



# Smokey Mackerel Spread

## Farm to Fork

Part of the  
**TESCO**  
Eat Happy Project

**RECIPE LESSON PLAN** Age group: 4-5 years

Suggested text: The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister, North South Books, but if you don't have it or can't access a copy you will be able to apply the activity ideas to a text of your choice.

Activities here are provided for the specific areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design within the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, to provide a springboard for planning cross-curricular lessons appropriate for developing children's knowledge, skills and understanding.

## LITERACY

Introduce and share the suggested text

- The Smokey Mackerel Spread recipe comes from the fish, meat, eggs and beans section of the Eatwell plate and, of course, the relevant ingredient is the mackerel.
- Check that the children know that mackerel is a type of fish.
- Look at a picture of a mackerel (or a real one if you can). The children will see that it is a pretty silvery fish with distinctive markings.
- Tell the children that you are going to tell a story about a fish that is even prettier than the mackerel, but that it is not a real fish.
- Show the children the front cover of the book, and ask them if they can suggest why the story is called The Rainbow Fish. Establish that the children understand what fish's scales are. Ask if any of the children already know this story and, if so, invite them to share their memories of it.
- Share the suggested text with the children.
- After the reading ask the children such questions as these:
  - Where did the rainbow fish live? [a long way out in the deep blue sea]
  - What did the little blue fish want? [one of the rainbow fish's shiny scales]
  - How did the rainbow fish react to the little blue fish? [he was angry and said 'get away from me']
  - Why didn't the other fish want to play with him? [because he had upset the little blue fish]
  - Whom did the rainbow fish ask for help? [the starfish and then the octopus]
  - What did the octopus advise him to do? [give a shiny scale to each of the other fish]
  - How did the rainbow fish feel at the end and why? [very happy because he had made friends and found that sharing felt good]

Talk about the story issues.

- Ask the children if they can remember a time when they shared something. If they do, ask how that made the other person feel.
- Ask the children if they understand what is meant by a 'prized possession'.

- If possible, show the children a prized possession of your own.
- Ask the children to talk in pairs about some of their most prized possessions.
- As a listening activity, invite the children to feed back and tell the class or group not what their prized possession was, but about what their partner said. This really encourages the children to listen to their partners.
- Invite the children to give a 'shiny scale' to someone and say why they deserve it.

## Writing Opportunities

- Ask the children to write a letter to the rainbow fish.
  - Talk about what message or question they would send and why.
  - Show the children the important rules about beginning and ending a letter.
- Write a shared story about another rainbow animal to parallel the story shape and language structures – e.g. the rainbow bird.
- Imagine that the rainbow fish's scales are magical. What might he be able to do? Ask the children to write their ideas on fish-scale coloured bits of paper so that these can be collated to form a rainbow fish display.

## Word Activities

- The author says that the rainbow fish's scales 'shimmer'.
  - It's a beautiful word. Ask the children what else shimmers – e.g. some fabrics, raindrops on the pavement, sunlight through trees.
  - Ask the children to come up with some other 'wow' words and display them round a picture of the rainbow fish to develop their vocabulary.
- A lovely expression in the story is 'happy as a splash'.
  - Ask the children to think of some other 'happy as a...' expressions and display them on shiny scales.
- Play 'Fishing for Phonics' games in small groups.
  - Make some fishing rods (they may be used for other games too).
  - Attach a small magnet to the end of the string and put a paper clip on whatever you would like to pick up.
  - Play with the phonic sounds you are working on. Ask the children to 'fish' for letters or words. If they can say the sound that the letter represents or read the word by blending, they keep it. If they can't, someone else can try for a bonus point.

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## MATHEMATICS

- Sing the counting rhymes, for example:
 

1, 2, 3, 4, 5  
Once I caught a fish alive.  
6, 7, 8, 9, 10  
Then I let it go again.  
Why did you let it go?  
Because it bit my finger so.  
Which finger did it bite?  
This little finger on my right!

## Counting and Number Recognition

- Make a very simple track with no numbers.
  - Draw a fish shape in some of the spaces.
  - The children throw a dice to move along the track. If they land on a space with a fish, they have a turn at fishing a number card out of a bag.
  - Whatever the number on the card, the player picks up that many rainbow-fish scales (made from shiny card).
  - When the children reach the end of the track, they count their shiny scales.
  - The player with the most is the winner.

- Give the children some fish shapes and some shiny scales. Let them share the scales between the fish however they like. Talk with the children about how they are sharing, encouraging mathematical language. Ask questions such as these. In how many different ways can four shiny scales be shared between two fish?
- Draw some fish on a sheet with a number next to each. The children stick or draw the correct number of shiny scales on the fish.
- If you have magnetic fishing rods, use them to fish for numbers. They may be used for a number of skill reinforcement activities:
  - number recognition
  - simple addition: two children fish a number out each and add them together
  - identifying odd and even numbers
  - talking about numbers: bigger than, smaller than etc.
- Give the children a sheet of paper with several rows of small fish on it.
  - Demonstrate how to make a repeating pattern with two colours.
  - Ask the children to create their own repeating patterns.
  - Practise making repeating patterns using other tactile equipment such as threading strings and peg board.

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## UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

### Healthy Eating

- If you have made or plan to make Smokey Mackerel Spread, show the children the Eatwell plate and tell them that this recipe fits into the meat, fish, eggs and beans section, which is coloured pink.
- If the children have not seen it before, explain that the Eatwell plate shows the sorts of food we need to eat to keep our bodies healthy.
- Explain that fish is very good for helping bodies to grow and repair, and that mackerel has healthy oils that are especially good for the heart.
- Ask the children to point to where their heart is and also get them to try to feel their own pulse (use two fingers – index and middle – and press lightly on the underside of the wrist just below the base of the thumb).
- Explain that a pulse lets us know the speed of a heartbeat.
- Prepare some pictures of foods that fit into the meat, fish, eggs and beans section of the Eatwell plate, a few that do not and a large 'plate'.
  - Put the pictures in a bag and ask the children – one at a time – to pull one out and decide whether or not it should go on the plate.
  - Stick the appropriate pictures on the plate and put the others to one side.

### Investigating Fish

- If possible, show the children a real whole mackerel (as suggested above).
- Ask the children to look closely at the fish and describe it.
- Talk about the different parts of the fish: tail, fins, eyes, gills, scales.
- Encourage the children to take photographs of the fish and/or to record their descriptions using simple handheld recording devices.
- Ask the children to draw the fish and add simple labels.

### Chinese New Year

- Together find out about Chinese New Year; search online and if possible watch videos to show the children the nature of the celebration.
  - Obviously check whether any children celebrate it and if so invite them if appropriate to share some of their experiences.
- Tell the children that the fish is an important part of the Chinese New Year celebrations. The fish is considered to be a lucky New Year symbol and it is also eaten on the day.
- Share any stories you can find about Chinese New Year.
- Look for images of the Chinese character associated with the fish. It means good fortune, happiness and good luck.
- You may wish to identify which animal of the Chinese New Year is associated with the children's birth year.

## Map Making

- Make a picture of an underwater map showing the places where the rainbow fish goes (deep in the sea with other fish, on his own, talking to a starfish, in a cave with an octopus etc.).
  - Ask the children to make a map/sequence of places, either on paper or perhaps constructed in a small world area, where they go in a typical single day.
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## EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

- Ask the children to design their own rainbow fish on a fish template. Provide different materials for them to cut and stick, including some sparkles.
  - The rainbow fish is 'every shade of blue, green and purple'. Allow the children to make different shades of these colours using different types of materials including paints, crayons and chalks.
    - Ask how they can make the shade lighter. [by adding white]
    - Cut out scale shapes from the children's colours and put them together to make a large rainbow fish of all different shades.
  - Create a rainbow fish using filter paper.
    - Use marker pens / felt tips and scribble different colours on to the filter paper. It does not have to be done at all neatly!
    - Spray the filter paper with some water. The colours will mingle.
    - Allow these to dry and then cut out a fish shape. Add details such as a googly eye and some sparkly scales made from silver or shiny paper.
  - Create beautiful pictures of the rainbow fish or an underwater scene using wax batik.
    - You will need: 1 piece of cotton per child, paper, cold wax for batiks, paintbrushes and batik inks.
    - Tape a piece of white cotton (whatever size you like; A4 works well) with a piece of paper underneath it on to a table. (The paper prevents the ink from getting on to the table when the children are painting with it.)
    - Ask the children to design their picture on a piece of paper first to copy on to the cotton. Bolder designs are better as small details are more difficult to manage when applying the wax. (A rainbow fish is ideal.)
    - When the children are happy with their design, ask them to draw it lightly on the cotton. (This is easier if the cotton is stretched out and taped down.)
    - Ask the children to paint the cold wax over the pencil outlines of their design with a paintbrush.
    - Allow these to dry and iron over them.
    - Give the children two or four different-coloured inks.
    - Ask them to paint the ink within the wax outlines. (Explain that It doesn't matter if they get ink on the outlines.) The ink can be watered down, or the children can lighten the ink by painting on top of it with water. The colours may run into each other, also creating a watery effect.
    - The wax resists the ink and creates a white outline that looks very effective and produces a special and lasting piece of artwork.
  - Hang the various rainbow fish that the children have made to from wire hangers to create fish mobiles or a gallery of beautiful artwork.
    - Consider inviting an audience in to appreciate the gallery and to leave comments in a book which can be shared later.
  - Create an underwater 3D scene in a box.
  - Create an under-sea world role-play area.
  - Learn the traditional English folk song 'When the Boat comes In' and/or any other song or rhyme that is connected with this theme.
    - Learn the songs with the children and enjoy rehearsing them.
    - Decide if the learning is for the class only or whether they will perform it for others.
    - Revisit what is important about performance, including speaking clearly, looking up and out and smiling.
    - Ask the children if actions or sound effects are required to enhance the performance.
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