

Go Bananas

Ideas for taking the work further

Art

- Close observation. How many different colours are there in a single banana? In a bunch/several bunches? Try drawing a banana from different angles.
- A class of infants in Hackney constructed a banana tree from paper and card.

Cookery

- Make **banana cake** (below)
- Try Caribbean recipes using cooked green bananas and plantains.

Drama

- A group of seven-year-olds decided to enact the journey of the banana in an improvised role-play (with costumes), ending up with a mathematics exercise about pricing bananas.

Geography

- Look at the **Peters projection map** (below). How does it differ from more commonly seen map projections (like Mercator)? What is the overall effect of this type of projection? Investigate the background to the projection.

History

- An Islington primary teacher followed work on bananas by looking at the history of the Caribbean, how it was colonised by the British, and the trade links between the slave trade and plantations.

Local studies

- Survey local shops/ markets. How many brands of banana are available in the shops in your area? Where do the bananas come from?

Mathematics

- Compare prices of bananas in markets /shops/supermarkets. How do prices differ? What reasons might there be for this? How much do bananas cost individually? Per kilo? How much do single bananas weigh? How much difference is there between the smallest and the largest?

Science

- An Islington primary school grew a banana tree, closely observing and recording its growth.
- Study the conditions for bananas ripening/decaying. Observe changes in appearance, texture, taste. Why does banana flesh discolour, once outside its skin? Can this be prevented?

Technology

- Obtain a banana box from a local shop or market. How is it made? How many bananas can it hold? How can the bananas be packed? How heavy is a full box? How much information is found on the box?
- Look at banana labels/boxes. What sort of design are used? Design your own label.

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Supporting Information: Banana cake recipe

A recipe sent in by Cool Planet visitor Liam.

Ingredients

250g (8oz) organic white self-raising flour
1/4 of an organic nutmeg, ground (a challenge to find, but it does exist, honest!)
1 teaspoon organic cinnamon (also can be a challenge to find)
125g (4 oz) organic butter
125g (4 oz) organic caster sugar
125g (4oz) organic margarine
grated rind of an organic lemon
2 organic free range eggs
3 medium Fairtrade bananas, mashed with a fork (it is better if they are a bit old and squashy)
handful of organic sultanas
6 heaped tablespoons organic set honey
1 whole firm fairtrade banana (optional)

Method

Heat oven to 180°C/Gas Mark 4.

Sieve the flour, nutmeg and cinnamon into a bowl, and rub in the margarine. Using a wooden spoon, fold in the sugar, eggs, lemon rind, sultanas, mashed bananas and honey.

Pour half of the mixture in the tin, drop in the whole firm banana and add the rest of the mixture.

Bake for 1¼ to 1½ hours or until a skewer pushed into the cake comes out clean (avoid pushing into the whole banana!).

Leave to cool in the tin for ten minutes before turning out onto a rack to cool. Slice, spread with organic butter, eat.

Recipe taken from Cool Planet for Children:

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/kidsweb/recipes/bananacake.htm>

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Handout: Peters projection map

World map: Peters projection



Taken from Go Bananas! (Oxfam 2000)