

Tasting Checklist

When any food tasting takes place, the session must be well organised and tasting rules followed to ensure the process is safe and hygienic.

Think about the following points:

- * Parent/consent forms have been sent out, returned and used to inform the choice of ingredients to be tasted.
- * The school Food Policy has been checked for any relevant considerations.
- * Desks have been cleared and cleaned with anti-bacterial spray/wipes.
- * Children have tied back long hair, washed their hands with warm water and soap/handwash and dried them.
- * The food to be tried has been stored correctly, e.g. in the fridge or an air tight container. Date-marks have been checked, i.e. 'use-by' and 'best before' dates.
- * Food to be tasted has been hygienically prepared into small sample sized pieces.
- * All the children have their own plate (this can be a paper plate) to serve their samples on to or rest partly eaten foods they are tasting.
- * Water is available for all the children so they can clean their pallets while sampling.
- * Kitchen paper is available in case children need to remove food from their mouth.
- * Serve food with one spoon and eat with another. Do not allow children to serve food using the spoon (or other cutlery) they eat with.
- * Children should be briefed on how the tasting will work, including:
 - using their senses to explore the food, e.g. look, smell, touch (if appropriate) and taste.
 - not sharing cutlery with their friends during tasting for hygiene reasons.
- * Encourage children to sample the foods, explaining that you would like them to try the foods so they can share their thoughts about them. Make the session a positive experience. Do not force the children to eat anything, instead offer positive comments to those willing to try foods. Explain that if they do not feel they can swallow something, they can remove it quietly from their mouth with a piece of kitchen paper. This should then be thrown in the bin and they should wash their hands.

Types of tests

Depending on the age of the children, and your learning objectives, there are different tasting tests that you could use. Below is a selection of different tests that you could use in school.

Preferences tests

These types of tests give information about children's likes and dislikes for an ingredient or food. They can be used to:

- find out which food the child prefers from a small selection;
- rank a number of foods in order, e.g. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.

For younger children, it may be enough to find out which foods they prefer. However, you can also ask children for their reasoning, allowing for greater use of vocabulary to describe the food, e.g. crunchy, smooth, sweet.

Hedonic scale

This test allows children to tick a rating for each food they sample to indicate their preference.

The scale is usually from 'Dislike very much' to 'Like very much'. If appropriate, children can also make comments about the food's appearance, odour, taste and texture.

Sample	Dislike Very Much	Dislike	Neither Like or Dislike	Like	Like Very Much

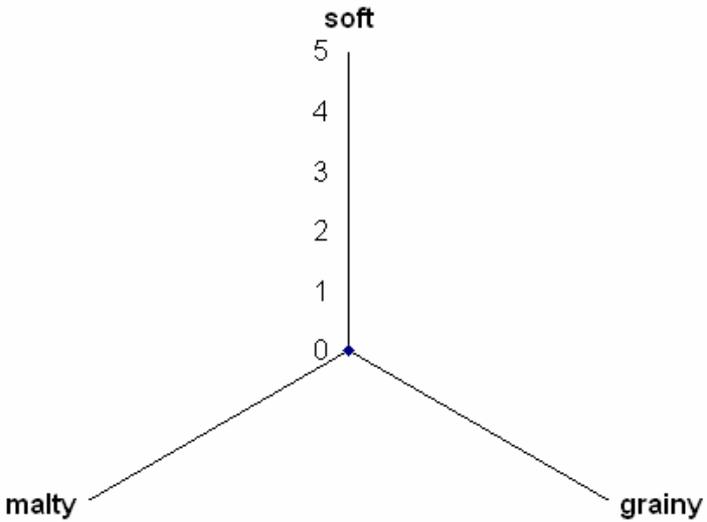
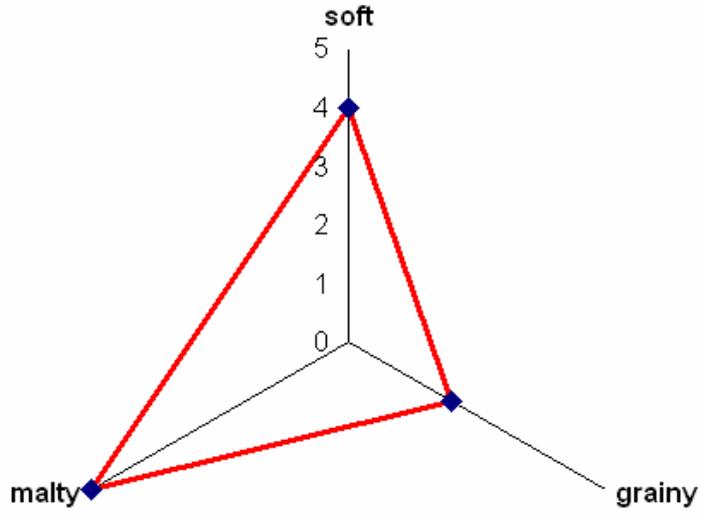
Children can compare their results with each other and create bar charts displaying class information.

Discrimination tests

These types of tests aim to evaluate specific attributes of an ingredient or food, e.g. which sample is most crunchy. In addition, discrimination tests can be used to evaluate a range of attributes for a food leading to star diagram (profile). (Attributes are tasting describing words for a food or range of foods.)

Star diagram

This test allows children to create a profile for one or more foods on a number of attributes, e.g. sweetness, crunchiness. For younger children, start with 3 different attributes, working up for 5 or 8 for older children. The attributes you use will depend on the food you are going to taste. Ask children for suggestions – you could build a sensory vocabulary bank of words to help.

<p>1. Decide on the number and type of attributes, e.g. 3 – soft, malty and grainy.</p>	
<p>2. Taste each sample and rate each attribute on a scale of 0 to 5 (0=can not detect, 5=very strong).</p>	
<p>3. Record the rating on the diagram/profile.</p>	



Hedonic scale

Name: _____

	Dislike very much	Dislike	OK	Like	Like very much	Comments

Star diagram

Name: _____

