

# Nifty Idea: Food & Spirit

## **Activities**

👉 Tell the children we're having a snack today! Give each child in the group *one* of the following: peanut butter, jelly, a knife, a plate, a cup, milk, a loaf of bread (subtract the dishes and/or milk for small classes). It's okay if someone has nothing. Tell them "Enjoy!" They may or may not need adult support to decide to share the food and make a snack for each person. Reflect with them on the choices they made and the feelings they experienced when the "snack" was distributed.

**or**

👉 Make Stone Soup

**or**

👉 Before class, draw a picture or cut out from a magazine a picture of two meals: a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a hamburger. Also, on two large pieces of paper, make two charts, each with two columns. Label one column "Resources" or "Ingredients" and the other "Labor" or "Work".

During class, place the "meals" on the table. Then ask the children to list the ingredients or resources that are in the PBJ. Write down all of their responses in the first column of the chart. Then ask them to list how much labor went into making the meal available. Include the labor in preparing the meal and all the people who farmed, baked, and transported ingredients. You may end up adding resources at this point, such as fuel for the trucks hauling the ingredients around. You may include Nature/God's work of creating seeds, rain, sun, soil, etc. Do the same for the hamburger. Note that the cows need a *lot* of grain (and a lot of land to live on) to sustain them through adulthood.

Compare the difference in the amount of resources used between the two meals.

**and/or**

👉 Write down all the bits of sitting down to a meal together for which one may be thankful. Use these ideas to write a blessing. Write out a copy of the blessing for each child to take home.

## **Wrap-up**

👉 Look again at your plate of "cookies." Is there anything to add about what is important to us or to Love when we think about eating?

👉 Share a simple snack together! Perhaps encourage the children to eat each bite mindfully/thankfully.

### A note on language

I used the name Love for the Divine in this case for a very specific reason. My experience teaches me that people lose some of what they can sense the power/presence of God is by conceiving God as being person-like. In the scenario of imagining being served dinner by this Power, I want to avoid the mental picture of God as a man, probably Caucasian, probably descending from a cloud. That picture diminishes what the Power is and what It desires for and from us to live within It.

# Nifty Ideas *for First Day Schools*

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Children's Religious Education

October, November and December offer one celebration after another, all featuring feasts and special foods. It is a wonderful time of abundance!

This month's *Nifty Idea* draws awareness to the foods we eat, the community with which we eat it, and the relationship of food and Spirit.

For more lessons on this topic, check out Food for Body and Spirit by the Children and Young People at Yearly Meeting Working Group. It is available at QuakerBooks of FGC and the PYM library .

A description of the curriculum can be found at :

[www.pym.org/education/capsules/12.htm](http://www.pym.org/education/capsules/12.htm).

## Food & Spirit

### **Objective:**

To explore how the choices we make about our food affect our relationships with the earth, each other and with God.

### **Introduction**

- ✎ Ask the children what food and food-related traditions they are looking forward to in the coming months. Write down each thing they say on a cut out shape of a cookie and place it on a real plate.
- ✎ Ask the children "If Love (*or God*) were serving these meals, what would Love (*God*) want friends at the table to have and to feel. Write the responses on the backs of the "cookies." (see "Note on language" on back)
- ✎ Tell the children that in FDS today we are going to explore more about what is important about food and eating together.

### **Read a Story**

- ✎ The Little Red Hen tells the story of a hen making bread entirely from scratch. No one wants to help bake, but they all want to help eat. It describes all of the resources that go into a simple food that we eat including ingredients and labor.

**or**

- ✎ Stone Soup is a story about a poor village where no one has enough ingredients to make a full meal. A clever vagrant claims he can make soup out of a stone he has and he gets each villager to add a vegetable. They end up with vegetable soup that everyone can share.

**or**

- ✎ Bible stories about people being fed include:
  - \* Abraham shares his food with God (Genesis 18:1-8)
  - \* The Lord provides the Israelites with bread from heaven during the exodus (Exodus 16:4-36)
  - \* Ruth and Boaz gather grain (Ruth 2)
  - \* Jesus provides food for the multitudes (Luke 9:10-17; also found in Matthew, Mark, and John)
  - \* The last supper (Matthew 26:17-29)
  - \* Jesus picks Zacchaeus' home to visit for a meal (Luke 19:1-10)

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