

# February

..... HARVEST OF THE MONTH .....

## SWEET POTATO

### NC Standard Course of Study

**Language Arts:**

**L.3.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuations and spelling when writing, demonstrate proficiency within the 2-3 conventions continuum.

**L.3.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

**L.4.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuations and spelling when writing, demonstrate proficiency within the 4-5 conventions continuum.

**L.4.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

**L.5.2** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuations and spelling when writing, demonstrate proficiency within the 4-5 conventions continuum.

**L.5.3** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

**NC Essential Standards**

**Health:**

**3.NPA.2** Understand the importance of consuming a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages in moderation.

**4.NPA.2** Understand the importance of consuming a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages in moderation.

**4.NPA.3** Understand the benefits of nutrition and fitness to disease prevention

**5.NPA.2** Understand the importance of consuming a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages in moderation.

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**Science:**

**4.L.2** Understand food and the benefits of vitamins, minerals and exercise.

 **Goal:**

Using sweet potato as an example, this lesson is designed to deepen students' understanding of vitamins and their benefits. We will discuss the importance of a varied diet rich in different fruits and vegetables.



**Activity Length:**

60 minutes ideal (kids often like to spend a lot of time designing their superheroes)



**Location:**

Classroom

### Materials needed:

- Sweet Potato to pass around
- Writing utensils (markers, crayons, colored pencils)
- Construction Paper
- “The Vitamin Alphabet” handouts

# Sweet Potatoes Life Cycle

Pass out “Sweet Potato Life Cycle” handouts and ask students to follow along as you read the script. (Alternatively, students can practice reading and take turns read the different steps of the life cycle.)

- Before it grows into a plant, what do sweet potatoes start out as? **Seeds.**
- What do sweet potatoes need to grow? **Sun, Soil, Water, and Air.**
- When most people plant sweet potatoes, they do not plant the actual **seed.** They plant **slips**, which are sprouts that grow out of a mature sweet potato.
- The **slips** are planted in the ground and become sweet potato plants. The **slips** send additional **roots** down into the soil.
- Sweet potatoes begin to grow at the ends of these additional **roots.** The **root** of the sweet potato plant is the part we eat!
- After growing roots, the sweet potato plant will send up a **stem and leaves.** These are the first parts of the plant that we can see above ground.
- What are the main role of **leaves? Photosynthesis!** The leaves collect energy from the sun. The cabbage plant uses this energy to create food for itself.
- A mature sweet potato can be saved to grow more **slips**, and the cycle begins all over again!

## Supply Chain

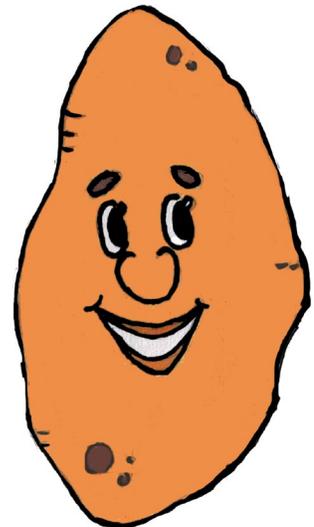
Watch the video “Farm to Fork with Mr. Food”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkGbcMdvVVQ>

**Ask students to identify the different steps of the supply chain as seen in the video, arriving at the five main steps:**

- Plant: The farmer had to plant the seeds or seedlings
- Harvest: The farmer and his or her employees harvest the produce
- Transport: A driver had to drive them from farm to the store, market or processing facility
- Prepare: Someone (a processing facility, chef, family member) has to wash and prepare the food
- Eat: Finally, after all that work, YOU get to eat it!

This video does not show the step of transporting the vegetable. This is a good time to quiz students. Ask, *are there any steps of the supply chain that we didn't see in this video? What are they?*



# Harvest of the Month Moment!



Before diving into the lesson, introduce the featured produce!

If space, gather in a circle or around the poster. Feel free to use this space to share your own experiences with the harvest and celebrate what students know.

*The Harvest of the Month for FEBRUARY is SWEET POTATOES!*

- *They grow well most of the year in central North Carolina.*
- *We eat the root of the sweet potato plant*
- *North Carolina is the largest producer of Sweet Potatoes in the United States!*
- *Fun fact: February is Sweet Potato Month and February 22nd is National Sweet Potato Day*
- *Sweet Potatoes are full of Vitamin A and other important nutrients! Let's dive in to learn more about what different vitamins do for our bodies*

Ask students to find the harvest on the What's Growing On? Poster. If available, pass around the harvest and invite students to share observations (*How does it feel, look, smell, sound? Does it remind you of another harvest we've done this year?*).

Consider asking some warm-up questions for students:

*Have you tried it? When did you try it?*

*How does your family like to prepare this fruit/vegetable?*

*Do you have anything that you know about this harvest that you'd like to share?*

## What's Growing On?



### 1. Eating the Rainbow

Divide students into 5 groups. Assign each group one of the color categories on the chart below: Red, Orange/Yellow, Green, Blue/Purple, and White

- Give the groups time to talk about what fruits and vegetables are their assigned color. Try and come up with as many as possible!
- Write student answers on the board in their respective color categories

## 2. Discuss Eating the Rainbow

*Wow, that's a wonderful list! So, do you think you'd like to draw with one color for the rest of your life? Do you want to eat the same color food?*

*Different color fruits and vegetables have different nutrients, vitamins, and minerals that do good things for our body!*

*Today we've been talking about yummy sweet potatoes! They're orange and like other orange foods like carrots and pumpkins, they have a lot of Vitamin A*

- Invite students to make a big letter A with their arms above their heads.
- Vitamin A helps with eyesight, growth and development.

*Eating different colors can give our bodies the vitamins they need*

*In our next activity, we will learn more about all the things vitamins and minerals can help us do!*

## 3. Fruit and Veggie Superheroes!

### Quick Warm-Up

- Invite everyone to share something they are good at. Don't be shy! (For example, I am good at cooking, or math, or playing a musical instrument.)
- Just like us, vitamins are good at different things! All the things that the different vitamins are good at help our bodies stay healthy.

Ask students: **What is a vitamin?**

- *Vitamins are nutrients your body needs to develop and function properly.*
- *Our body does not create vitamins, so we need to get them in our diet.*



Pass out "Vitamin Alphabet" worksheet to each group of students or display on the board in your classroom.

Look over the worksheet together, and read about what each vitamin does for our bodies, and what fruits and vegetables contain each vitamin

Discuss, *It can be hard to remember what every vitamin does and where we can find it. How might we make sure we are getting what we need to be healthy? Eat the Rainbow!*

Tell each student to select their favorite fruit or vegetable from the worksheet and design a superhero version of that vegetable, giving it a power based on the vitamin it is richest in!

- For example, the Superhero "Carrot Woman" has a lot of Vitamin A, so she might have the power of super vision!
- Have students spend about ten minutes coming up with their superhero, drawing it, and giving it a super name and costume!
- Invite students to share their superhero with their group, or do a gallery walk where the whole class can see everyone's superheroes!

**ELA Extension:** For extra writing practice, have students write a 3-5 sentence caption underneath their drawing, explaining their superhero.

# “Crustless” Sweet Potato Pie Bites



## Ingredients

- 3 Sweet Potatoes, cooked and mashed
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 ½ tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Pinch of nutmeg
- Pinch of ground cloves
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt

## Instructions

- Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl, then pour into a greased rimmed baking sheet.
- Bake at 350 degrees for about 20-25 minutes.
- Slice into small squares and enjoy!

# The Vitamin Alphabet

**Vitamin A** plays a really big part in your eyesight. It also helps your body fight off sickness by boosting your immune system. Fruits and vegetables that are high in **Vitamin A** are: *leafy greens, apricots, cantaloupe, carrots, winter squash, pumpkin, and sweet potatoes!*

There are many types of **B Vitamins**, including **Vitamin B1, B2, B6, and B12**. The **B Vitamins** help your body store energy and release it whenever your body needs it! **B Vitamins** can be found in *whole grains like wheat and oats, leafy green vegetables, beans, and peas!*

**Vitamin C** helps your body stay well by fighting off infections and boosting your immune system. Many fruits and vegetables are high in **Vitamin C**, including: *citrus fruits such as oranges, lemons, and limes, cantaloupe, strawberries, tomatoes, broccoli, cabbage, kiwi, and sweet red peppers!*

**Vitamin D** helps your body absorb calcium, which helps build our bones and keep them strong. Vegetables that contain **Vitamin D** are: *spinach, kale, okra, collard greens, soybeans, and white beans!*

**Vitamin E** helps protect your cells and tissue from damage. It also helps the blood flow smoothly throughout your body. **Vitamin E** can be found in foods like: *whole grains like wheat and oats, leafy green vegetables, vegetable oils like sunflower, canola, and olive, nuts, and seeds!*

When you cut your finger, it may bleed for a little while, but then the bleeding stops, and your body begins to heal. You can say thank you to **Vitamin K** for that! **Vitamin K** helps your blood clot when you have a cut or scrape. Vegetables that are high in **Vitamin K** are: *dark leafy greens, brussels sprouts, broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower!*

# Sweet Potatoes Life Cycle

