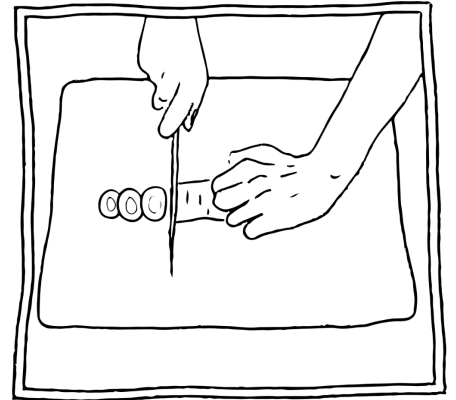
- Cutting board
- Knife
- Box grater
- Cookie sheet
- Spoon
- Oven or toaster oven*

* If using a toaster oven, only two mini pizzas can cook at a time.

FOOD IS FUN! FOOD IS FUEL. FOOD IS FROM THE EARTH. FOOD IS FOR SHARING!

Gather Around the Table + Recipe for Mini Pizzas**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Be careful. That is hot!
2. With adult supervision. Cut your toppings, either diced or sliced. Use your best knife skills!
3. Use a box grater to shred your cheese and place the shredded cheese onto a plate.
4. Get all of your ingredients ready by placing them each into a separate bowl or into piles on a plate.
5. Set out the sauce you are using, and place a spoon next to the container.

**Assembly:**

1. Place a pizza base in front of each person or take turns. Remember, food is for sharing!
2. Each person can make their own pizza or you can take orders and custom make it for them! Try to see if every person would like to try at least two vegetables on their pizza. Be sure to help your younger friends or family members!
3. First, put two spoonfuls of sauce onto the base and spread around.
4. Second, add the toppings each person enjoys.
5. Last, add 1/8 cup shredded cheese to each pizza.
6. Place the pizza bases onto a cookie sheet.
7. With the help of an adult, place the cookie sheet into the pre-heated oven. Bake the pizzas for 5-7 minutes, until the cheese has melted and is bubbly.
8. With the help of an adult, use a towel or oven mitts to remove the baking tray from the oven. Allow to cool for 4 minutes.
9. Slice the pizzas into 3 or 4 pieces. Put onto a plate and serve your friends or family.
10. Enjoy! Be sure to talk to everyone at the table during the meal!

FOOD IS FUN! FOOD IS FUEL. FOOD IS FROM THE EARTH. FOOD IS FOR SHARING!