



Developed with Catherine Lader, Retired FCS Teacher & FCCLA Adviser

Volume 15 | Gr. 6–8

Meal appeal



Standards

NASAFACS 8.5.12

Demonstrate professional plating, garnishing, and food presentation techniques.



Materials list:

- Fruits and Vegetables by Color poster set ([WA28719](#))
- Creative Cuts poster ([WA23292](#))
- Mercer® plating tool kit ([WA32780](#))
- Knife cuts ([WA33661](#))
- Mercer® garnishing set ([WA29342](#))
- Knife Skills for Food Service DVD ([WA32918](#))
- Assorted cutlery
- Index cards (4" x 6")
- Flip chart with markers

Objectives

Students will...

- Develop cutlery skills
- Increase knowledge of fruits and vegetables
- Plan garnishes for upcoming food prep labs

Essential Question

What garnishing skills will increase the meal appeal of food being prepared?

Career Clusters (& Pathways)

Hospitality and Tourism (Restaurants and Food/Beverage Services)

FCCLA Connections

- Power of One
- Culinary Arts
- Food Garnishing

Prior to lesson: Create a deck of index cards with the name of a fruit or vegetable on each one. Refer to Fruits and Vegetables by Color poster set for ideas.

Day 1

Introduction (10–15 minutes)

Start class with a variety of posters hanging up in classroom:

- Fruit and Vegetable by Color poster set
- Knife Cuts poster

Students identify the fruits and vegetables on the posters and indicate those they have not eaten. Each student draws one card from the deck. Research the fruit or vegetable drawn. Write six or seven interesting facts on the card, along with a color picture. One side of the card will remain blank. Be prepared to turn in the card next class period.



Activity 1 (20–25 minutes)

Chefs and culinary consultants talk about “what pleases the eye, pleases the palate.” Discuss the meaning of this phrase and have students identify garnishing techniques they have seen used.

Everyone will try their skills in the role of garde manger during upcoming food prep labs. A garde manger (pronounced gärd män-zhâ) is the accepted name for a trained professional that garnishes food. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition is “a cook who specializes in the preparation of cold foods (as meats, fish, and salads).” For more background information, go to culinaryschools.org/chef-types.

Activity 2 (10–15 minutes)

Students get out utensils, cutlery, etc. in the food prep lab to use when garnishing. Students identify cutlery used on the Creative Cuts poster.

Assignment — Complete index card. Remember, one side remains blank; the other side has a picture, facts, and the name of the fruit or vegetable.

Day 2

Activity 1 (15 minutes)

Collect index cards and shuffle deck. Class divides into teams. Play a game of “What Am I?” with teams earning points by correctly identifying a fruit or vegetable. Rules for the “What Am I?” game are on p. 4.

Activity 2 (10–15 minutes)

Demonstrate cutlery techniques from posters; teacher demonstration assisted by students.

Activity 3 (15–20 minutes)

Plan cutlery skills lab. Students will design an original “platescape” using fruits and vegetables. Use minimum of five different cuts in the “veggie-scape.” Include one or two garnish ideas. Students sketch their “veggie-scape,” consider the color of the foods being used, identify cuts to use, and plan lab.

Day 3

Activity 1 (15 minutes)

Lab groups will be graded on the five basic cuts they selected from the posters. Sample cuts will be presented to the teacher for evaluation. Use the Cutlery Skills Lab Matrix chart (p. 3) provided.

Activity 2 (10–15 minutes)

Create the original “veggie-scape” design that the lab group planned on the previous day. Take a picture and share or post.

Summation (15–20 minutes)

Eat fruits and vegetables from the “veggie-scape.” Plan on how to garnish foods that will be prepared during upcoming food prep labs (i.e., sandwiches, omelets, etc.). Package leftovers, label, and refrigerate. Clean up.

Cutlery skills lab matrix

Each lab team will demonstrate five basic cuts from the posters displayed in the classroom. Each cut is worth a maximum of five points. Students may earn:

- 5 points for consistent size and shapes of samples
- 3 points for average consistency
- 1 point for needing improvement with both consistency of size and shape

Type of cut	Team #1	Team #2	Team #3	Team #4	Team #5
Barrel cut					
Brunoise cut					
Country-style cut					
Cube cut					
Diamond-shaped cut					
Dice cut					
Farmer-style cut					
Julienne cut					
Slices cut					
Sticks cut					

Rules for “What Am I?” game

To be used with the deck of fruit/vegetable facts cards created by students.

1. Divide class into teams.
2. Flip a coin to determine which team goes first.
3. After a clue (fact from the index card) is read, the first team has 10 seconds to respond. A correct response earns points (see scoring below).
4. When the response is incorrect, the next clue is read to the second team and they have 10 seconds to respond. A correct response earns points (see scoring below).
5. Proceed in this manner until either a correct answer is given or all five clues have been read. If neither team identifies the fruit or vegetable correctly, the teacher gives the answer before moving on.
6. Scoring – Teams will earn points in the following manner:
 - a. Accurate response after 1 clue is read = 5 points
 - b. Accurate response after 2 clues are read = 4 points
 - c. Accurate response after 3 clues are read = 3 points
 - d. Accurate response after 4 clues are read = 2 points
 - e. Accurate response after 5 clues are read = 1 point
7. A team does not lose points when an inaccurate answer is given.
8. The team with the most accumulated points at the end of the game gets to assist the teacher with the cutting techniques demonstration.