



Streamlined Literacy Adventure:

A Recipe for Fun

Reading, Exploring, and Writing Recipes

Aventura de alfabetización: Recetas - ¡Cocinando Con Palabras

Age Range: K + up

Group Size: flexible

Time Range: 45-90 min



Adventure Goals

Our goal in every adventure is for children to have fun with books and reading! Additional participant goals for this literacy adventure:

- Learn about the parts of a recipe
- Explore cookbooks, which are a type of “how-to” nonfiction book
- Find some interesting example cookbooks to use as “mentor texts” (to help spark ideas for writing their own how-to recipes)
- Practice free writing by creating a set of directions (including supplies or ingredients) for a recipe or activity

**Note: [Variations](#) of this adventure include a version well suited to an older group, in which participants explore and create a “Recipe for a Fun Day.”*



Adventure Outline

Making up recipes provides opportunities to practice free writing and to use writing in any language as a tool to become familiar with new concepts. This adventure includes:

1. **Hook:** What Are Recipes? Learn about the main parts of a recipe, including ingredients and steps
2. **Book Browsing Time:** Browse cookbooks and select some to read and/or take home
3. **Recipe Read-Aloud:** Read a recipe together; discuss its ingredients, and steps or directions

4. **Activity:** Making our own recipes
 - Writing/drawing our own recipes
 - Sharing recipes and titling our cookbook
5. **Wrap Up:** Review recipe parts and take home recipes, recipe templates, and/or cookbooks



TIP: See [Variations](#) for optional activities, including making the recipe, and creating “Recipes for a Fun Day” (good for an older group).



Supplies

- Enough children’s (or all-ages) cookbooks for all participants to have browsing choices that match their reading levels, interests, and language needs.
- A short, interesting recipe to read aloud. (See [Additional Resources](#) for a sample recipe.)
- Large flipchart or whiteboard for the leader to write on, and appropriate markers.
- Drawing and writing supplies: pencils, pens, markers, crayons, etc.
- Blank recipe templates: enough copies for all participants to use one during the adventure and to take one home. (Templates can be found in [Additional Resources](#)).



Considerations for Planning

- Will you print the recipe templates on cardstock or regular paper?
- Where in your space will participants write their recipes?
- How will supplies be distributed? (E.g. Waiting on prepared tables? Handed out mid-activity?)
- Will participants work on recipes individually, or in small groups? (See [Variations](#) for small group suggestions.)
- Will you have example cookbooks at work stations, and save time for more Book Browsing at the end? Or make time for full Book Browsing before the activity?



ICON KEY



KEY ELEMENT



TIP



KEY STRATEGY

Adventure Plan

1. Hook/Getting Started: Recipes! What Are They? (5-15 min)

Say Something like, *My dad makes the most delicious blueberry chocolate chip pancakes. I should ask him for the recipe.*



TIP: For extension activities, such as a short discussion of Favorite Childhood Foods, see [Variations](#).

“Recipe” in Spanish = *una receta/la receta*

“Ingredients” in Spanish = *los ingredientes*

“Cookies” in Spanish = *galletas*

“Directions” (for a recipe) in Spanish = *instrucciones* or *preparación*

“Cookbook” in Spanish = *libro de cocina* or *libro de recetas*

Using the following prompts, lead a short discussion about what a recipe is.

Say: *What is a **recipe**?*

Write the group’s ideas on the whiteboard or flipchart. Make sure to include these elements:

- a list of ingredients to make something
- steps or directions to help us make it
- often written down

Say: *If I wanted to make cookies, what might be some of the ingredients I would need to include in a cookie **recipe**? **Ingredients** are the things you need to put together to make your **recipe**.*

Help the group brainstorm suggestions such as: Sugar, butter, eggs, flour, baking soda, salt, chocolate chips, etc.

*What might some of the steps or directions for my cookie **recipe** be?*

Help the group brainstorm suggestions such as: Preheat the oven; mix the ingredients together; form the dough into balls; place the balls on a greased cookie sheet; put the cookie sheet in the oven to bake; etc.

*Is it important to do the **steps** in a certain order? (Often, yes.)*



2. Book Browsing Time -- Cookbooks & Recipes (5-10 min)

Caregiver Literacy Message: Kids read more and develop lifelong reading habits and strategies when they have the chance to choose their own books.



TIP: “Mentor texts” help beginning writers by providing examples.

Book Browsing: Browsing Cookbooks for Intriguing Recipes

Say: *Today we’re going to talk some more about **recipes**, and try making some creative **recipes** of our own. To get some ideas, let’s take a few minutes to look through some books with **recipes** in them. What kind of books have **recipes** in them? Cookbooks!*



TIP: See [Variations](#) for talking points about reading recipes online.

Let’s have a cookbook treasure hunt. Take some time to look through these books for a recipe that looks good to you, looking at its words or pictures or both. Maybe it’s something you might want to taste, or have someone help you make.

Everyone find at least one cookbook you think looks interesting. Bring your choices back to your spot.

Open Exploration

Move around the room to help participants find books they find interesting and readable. Encourage participants to:

- Try out multiple books to figure out a book that will work for them.
- Read a little bit, silently or with a partner.
- Pick a book or two to borrow!



TIP: Got more time? Let participants pair up to share what they’ve found.

Facilitator note: Another option is to move Book Browsing to the end, and set out a few cookbooks at work stations so participants can look at recipe examples as they do the activity.



3. Read-Aloud -- Reading a Recipe (5-10 min)



TIP: The example in this activity plan is making trail mix. Other fun, simple recipes would work too. A sample recipe for Ice Cream in a Bag and other recipe resources are included in the [Additional Resources](#).

Before Reading

Say: *I hope everyone was able to find a **recipe** that looked interesting to you. I did! I'll share it with you.*

Caregiver Literacy Message: Reading labels, recipes, instructions, and other informational text helps kids develop necessary skills for being a self-sufficient adult. This kind of reading is just as important as reading books!

While Reading Read aloud a short, interesting recipe. Make sure to point out the recipe's title, ingredients, steps or directions, and the resulting dish. (See [Additional Resources](#) for recipe resources and suggestions of picture books with recipes.)

"Recipe name" (or title) in Spanish = *el título de la receta*

After Reading

Say:

1. *What was the name of this **recipe**?*
2. *What **ingredients** did the recipe say I would need?*
3. *What **directions** or **steps** did the recipe tell me to do?*



TIP: Paraphrase participant responses to increase the richness and accuracy of the language. (E.g. "The recipe would be gooder with more." "Okay, so you're suggesting the recipe would be better if we added more ingredients.")



TIP: Welcome and invite responses in any language.

Got more time? Say:

- *Why did the recipe sound good to you?*
- *Do you think the recipe should have included any other ingredients? What would you suggest?*
- *Were the steps clear? Do you think you could follow these directions to make this recipe?*

Transition

Recipe Summary

Say: *So, a recipe usually has:*

- a name or title;
- Some ingredients;
- Some steps or directions;
- And when you put it all together, you wind up making something.

*If you were making a **recipe** for trail mix, what **ingredients** would your **recipe** include? For today's adventure, we will each think of a **recipe** for trail mix, Then we'll write our **recipe** down, using words or pictures or both, in [any languages we like](#), so that someone else could follow our **recipe** to make it too.*

4a. Activity: Creating Our Own Recipes (20-30 min)

After a mini-brainstorm to help the group think of example ingredients and directions, participants write and/or draw their own **recipes**.



TIP: Short on time? Model writing up a few possibilities and skip asking for group input; or ask the group for ideas for ingredients but not for directions.



TIP: Got more time? Ask participants to brainstorm ingredients with a partner or group.



TIP: Being inclusive of all languages supports biliteracy.



TIP: A proven way to develop comprehension strategies is through the gradual release of responsibility: I do, we do, you do!

Mini-brainstorm (5 min)

Write participant suggestions on the board or paper.



TIP: Model writing in a recipe format by using the headings “Recipe Name,” “Ingredients,” and “Steps” or “Directions.” Make sure participants can see these guide words written up somewhere in languages they read.

Ingredients

Say: *If I were thinking of ingredients for trail mix, I might include: [list examples such as: Dried cranberries, M&Ms, almonds, gummi worms, etc.] Let’s think of some **ingredients** you might include in a **recipe** for trail mix. What do you like to eat? What gives you energy? What would be yummy mixed together?*

Write suggestions up for everyone to see.

These are ideas to get us started. You might think of something else.

Directions

Say: *If I were writing directions for my Trail Mix **recipe**, I might start by saying “Find a big mixing bowl” or “Wash your hands.” What are some directions you might suggest for a Trail Mix **recipe**? [Write a few of these up.]*

Title

Say: *I might call my recipe “Super Delicious Crunch Munch,” or “Outside On-the-Go Snackety Snack.” You will decide what to call your recipe.*

Writing the Recipe

Say: *It’s your turn to write or draw a **recipe**! What **ingredients** would you include in a really yummy trail mix? What **steps** or **directions** would you give? What will you call your **recipe**?*

Hand out blank [recipe templates](#).

Say: Using your *recipe* paper, write down a **recipe** with a few different **ingredients**. You can write the **ingredients** or draw pictures, or both; it's up to you!

Got more time? Say: You can work alone or with another person. Any language or combination of languages is fine. Make sure to include **directions**. Give your **recipe** a title. You can look at your cookbook(s) for ideas of what a **recipe** looks like, too. Don't worry about spelling all of the words correctly; this is a time to let your imagination loose and get creative! Just focus on creating your **recipe**.

Caregiver Literacy Message: Writing is powerful! It's exciting when we see our ideas written down so others can understand them -- and especially powerful when other people follow our directions! A recipe is a great example. You can help your child find and write the words to express themselves and explore that power of communication.

Offer encouragement and help with writing as needed.

Let the group know when there are 5 minutes left in the writing and/or drawing time.



TIP: If some participants finish early, you could suggest they draw illustrations for their recipe. See Variations for more ideas.

4b. Activity Conclusion: Sharing Our Recipes and Titling Our Cookbook (5-10 min)



TIP: For extension activities (such as talking about Family Favorites), see [Variations](#).

Sharing Our Recipes

Say: *Wow, we've got a whole room full of creative recipes.*

Ask for volunteers to share some of their recipes with group.



TIP: Short on time? Just share recipe titles, or have participants share in pairs or groups.



TIP: Got more time? Share some ingredients and directions too. Encourage participants to point out the different parts of their recipes. Or, lay out recipes for the group to walk around and read.

Giving Our Cookbook a Title

Say: *What a lot of great trail mix recipes. You know what, I think we've got a whole cookbook! What should the title of our cookbook be?*

Write up suggestions on the whiteboard or flipchart and help the group make a decision about the title.



TIP: Short on time? Say: *I'd say we've got a whole Cookbook of Recipes for Trail Mix Deluxe!*

5. Wrap-Up: Review and Take Home

Say: *Today we have blank **recipe** cards for you to take home if you'd like to create some more **recipes**. Or maybe you'd like your friends or family to join you in creating some **recipes** together! You can help them learn more about **recipes** by teaching them the usual parts of a **recipe**. Do you remember what they are?*



TIP: Got more time? Share cookbook choices. See [Variations](#).

Take Home:

- The recipe they created today
- Blank recipe templates
- Cookbooks to borrow



TIP: Make copies of the recipes to display in a binder in your programming location so that others can enjoy the group cookbook.



I hope everybody had fun today learning about cookbooks and coming up with our own interesting how-to recipes. Now, at the end of an adventure, I like to ask these three very important questions! I'll give you a hint: the answer to these questions is always... ¡Que sí! Or Yes!

1. Are we happy to help you find good books to read? (Yes!)
¿Nos gusta ayudarte a encontrar buenos libros para leer? (¡Que sí!)
2. Do we love to talk about books with you? (Yes!)
¿Nos gusta conversar sobre los libros contigo? (¡Que sí!)
3. Is all reading good reading? (Yes!)
¿Toda lectura es buena lectura? (¡Que sí!)



Adventure Variations and Extended Learning

Please see [A Recipe for Fun: Variations and Extended Learning](#) for a wide variety of research-supported tips for engaging participants of various ages, cultures, languages and abilities.

Tips include: Ways to shorten or extend the program; ways to work with pairs and with groups of different sizes, ages, and language mixes; additional activities; discussion ideas and sentence prompts; DIY stations and other passive program ideas; vocabulary extension activities; what to do if participants finish early; ideas for K-3 storytimes; and suggestions for family engagement.

For a more detailed adventure plan, please see [A Recipe for Fun: The Extended Version](#), which includes a complete script and more supporting information.



Sample Recipe

Recipe for Ice Cream In a Bag

Receta para hacer helado en una bolsa ziplock

Ingredients:

- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla, peppermint or other flavoring
- 1-3 Tablespoons sugar
- any mix-ins or flavors you'd like (chocolate syrup, M&M's, etc.)

Other Things You'll Need:

- Small (sandwich size) ziplock baggie
- Large (1-gallon size) ziplock bag
- Ice
- Rock salt
- Measuring spoons
- Liquid cup measure
- Bowl and spoon or cup and straw
- Masking tape (optional)
- Gloves (optional)
- A buddy

Directions (How to Make the Ice Cream):

Ask your buddy to hold open the small ziplock baggie. Measure out one cup of milk and pour it into the bag. Measure and add 1 teaspoon vanilla and 1-3 tablespoons sugar. (You can add your mix-ins now, but they may change the color of your ice cream; I like to add mine at the end.) Seal this bag very carefully. After zipping the bag closed, you can make sure it's sealed tightly by folding masking tape over the top. (You can also double-bag it to prevent punctures.) Set the small baggie aside.

Ask your buddy to hold open the large ziplock bag. Fill this bag about 1/3 full of ice. Pour in about a quarter cup of rock salt.

Drop the small (sealed!) baggie into the bigger bag of ice. Seal this bag carefully too, so you don't splash yourself with salty ice-melt.

Shake shake shake the bag for about 10-15 minutes (you can also roll it on the surface of a table or toss it back and forth - carefully over soft grass - with a friend), until the ice cream has attained the consistency you like. Add mix-ins. Now eat it! You can eat it right out of the bag, or transfer it to a bowl or cup. Enjoy!

-Deborah Gitlitz



Vocabulary

Spanish Vocabulary

“Picture book” = *libro de cuentos ilustrado*

“Recipe” = *una receta/la receta*

“Ingredients” = *los ingredientes*

“Directions [for a recipe]” = *las instrucciones or la preparación*

“Recipe name” = *el título de la receta*

“Metaphor” = *Una/la metáfora*

“A disaster” = *un desastre*

Introducing new vocabulary offers many opportunities for extension activities. See [Variations and Extended Learning](#) for a few activity options when introducing vocabulary.

Additional Resources



Recipe templates

- [Fostering Readers Recipe Template](#)
- Recipe template from ReadWriteThink.org:
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/p-as_docs/RecipeCard.pdf
- Recipe template from Cincinnati Engineering Enhanced Math and Science Program:
https://ceas.uc.edu/content/dam/ceas/documents/CEEMS/instructionalunits/Dress_it_up_Garner/4.2.04.H%20Recipe%20Card%20Template.png



Recipe Resources

- Ask at your library for help finding children’s and family cookbooks
- Cooking with Kids: <http://cookingwithkids.org/> “Cooking with Kids educates and empowers children and families to make healthy food choices through hands-on learning with fresh, affordable foods.”
- [Spanish/English pictorial recipe sets](#). The Oregon State University (OSU)’s Extension Service has created several sets of print-ready, illustrated, culturally appropriate recipes in Spanish and English. Designed for limited-literacy, limited-income audiences.
- [Food Hero](#): simple, healthy, kid-friendly recipes in [Spanish](#) and [English](#) produced by OSU’s Extension Service.
- San Diego Zoo Kids page; search for “recipes”: <http://kids.sandiegozoo.org/index.php/activities>
- 100+ Easy Kid Friendly Recipes from Delish.com: <https://www.delish.com/easy-kid-recipes/>



Storytime Suggestions: Picture Books With Recipes

[Apple Cake: A Recipe for Love](#) by Julie Paschkis, 2012

[Arroz con leche: un poema para cocinar / Rice Pudding: A Cooking Poem](#) by Jorge Argueta, 2010

[Arturo and the Bienvenido Feast](#), by Anne Broyles, 2017

[Bee-Bim Bop!](#) by Linda Sue Park, 2005
[The Cazuela that the Farm Maiden Stirred](#) by Samantha R. Vamos, 2011
[Cosechando amigos / Harvesting Friends](#) by Kathleen Contreras, 2018
[Dumpling Dreams: How Joyce Chen Brought the Dumpling From Beijing to Cambridge](#)
by Carrie Clickard, 2017
[Gazpacho for Nacho](#) by Tracey Kyle, 2014
[Growing Vegetable Soup](#) by Lois Ehlert, 1987
[Guacamole: un poema para cocinar / Guacamole: A Cooking Poem](#) by Jorge Argueta,
2012
[Las Empanadas Que Hacía la Abuela / The Empanadas that Abuela Made](#) by Diana
Gonzalez Bertrand, 2003
[Panqueques Panqueques! / Pancakes Pancakes!](#) by Eric Carle, 2017
[Peeny Butter Fudge](#) by Toni Morrison, 2009
[The Red Hen](#) by Rebecca Emberley, 2010
[Salsa: un poema para cocinar / Salsa: A Cooking Poem](#) by Jorge Argueta, 2015
[Sopa de frijoles: un poema para cocinar / Bean Soup: A Cooking Poem](#) by Jorge
Argueta, 2017
[Tamalitos: un poema para cocinar / Tamalitos: a Cooking Poem](#) by Jorge Argueta, 2013
[Wild Boars Cook](#) by Meg Rosoff, 2008

Booklist: [Picture Books with Recipes](#) (from Olathe Public Library)

Booklist: [This Book Includes a Recipe](#) (from LiztheLibrarian, Palo Alto City Library)



TIP: The “Fun Day” activity variation includes reading aloud any short book in which characters have a fun day. See Variations for suggestions of engaging “fun day” picture books

Supporting Research

- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 4:** Gradual release of responsibility is the most effective way to foster comprehension
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing: Key Finding 5:** Access, choice, and time reading and discussing engaging text increase reading achievement.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 6:** Interactive read alouds increase reading engagement, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 7:** Ensuring children are immersed in language and reading aloud helps develop reading readiness.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 13:** Using the Language Experience Approach (LEA) allows for shared and meaningful experiences that connect to print.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 15:** Embracing the multilingual perspective is essential for literacy learning (vs. the monolingual perspective).
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 17:** Translanguaging acknowledges and utilizes the bilingual child’s complex language repertoire as a resource.
- **Best Practices in Reading and Writing Key Finding 18:** To acquire language children need to be immersed in meaningful and authentic language opportunities.
- **Library and Afterschool Program Models Key Finding 2:** Centering books & reading in programming improves children’s attitudes toward reading and books.
- **Library and Afterschool Program Models Key Finding 10:** Encouraging joint media engagement between children, caregivers and educators increases literacy benefits of digital tools.
- **Library Program Models Key Finding 12:** Oral storytelling programs help children develop literacy skills and honor cultures with strong oral storytelling traditions.
- **Library and Afterschool Program Models Key Finding 17:** Since writing is key to reading/literacy, libraries should offer playful creative writing programming for K-3 kids.
- **Family Outreach and Engagement Key Finding 2:** [Elevating family perspectives is essential to family engagement.](#)
- **Equity Key Finding 2:** The library is well-positioned to confer public legitimacy on bilingualism/biliteracy (and translanguaging).
- **Equity Key Finding 4:** [Opportunities to share experiences and perspectives can help immigrants and refugees feel more welcome.](#)
- **Equity Key Finding 7:** Latino families from a range of backgrounds have a preference for activities that build and maintain cohesion within the family.

Credits



Creative Commons License

Fostering Readers by [Deborah Gitlitz, Jen Burkart, Kari Kunst, Kelli Scardina, NPC Research, OregonASK, and Washington County Cooperative Library Services](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](#).



Fostering Readers is supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the State Library of Oregon.