

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
Kitchen & Knife Safety While Cooking Onions
+ Grades 3-8 Common Core English Language Arts - Writing -
Production and Distribution of Writing

Suggested Recipe Age Range: 8-13

Recipe by Chef Laura Culbreth:

Sweating, Sautéing, and Caramelizing Onions**Ingredients:**

- 1-2 Onions
- Salt
- Cooking oil

Materials:

- Counter space
- Heat source
- Cutting knife
- Cutting board
- Medium pan w/lid
- Medium to Large frying/saute pan w/lid
- Stirring spoon

**To Sweat:**

When a recipe calls for sweating vegetables, it is asking you to cook until done with no color. You can achieve this by **crowding the vegetables and using low heat**. Choose a pan that has a fitting lid as well as a small amount of surface area. This will force the onions to crowd together in the pan, one step to successful sweating. **Adding salt at the beginning of**

cooking helps create a more flavorful end result and draws out water in the onion, thus starting the “Sweat”.

Directions:

1. Cut onion
2. Place enough oil, approximately 1 Tablespoon, to cover the bottom of a medium sized pot that has a lid
3. Place pot on Low to Medium heat and add cut onions
4. Add a bit of salt and stir
5. Cover with lid and continue cooking until onions are translucent

To Saute:

Saute is defined as **cooking quickly with a small amount of fat at a high heat**. It is derived from the French verb “to jump”, sauter. Recipes will vary with the amount of color and doneness of the cooked item. Saute can refer to the type of pan preferred for this method as well.

Directions:

1. Cut onion
2. Place enough oil, approximately 2 Tablespoons, in the bottom of a medium to large frying/saute pan
3. Place the pan on Medium to High heat and wait until the oil gets hot. It will begin to “shimmer” and produce a faint smoke.
4. Add cut onions, carefully from a low height. Be careful, they will “jump” in the pan!
5. Add salt and stir
6. Stir or flip to avoid burning
7. Cook to desired doneness

To Caramelize:

When you **cook onions slowly, low and for a long time** the natural sugars in the onion break down and brown creating a sweet, nutty and complex flavor. These onions can then be used to top various dishes, like pizza and pasta, or be the start to some great sauces or soups.

Directions:

1. Cut onion
2. Place enough oil, approximately 2 Tablespoons, in the bottom of a medium to large frying/saute pan
3. Place pan on Low to Medium heat and add cut onions
4. Let onion cook for about five minutes, without stirring
5. Add salt to help draw out the water in the onion. This will start the browning that will lead to the caramelization
6. Continue to cook for a least an ½ hour, stirring every once and a while
7. Cook to desired doneness. The darker the onions are in color, the more flavorful they will be!

Common Core Connections:

Grades 3-8

English Language Arts - Writing - Production and Distribution of Writing - Standard 4:

Students will produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

What does this mean?

Common Core in grades 3-8 identifies three types of student writing: opinion pieces, informative/explanatory writing, and narratives (real or imagined stories).

Common Core standards around literacy build in complexity throughout the grades. That means that the standards can sound the same for younger, as well as older grades, but the kinds of writing produced will be much different. In this project, for example, a third grader could write a short paragraph to describe the three different methods for cooking onion, while an eighth grade student might write an essay exploring the widespread use of onion for cooking recipes and medicinal properties in different cultures, and compare it to the use of onion by people in their culture. This lesson will guide you through appropriate projects for your student.

In this lesson, you (the student) will be working on informative/explanatory writing in which you will pick a topic and provide supporting details.

What does this look like?

Materials needed:

- Pens
- Paper (or computer)
- Research tools (books, the internet, family members or friends, etc)

Directions:

1. Choose one of the follow prompts/questions to answer related to ***Sweating, Sautéing, and Caramelizing Onions:***
 - Where did onions originate and where do they grow today?
 - How is onion used by different cultures from around the world?
 - Why do you think onion is such a popular ingredient in kitchens and households all around the world?
2. Research the question you chose. Write down any notes or ideas you find to use later in your writing.
3. Begin your first draft (at least 2 paragraphs in length): Write a thesis statement or a topic sentence that explains what your writing will be about.
4. Write about 2-3 supporting details or examples that support your thesis. Think about what facts or examples you find that show that your thesis statement is true.
5. Write a concluding statement that restates (puts in different words) your thesis (your first sentence).
6. Read your draft aloud and make any changes. You can also give your rough draft to a friend or care giver for feedback.
7. Write your final draft. Share your writing with family or friends if you like.

To meet the expectations of this standard, your writing should be **at least 2 paragraphs long** and include the following:

- Introduction:** Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Facts and details that relate to the topic:** Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- Transition Words:** Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).
- (Grades 4-8) Use specific vocabulary related to the topic:** Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- (Grades 6-8) Establish and maintain a formal style.**
- Conclusion:** Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

Family Discussion Questions:

Families/children could discuss or write about:

- How does the flavor of the onion change from its raw form to when it gets sweated, sautéed, or caramelized? Which one was your favorite?
- What other vegetables might be good for sweating, sautéing, or caramelizing? Why do you think that is?
- Onions make people cry--but that doesn't mean they're bad for you! In fact, onions are widely used for their medicinal properties all over the world! Ask a family member if they know of any home remedies that use onion as one of its ingredients. Where did they hear of the recipe? Have they ever tried it? Does it work? What other answers to our ailments can we find hidden in our very own kitchen pantries?

Extension Activities:

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

- Your family loves onions. You love onions. How can you use your onion knowledge and all your cooking skills to convince a picky eater of the benefits of eating onion for flavor and for health?
- Conduct a taste test during 'Taco Night' at home! For an added challenge try preparing onion using all three methods from the recipe above and conduct a taste test at home by using differently prepared onions on the tacos. Which method gave the onion the most popular flavor? You might be surprised with the results!
- Even though Onion is hugely popular in kitchens and households all over the world, it rarely gets the credit that it deserves. Write a short fictional story where the onion starts out awkwardly but somehow ends up being the unlikely hero of the story. Get creative when showcasing the different characteristics of the onion (for example:

onions can make people cry, but crying isn't always a bad thing!)

Some good reads include:

- *Ode to the Onion* Poem by: Pablo Neruda
- Onions: Health benefits, health risks & nutrition facts
Article source: LiveScience.com
Written by: Jessie Szalay 5/9/17

This original Family Lesson was written by Pilot Light Food Education Fellow, Bryan Soto.