

Restaurants

Materials

menus
small tablets
pencils
clothesline
clothespins

What to do

1. If possible, visit a restaurant, including the kitchen area. If not, read books about restaurants and ask some restaurant employees to visit your classroom.
2. Set up the dramatic play or house area to represent a restaurant. Place a table and chairs behind the kitchen appliances so that the food prep area is separate from where the “customers” eat. Tie a clothesline over the food prep area to clip food orders. Put out the menus, tablets, and pencils.
3. Encourage the children to take turns playing different roles (cooks, food servers, customers). Model for or encourage the “food servers” to use the tablets to write down what their “customers” order. The food server can clip the orders to the clothesline for the cooks to refer to it as they prepare the food in the kitchen.

Related books *Froggy Eats Out* by Jonathan London
Monsterlicious by Erik Jon Slangurup

 Ann Kelly, Johnstown, PA

Chinese New Year

Materials

chopsticks or paper and rubber bands
rice
rice cooker
soy sauce
small bowls

What to do

1. Make chopsticks out of rolled paper and rubber bands or use real chopsticks (donated from Japanese or Chinese restaurants).
2. Make rice with the children. Encourage the children to feel the rice before it is cooked.
3. Cook the rice in a rice cooker. When the rice is done, let the children scoop rice into their bowls.

4. If desired, the children can add soy sauce or eat the rice plain.
5. Encourage the children to try to eat with chopsticks.

Related books *Cleversticks* by Bernard Ashley
The Dancing Dragon by Marcia Vaughan

 Sandy Scott, Vancouver, WA

Class Café

Materials

- magazines
- glue
- paper
- paper cups and plates
- plastic cutlery
- play cooking utensils
- cash register (optional)
- play money
- play food
- plastic tablecloth
- pencils and paper
- cookbooks
- food donated from parents (such as pretzels, juice, crackers, and raisins)

What to do

1. Beforehand, make menus using magazine pictures and words.
2. Set up the house area like a café. Add menus, plates, cups, utensils, play food, and so on.
3. Let the children play “café” by taking orders, preparing play food, and serving it. The customers may use play money to purchase food.
4. At snack time, encourage the “waiters/waitresses” to take orders from the “customers.” Make sure that the servers wash their hands before putting the food on plates and pouring juice. Let them switch roles so the waiters and waitresses eat, too.

Related books *Bread and Jam for Frances* by Russell Hoban
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff
Pete’s a Pizza by William Steig
There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by Simms Taback

 Barbara Saul, Eureka CA