

**NE LESSON CODE CH-000-16**  
**Let's Read! *Growing Vegetable Soup***  
**Written and Illustrated by Lois Ehlert**

**OBJECTIVES**

- ❖ Children will be able to learn that vegetables come from plants.
- ❖ Children will be able to identify a vegetable they can eat at home.

**MATERIALS**

**Book:** *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert. Voyager Books, Harcourt, Inc., San Diego, CA, copyright, 1987. ISBN 0-15-232580-8. \$6 in paperback.

- ❖ One paper bowl or piece of paper for each child ( for optional activity)
- ❖ Crayons or colored markers ( for optional activity)
- ❖ One of each vegetable in the book ( for optional activity)

For optional tasting: Hand sanitizer; a knife, spoon or fork; paper plates or bowls; and napkins. Cut the vegetables you select for the children to taste. Put each cut vegetable into a separate paper bowl or plate. Use the spoon or fork to place them on napkins for serving to each child. The children can clean their hands with the hand sanitizer before eating.

**HANDOUTS**

- ❖ *Let's Read at Home: Growing Vegetable Soup* attached; make copies as needed.

**Note about New Lesson Survey Forms:**

The first few times a new lesson is presented, staff and participants need to complete the survey forms attached at the end of this lesson. Please note that the *Staff Survey Form* is different from the *Participant Survey Form*. Only 10 - 20 participant surveys need to be completed. Please mail completed new lesson surveys to:

Delores Preece  
Texas Department of Health  
Bureau of Nutrition Services  
1100 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78756

## TEACHING TIPS

Children enjoy spending time looking at the details of each picture in a book. The pictures also add to their understanding of the story. When children act out a story as it is read, it helps children remember the book and makes reading fun. You can combine the two in this lesson. You can read the book and talk about the details of the pictures. To do both at the same time, take a break periodically to ask the children to pretend to do what the story describes. Alternatively, if you have time, you can read the entire book and look at the pictures with the children. Then read the book a second time and let the children act it out as you read.

## LESSON ACTIVITIES

Tell the children the name of the book and its author/illustrator. Talk about the cover of the book. Ask them questions such as:

- ❖ **What is shown in the picture on the cover of the book?**
- ❖ **Does anyone here eat vegetable soup?**
- ❖ **Have you ever grown vegetable soup?**
- ❖ **Where does your vegetable soup come from?**
- ❖ **How do you think that you would grow vegetable soup?**

2. Here are possible questions to ask the children as you read the book with them. You may find that your discussion with the children in your class leads to questions that are not listed here. That is fine. The questions below are listed in the order that they might come up in the book. You do not have to ask every question, but the question with the \* is part of the lesson evaluation and must be asked during the class.

- ❖ **What do you see in the picture?**
- ❖ **What are the tools shown on this page?**
- ❖ **What do you do with them?**

Possible answers can include:

- ❖ Working in the garden.
- ❖ Rakes are good for smoothing the soil.
- ❖ Shovels are good for digging holes, and hoes are good for getting rid of weeds or for making an indented line in the soil to plant seeds.
  
- ❖ **Do you ever get seeds in a package at your house? Where else do you find seeds?** ( In the foods they eat, like tomatoes or apples.)
- ❖ **What is the hole in the picture for?** (Planting a seed.)
- ❖ **Why would someone wear gloves in the yard?** ( To keep hands clean.)
- ❖ **What else do seeds need besides being put in the hole to grow?** (Being covered with dirt, being watered or growing in sunlight.)
- ❖ **What is a sprout? How are they different from seeds? Where do they come from?**

- ❖ **Do you need the same things that seeds or plants do to grow? What do you need?**
- ❖ **Do you like to eat the things they are planting?**
- ❖ **Can you guess why someone would label the seeds that they planted?**
- ❖ **Do all the plants look alike? What makes them look different?**
- ❖ **What are the different colored stripes on the page?** (This is on the pages that say “and waiting for warm sun to make them grow” and “and grow.” The stripes represent the rows where the plants are growing.)
- ❖ **What are the buds and blossoms?**
- ❖ **Does anyone know what blossoms become?**
- ❖ **What vegetables do you see in the pictures?**
- ❖ **Why do people weed?**
- ❖ **What is a hand grubber? What do you think that you do with it?**
- ❖ **Why would you have a hand basket? A bushel basket? A pail?**
- ❖ **Why are they picking the tomatoes and peppers? What will they do with them?**
- ❖ **Why do people dig up potatoes, onions and carrots? Why don't people dig up tomatoes or peppers?**
- ❖ **What are they doing with the spreading fork?**
- ❖ **Why would you wash the vegetables after they come out of the garden? Do you wash vegetables that you buy at the store?**
- ❖ **What do you think will happen to all of the cut-up vegetables?**
- ❖ **What is a soup ladle for? A soup pot? How big are they?**
- ❖ **What vegetables are in the soup?**
- ❖ **Why will they wait a year to grow more vegetable soup?**
- ❖ **Where do vegetables come from? (From plants.)**

**3. Pick one or two of these ideas for acting out the story in class. Ask the children to pretend :**

- ❖ **to use the tools in the book.**
- ❖ **to plant seeds, then pretend to plant sprouts.**
- ❖ **to water the seeds and sprouts.**
- ❖ **to be a plant growing day by day.**
- ❖ **to be a blossom on a plant turning into a squash or another vegetable.**
- ❖ **to weed the garden.**
- ❖ **to dig up potatoes or pick other vegetables.**
- ❖ **to wash the vegetables and cut them up.**
- ❖ **to put vegetables in the pot to make soup and then pretend to eat it.**

**4. Pick one of the following activities to do in class.**

**A. Drawing:**

Give each child a paper bowl or piece of paper. Also give the children crayons or colored markers. **Ask them to draw the vegetables in the story that they want to eat at home in vegetable soup.**

After they draw the vegetables, **ask them to pretend to eat the soup they just made. Ask them to tell their mother which vegetable in their soup they would like to eat by itself.**

**B. Touching:**

Bring in one example of each vegetable mentioned in the book. Let the children hold and smell each vegetable. The children can tell their mothers the name of the vegetable they like the best and will eat at home.

**C. Tasting:**

Cut up samples of some of the vegetables in the book for the children to taste. Before serving the children the vegetables, **ask them the name of the vegetables they will try. After they taste the vegetables, ask the children to tell their mothers the vegetable they liked the best and will eat at home.**

5. Give parents the *Let's Read at Home! Growing Vegetable Soup* sheet which is attached.



**NE LESSON CODE CH-000-16**  
**Let's Read! Growing Vegetable Soup**  
**Participant Survey Form**

**LA#** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. Do you like having books read to your children during WIC class?  
Please circle one:**
  - a. yes
  - b. no
  
- 2. Did the class help your child learn more about eating well?**
  - a. yes
  - b. no
  
- 3. Will you do any of the activities on the handout at home with your children?**
  - a. yes
  - b. no
  
- 4. Do you read with your children now?**
  - i. yes
  - ii. no
  
- 5. After the reading class, are you more interested in reading to your children?**
  - a. yes
  - b. no
  
- 6. Do you have any comments on the reading class?**

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*Thank you for your time!*



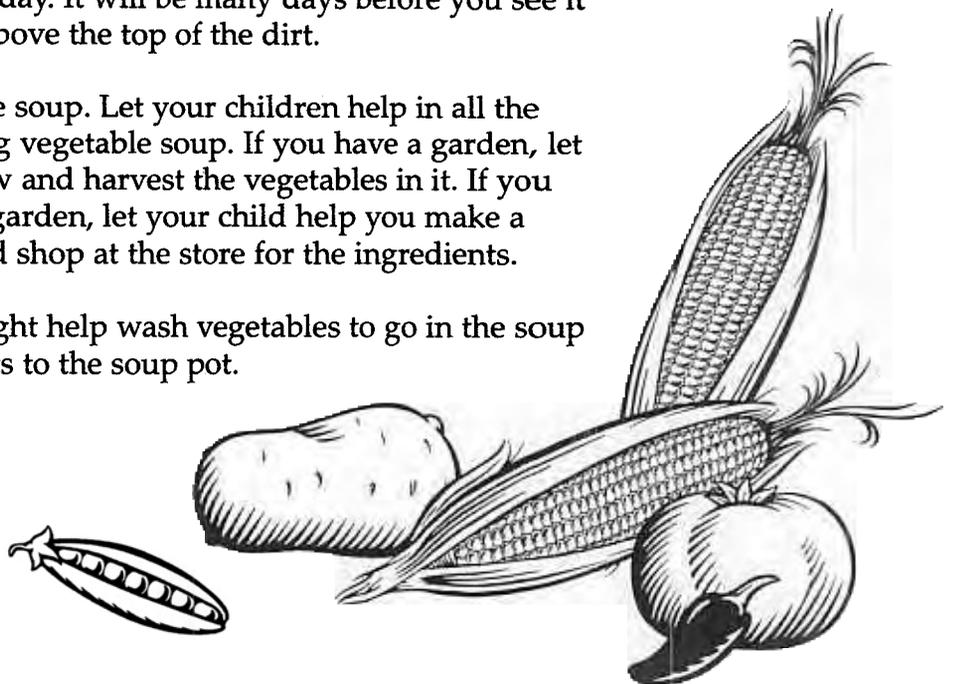
## Let's Read at Home

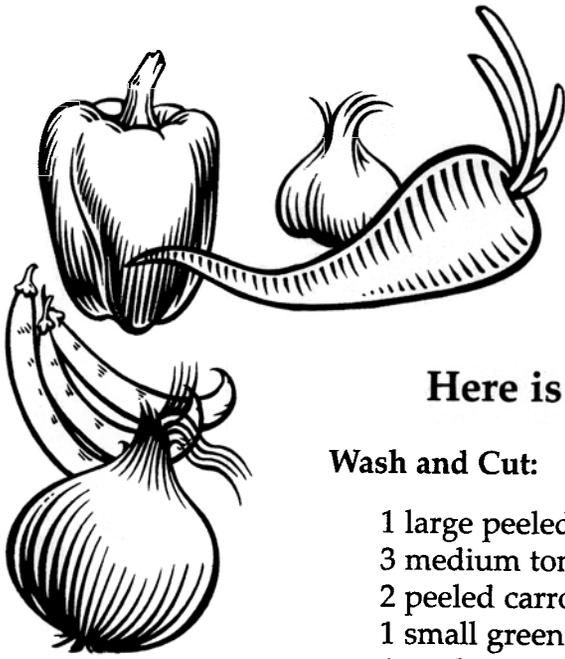
### *Growing Vegetable Soup*

There are several things you can do with your children at home to make reading and healthy eating come alive for them. Pick one of these or do all of them, as you have time.

1. Read *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert at home with your children. You can borrow the book from your local library. You will probably read the book to your child many times. Sometimes look at the pictures in the book with your child and talk about them. Other times ask your child to act out the story as you read it.
2. Grow seeds at home. Either buy a package of seeds or save the seeds from a vegetable you eat. Take a paper cup and poke a hole in the bottom with a pencil. Cover the hole with a small rock so water can get out, but the dirt cannot get out easily. Fill the cup with dirt. Make shallow holes in the dirt, leaving an inch around each hole. Put a seed in every hole and cover each hole with dirt. Put the cup on a window ledge where it will get sunlight. Water the seed every day. It will be many days before you see it start to grow above the top of the dirt.
3. Make vegetable soup. Let your children help in all the steps of making vegetable soup. If you have a garden, let them help grow and harvest the vegetables in it. If you do not have a garden, let your child help you make a grocery list and shop at the store for the ingredients.

Your children might help wash vegetables to go in the soup or add ingredients to the soup pot.





## Here is a recipe for vegetable soup

### Wash and Cut:

- 1 large peeled onion
- 3 medium tomatoes
- 2 peeled carrots
- 1 small green pepper
- 1 medium potato, with skin
- 1 ear of corn, husked (or 1 small can of corn)
- 9 green beans, with the ends snapped off

Slice the carrots into round pieces about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick. Cut the onions, potatoes, green beans, tomatoes and green peppers into bite-size pieces.

### Put in the Soup Pot:

Add all the vegetables except the tomatoes, green pepper and corn to a large pot with

- 5 cups water
- 4 bouillon cubes (any flavor)

Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes. Then add the tomatoes, green pepper, and corn and the spices:

- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- salt and pepper to taste

Bring back to a simmer and cook about 10 more minutes. When the vegetables are still slightly crisp, the soup is done.

*Enjoy!*

