

Families:

Pilot Light Family Meal Lessons are designed to easily bring food education into your home. We recommend using the Family Resources in the following way:

1. Watch the Family Meal video for the lesson as a family.
2. Make the recipe as a family.
3. In the Common Core Connections section, children can learn through and about food while strengthening Common Core English Language Arts or Math skills.
4. Family Discussion questions and Extension Activities are provided to allow learners of all ages opportunities to participate in the learning experience!



Pilot Light Family Meal Lesson

Shakshuka

+ Grades 6-8 - Common Core English Language Arts - Informational Text - Key Ideas and Details

Suggested Recipe Age Range: 10 and above with adult help

Recipe by Chef Ben Fasman

Shakshuka**Ingredients:**

- 1 28oz can tomatoes (crushed or whole)
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 2 red peppers, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. salt
- Black pepper, to taste
- Sugar, to taste
- For serving: Cilantro (fresh or dried), bread (your favorite type), and/or hot sauce

Materials:

- Knife
- Cutting board
- Saucepan with a lid
- Measuring cups
- Large spoon

Directions:

1. Pour 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil into a deep pan with a lid. Heat oil over medium heat, and add the diced onion, garlic, and bell pepper. Saute for a few minutes (until the onions start to get a little bit of color).
2. Add the cumin, paprika and salt. Stir together and continue cooking for another 2-3 minutes while stirring occasionally.
3. Add the tomatoes (if using whole tomatoes, crush them up with your hands before adding into the pan). Add a pinch of sugar and a pinch of black pepper and let everything cook down for another 10 minutes or so (until slightly reduced).
4. Make little wells in the reduced sauce using a spoon, and crack an egg and place into each divot. Repeat for all eggs. Cover and cook until the eggs are just set, about 4-6 minutes. You still want them runny, and remember, they will continue to cook when pulled off the heat.
5. Garnish the whole thing with cilantro, and some hot sauce if you like. Serve hot, with your favorite bread.

Common Core Connections:

Grades 6-8th

Common Core English Language Arts - Reading - Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details (Standard 2)

RI 6-8.2: Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

What does this mean?

In this lesson, students will trace the author’s argument about how to define shakshuka and what makes it special.

What does this look like?

Materials needed:

- The article “What is Shakshuka and Where Did It Come From?” by Jen Wheeler
- The guiding questions provided within that article.

Directions:

1. Read Jen Wheeler’s article about shakshuka, and answer the questions. Article by Jen Wheeler from chowhound.com
<https://www.chowhound.com/food-news/198606/what-is-shakshuka-and-where-did-it-come-from/>

What Is Shakshuka and Where Did It Come From?

BY JEN WHEELER for www.chowhound.com

APRIL 1, 2019

If a truly perfect dish exists, it just might be shakshuka. Easy to make, totally flexible, both comforting and exciting to eat, healthy, inexpensive, and composed of ingredients you likely regularly have on hand, it checks *all* the boxes for an ideal meal—plus, it’s fit for breakfast, lunch, brunch, or dinner! As long as you like eggs and tomatoes, you’ll love this one-pan marvel, but even if you don’t do one or another of those ingredients, you can still make a version that appeals to you (there’s that aforementioned flexibility coming into play).

1. The author argues that shakshuka is “a truly perfect dish.” List at least five reasons the author thinks so.

*

*

*

*

*

What is shakshuka? Shakshuka (also spelled shakshouka), in its simplest form, is a warmly spiced vegetarian dish of saucy tomatoes, often with peppers or onions, with eggs cracked right into the mix, usually left whole and simmered to desired doneness, whether you prefer lightly poached or hard-cooked so the yolks are firm.

2. Sum up what ingredients make up shakshuka.

Where did shakshuka come from? The dish as we know it is North African in origin, although it may have descended from the Ottoman Empire’s saksuka, which did not include tomatoes but did feature meat; today, shakshuka is most strongly associated with the Middle East and Israel in particular, where it was introduced by Jewish immigrants from Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, and Libya. It’s always been an affordable, filling, and undemanding meal, so it’s no wonder it’s only kept gaining in popularity all over the world. Its inclusion in renowned Israeli chef Yotam Ottolenghi’s 2011 cookbook “Plenty” helped spread the word, and nowadays, Instagram is a steady source of tantalizing shakshuka shots. You’re apt to find shakshuka on even the fanciest brunch menus these days, but while some places may have the nerve to sell it for \$20 and up, there’s zero pretension when it comes to the dish. You can even buy it in meal kit form, but you really don’t need to. You barely need a recipe, and then only the first time you make it.



Map from Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Middle+East/>

3. Draw lines on the map above, tracing shakshuka’s journey across the Middle East.

Is shakshuka the same thing as eggs in purgatory? While they have no direct connection to each other, Mexican huevos rancheros, Italian eggs in purgatory, and Turkish menemen (in which the eggs are scrambled) are all similar to shakshuka, proving that the combo of eggs and tomatoes is universally appealing, although all you need to do is taste it to know that. Eggs in purgatory is the closest analogue, with its eggs cooked in a pan of marinara sauce.

4. Based on the descriptions above, what ingredients do all of the dishes mentioned (shakshuka, huevos rancheros, eggs in purgatory, and menemen) have in common?

What does “shakshuka” mean? The name means, roughly, “shaken” or “mixed up,” which is reflective of shakshuka’s casual composition. You’re basically just nudging things around a pan (a cast iron skillet is the most common vessel, but whatever works). There are no theatrics, no tricks to master, no pitfalls except maybe potentially burning things, but moderate heat and occasional stirring easily prevent that.

5. How does the previous paragraph support the author’s argument that shakshuka is “a truly perfect dish”?

Is shakshuka good for you? Generally speaking, yes. It’s packed with vegetables and all the attendant nutrients, but low in fat and naturally gluten-free if that’s important to you. If you don’t eat eggs, you can substitute silken tofu for a vegan version (purists will fight you, but it works). If you choose to load it up with cheese, labneh, and lots of pita, then perhaps it’s not exactly health food, but you could do much worse.

How do you make shakshuka? Basically, you make a thick tomato sauce and crack some eggs in it, but beyond that, there are lots of ways to shake up your shakshuka. If you want,

whether it's your first or fiftieth time cooking shakshuka, you can alter the basic dish by adding almost anything that appeals, like more vegetables, from chopped eggplant, peppers, potatoes, artichokes, and squash, to kale, spinach, chard, and other hearty greens. If you want to keep it vegetarian but add more substance, stir in beans, chickpeas, or lentils. And if you want meat, add that too—sausages like merguez or chorizo; ground beef, lamb, or chicken; whole pieces of poultry or meat; even fish or shellfish. Seriously, anything goes. Season it with your favorite spices, from smoked paprika to chili powder to za'atar. Then sprinkle on as much cheese as you please—feta is a classic choice—or leave it off entirely. Same goes for labneh (thickened yogurt), harissa or other hot sauce, and any other garnishes, like olives, fresh herbs (cilantro or parsley), fried shallots, preserved lemon. The choices are *many*, and they're all yours. You can even subtract and substitute for the main components, although it will no longer be traditional (and maybe not *technically* shakshuka)—but everywhere it's enjoyed, there are countless variations offered, and personal spins on shakshuka are part of its beauty. In your own kitchen, the most important thing is that you're making something *you* want to eat, anyway. So feel free to go with a green sauce based on leafy vegetables and/or herbs if you're not feeling tomatoes, or swap in silken tofu for the eggs for a vegan version that still feels a lot like the real thing.

6. Using the two paragraphs above, fill out the following chart to show what types of changes one could make to shakshuka so that it fits your culinary needs.

CHANGES	WHAT INGREDIENTS TO INCLUDE
Vegan Shakshuka	
Vegetarian Shakshuka	
Meat-based Shakshuka	
Additional spices and garnishes	

What do you serve with shakshuka? Once you're done tinkering with—or just following—the basic formula, simply add pita, challah, or slices of any rustic crusty bread for sopping up the sauce. You'll be totally satisfied, and certain to come back for more.

7. Sum up the author's argument in five words. Make sure "shakshuka" is one of the words.

8. The word shakshuka means "shaken up." Why does that name seem appropriate for this dish?

9. The author has an obviously positive feeling about shakshuka. List three quotes taken directly from the text that show this positive bias.

*

*

*

Family Discussion Questions:

Families/children could discuss or write about:

- What could you imagine a chef adding or subtracting from shakshuka that would make it not qualify as shakshuka anymore?
- What other dishes do you know of that allow for many substitutions as does shakshuka?
- What are some of the substitutions listed in the article that you would like to try in the recipe you've been given?

Extension Activities:

Here are some suggestions for additional activities that relate to this recipe:

- Research huevos rancheros recipes and make two lists showing how shakshuka is similar to and different from shakshuka.
- Find pictures of huevos rancheros, eggs in purgatory, menemen, and shakshuka. From the images, what are the similarities and differences.
- Find and make a recipe of eggs in purgatory. Do a taste test to compare what makes it different from shakshuka.
- After researching all four recipes (shakshuka, eggs in purgatory, huevos rancheros, and menemen) record where each is found on a world map.

This original Family Lesson was written by Pilot Light Food Education Fellow, Leah Guenther.