

What's in My Salsa?

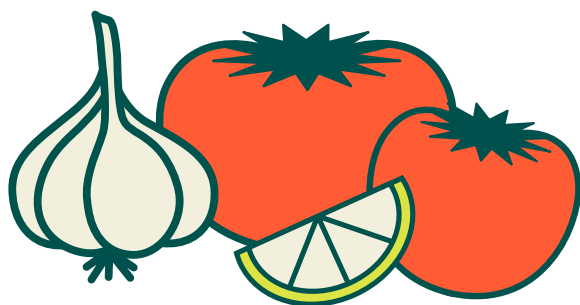
ESSENTIAL QUESTION: HOW DO PEOPLE MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will compare and contrast homemade and store-bought salsas, by reading nutrition labels and making their own salsa.

PREPARATION

- › Print and make copies of salsa nutrition label samples.
- › Display salsa recipe on board or poster paper.
- › Prepare trays of materials and ingredients for each group.



SALSA (PICO DE GALLO) RECIPE

- › 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- › 1/2 small onion, finely diced (about 1/3 cup)
- › 1/4 cup cilantro, finely chopped
- › 1 clove garlic, minced
- › Juice of 1/2 lime, or more to taste
- › Salt, to taste

MATERIALS

- Salsa ingredients
- Spoon for mixing
- Bag of tortilla chips
- Nutrition labels for one store-bought, shelf-stable salsa (the more processed, the better) and one store-bought, refrigerated salsa
- Salsa recipe
- Tray

A set of the following for each group of 4–6 students:

- Washed and portioned ingredients (see recipe)
- Cutting mats
- Knives
- Bowl of chips
- Bowl for salsa
- Container for compost

ACTION STEPS

1. Introduction: Ask students, *How often do you read the nutrition labels on your food? What does the nutrition label tell you? How does reading the label inform any choices that you make?* Explain that today students will get a chance to make their own salsa and compare it to store-bought salsa. **(5 min.)**

2. Comparing Ingredients on Nutrition Labels: Pass out the sample nutrition labels for your two different types of salsa. Have students read the labels in pairs and make observations. Provide guiding questions, such as *What differences can you spot between the ingredients lists? Which has more ingredients? Are there any ingredients in the list that surprise you or that you've never heard of?* Share observations as a class and explain, *One of these is shelf-stable, which means it's made to last on a shelf for a long time, and the other is refrigerated. Can you guess which is which?* Discuss how we consider the shelf-stable one more highly processed, but that the refrigerated ones sometimes have preservatives to make them last longer as well. Have students preview the salsa recipe you'll be making together. Ask them to compare the ingredients to those listed on the store-bought nutrition labels. **(10 min.)**

3. Wash Hands Break! (5 min.)

4. Knife Safety Demo (5 min.)

5. Making Salsa: Assign team leaders in each group, whose job will be to read the recipe and give roles to each person in the group. Pass out trays of ingredients and materials; (setting aside tortilla chips for now) and circulate, making sure students are being safe, and providing support where needed. Give students a two-minute warning and then have them clean up their spaces. **(15 min.)**

6. Tasting: Remind students that they're not going to eat until you say, then pass out bowls of chips. Remind students not to double-dip chips and to use a napkin rather than licking their fingers. Before having students taste, ask them to make observations of how the salsa looks and smells. **(10 min.)**

REFLECTION

Discuss the following questions with your group: **(5 min.)**

- *What words describe the taste of our homemade salsa? How about the texture? How is it different from store-bought salsas you've had in the past?*
- *What other ingredients would make our homemade salsa tasty?*
- *Do you think you're more or less likely to read nutrition labels after today's lesson? Why?*

ADAPTATIONS

Adding Writing: Have students draw Venn Diagrams and fill them in to show the similarities and differences between the shelf-stable salsa and the one they made.

Garden Setting: Have different groups make different salsas, depending on what's in your garden. You could have salsa that includes spicy peppers, a salsa that replaces tomatoes with sweet fruits like strawberries, a salsa made from tomatillos, or even green tomatoes that never had a chance to ripen!

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

CCSS.ELA.RI.5.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.