

TastEd Beans, Pulses and Peas Lessons – Upper KS2

Chickpeas – Green, Raw and Cooked

Touch



Learning objectives

Duration: 45 minutes - 1 hour

The focus of this lesson is using our sense of touch to explore dried and cooked (canned or jarred) chickpeas as well as to explore the concept of chickpeas and other pulses or beans as a sustainable food.

Resources

Equipment: Can opener if needed (check if cans have ring pulls), sieve or colander, a couple of large bowls, a couple of serving spoons, reusable plate and spoon for each child. A paper napkin for each child for touching a few dried chickpeas.

Food to buy:

1 x bag of dried chickpeas (for exploring with hands)
2 x cans or jars of chickpeas

Optional: 2 x tubs hummus (or use the recipe at the end to make sesame-free hummus if you have sesame allergy sufferers in your class) and/or a loaf of sliced bread or a packet of oatcakes for tasting.

Optional: 2 x bags sugarsnap peas (these can be used to explore the concept of green chickpeas, although they are not chickpeas).

Preparation: Slice the bread, if using, into small pieces. Drain the chickpeas and put them in a bowl but save the can or jar to show the children.

Safety: make sure you explain to the children that the dried chickpeas in the lesson are only for looking and touching, not tasting. Before you start, make sure the children wash their hands.

Some children may not have seen or tasted chickpeas before – frame it as a fun discovery rather than something they “should” already know or like. Many children can find chickpeas a bit challenging to like at first, especially if they're unfamiliar with them or have only had them in cooked dishes or blended into hummus.

Lesson Outline

1. Today we're doing TastEd - that means we're going to be exploring new foods using our senses.
2. Has everyone washed their hands?
3. Ask the class, 'Can anyone tell me what the five senses are?' Sight, touch, hear, smell and taste. For each sense ask the children which part of the body they use.

4. Remind them of the two golden rules: NO ONE HAS TO TRY and NO ONE HAS TO LIKE anything.
5. Today is about touch. We are going to use our sense of touch to explore chickpeas.
6. Has anyone ever tried a chickpea? Encourage an open conversation. Give children space and encouragement to say what they think.
7. Who has tried and who likes hummus? Link hummus and chickpeas. Look at the Arabic word for chickpeas.
8. Chickpeas as an ancient crop that goes back thousands of years. Chickpeas from Pompeii!
9. Photos of a chickpea growing. Ask the children what they notice about the chickpea. It may be a surprise that it is green.
10. Introduce the concept of chickpeas being a sustainable crop.
11. Chickpeas are high protein and low greenhouse gas emitting.
12. Introduce the idea of fresh chickpeas being green and juicy.
13. Introduce the idea of chickpeas as seeds. Green chickpeas in Lebanon.
14. The chickpeas in our shops are dry. Now pass round some dry chickpeas for the children to explore through touch. NB emphasise that these are not for eating, just touching. Model this.
15. Why might dry chickpeas be a sustainable food? This is space for a conversation about preservation methods. Dry foods store a long time without electricity.
16. Explain that cooked chickpeas go soft. Canned and bottled chickpeas are ready-cooked.
17. Explore different chickpea dishes from different cultures. Give children space to share ways they eat chickpeas at home.
18. Chickpea flour – another way to eat chickpeas.
19. You need to soak and cook chickpeas before you eat them. Chickpeas are easy to purchase ready to eat, in jars or tins.
20. Pass round plates with cooked chickpeas (plus hummus, bread, sugarsnap peas if using).
21. Encourage children to explore the chickpeas through touch and taste. Give them some touch words to get them started, referring to the word bank below.
22. Share observations and ask children to write down what they noticed.
23. Hear are some examples of other children writing about chickpeas.
24. Did anyone try anything new today?

Word Bank for Chickpeas

Shape / texture: round, curvy, wrinkled, lumpy, dimpled, bumpy, soft, hard, grainy (hummus), slimy, ridgy, smooth, papery, fresh, watery, crunchy, juicy

Colour: green, beige, cream, golden, yellow, brown, green, tan

Taste: nutty, mild, earthy, buttery, sweet, hearty

Similes: Like a marble, a brain, a golden pebble, a bean wearing a wrinkly coat, as round as a planet, a button from a giant's coat, a tiny rock, a soft nut, a little moon, like a pearl

Success Criteria

- I can use my sense of touch and different words to describe chickpeas that are dry and cooked
- I can learn that there are different ways to 'try' food. I can try a food with my hand as well as with my mouth.
- I can talk about what I like and understand that not everyone has the same tastes.
- I can explain some of the ways in which chickpeas are a sustainable food.

Curriculum Links

Sustainability and Climate Change: 'learning about the importance of sustainability'

D & T: Cooking and Nutrition: 'apply the principles of nutrition and healthy eating'
'know where and how a variety of ingredients are grown'

Writing: Composing a sentence orally before writing it.
Writing narratives about personal experiences.

School Kitchen

Link to any chickpea or pulse dishes served at school lunch. Or if your school doesn't currently serve chickpeas, link to peas and beans on the menu.

Reading links for teachers and children

'Farmer Trial Climate-Friendly Chickpeas in Upstate New York', [Civil Eats 2022](#)

New research reveals chickpeas as a sustainable solution for drought resistance ([New Food Magazine, February 2025](#))

Extra Resources for Children:

Short stories, poem (see appendix)

see our appendix for a range of reading about chickpeas and beans:

We have put together a series of short stories and poems to share with your pupils, these can also be used as inspiration for children to write do their own creative writing focussing on lentils.

Song in French: Les Pois Chiches (Chickpea Song!)” - (to the tune of *Frère Jacques*)

Optional further activities

Maths: Chickpeas usually grow two to a pod. Research different beans and peas and how many seeds there are per pod and think of ways to represent this data in graphs and charts.

D & T: Cooking: Make your own hummus with the class as a follow-up activity

D & T: Cooking: Use chickpeas to make a simple curry to eat with flatbreads or rice. E.g. This [Speedy Tikka Chickpeas and Mint Raita](#)

Background facts for teachers

In India, gram flour (chickpea flour) is used for a whole range of dishes including poppadoms. In Iran, it is used to make biscuits.

There are two main types of chickpeas: the smaller 'desi' variety grown in Asia and Mexico (these can be brown, black or green) and the larger beige-coloured 'kabuli' variety grown in the Middle East.

The larger kabuli type of chickpea is curled at the sides and has been compared to the head of a ram, hence the botanical name for chickpeas: *arietinum* (Aries is the ram). These are milder in taste and what most people in Britain would think of as a typical chickpea for hummus.

When you whisk the liquid from a tin of chickpeas (**aquafaba**), it turns into foam like egg whites! It's often used by vegans to make meringues and mousses.

Chickpeas were grown in **space experiments** aboard the International Space Station! Scientists wanted to see how they might grow in microgravity as a protein source for future space travel.

Tiny but mighty: Just 100g of cooked chickpeas gives: **19g of protein, fibre for healthy digestion, iron for energy**, And they're naturally **gluten-free** and **low in fat**.

Recipe for Sesame-Free Hummus

Here is a recipe you can use to make sesame-free hummus, you could do this before the lesson or make it with your class.

By using some of the chickpea water (aquafaba) which comes with the chickpeas in the can or jar, which acts as a thickening agent, you can make a creamy hummus without tahini. This is great for classes where any of the children have a sesame allergy.

Ingredients (for a class of 30 so that each person can have a small taste - scale up if you want more):

1 x 570g jar of chickpeas or 2 x 400g cans chickpeas
80-100ml extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves peeled and grated or chopped
4 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (from about 2 lemons)
Salt

To serve – optional

Smoked paprika or dried or fresh herbs to sprinkle on top such as dried oregano or fresh parsley
More olive oil to drizzle
Slices of bread and raw carrots or other raw vegetables, peeled, for dipping.

Method:

- Drain the chickpeas in a sieve reserving the liquid.
- Heat the garlic with 20ml olive oil until fragrant and softened.

You can use the garlic raw, however children seem to like the taste of the sauteed garlic. One girl described this hummus as tasting 'like garlic bread'.

- Put the chickpeas in a blender or food processor with the remaining olive oil, lemon juice, salt and 150ml chickpea water.
- Blend continuously until it is a creamy smooth texture.
- Add more chickpea water as needed.
- Taste for seasoning to see if it needs a little more lemon or salt.
- Top with smoked paprika or dried herbs if you like or leave it plain.

Serve with fresh bread and washed raw vegetables (e.g. carrots, sugarsnap peas, slices of red pepper).



These lessons have been produced in collaboration with Beans is How, with financial support from the US Dry Bean Council. Beans is How is a global campaign to double the consumption of beans, peas, lentils and other pulses by 2028, bolstered by a Coalition of 120+ partners. Beans are a simple, affordable solution to help address malnutrition, climate change, biodiversity loss, and food affordability.

