

MINDFUL SNACK



BENEFITS

Calming. Develops good eating habits, manners, gratitude, and appreciation for beauty—and serves as remembrance that beauty and peace are available to us in the present moment. (One of the translations for mindfulness is remembrance.) Also a much calmer way to celebrate holidays and have class parties!

TIME

30 minutes

ACTIVITY

This beautiful activity requires some preparation. Begin by finding some colorful paper and coordinating decorative paper napkins. Turn down lights and put on soothing music. Give students antiseptic towelettes that they can use first to wash their hands, then to wipe the desk or table in front of them.

Pass the paper around so that each student has a piece to use for a placemat. Next pass a small basket of napkins and have each student take a napkin to spread out onto their placemat. Ask students to admire the artwork in the napkin. Then pass around a basket or bowl with the names of the students in it. The names can be beautifully handwritten or printed on small pieces of textured paper using a special font. Have each student find their name and place this on their mat. Pass a bowl or tray of cups and have the students each pick out a cup for their setting. (We use a collection of glasses, which we ask the students to treat carefully—as if they were kings and queens—but paper cups work, too.) Then pass around a bowl or basket of beautiful natural objects with which the students can decorate their placemats. You can use small flowers, leaves, rocks, pine cones—things from the natural world. Allow each student to pick two or three items.

When the mats have been decorated, pass around a bowl of fresh fruit and a small amount of chocolate or other dessert. Ask the students to take a portion of each and set the food on their placemat. Pass around a pitcher of fresh juice and have them pour a glass for themselves. No eating until everyone is served. Once everyone has been served, take a minute to tell them about the food they are about to eat: what kind of fruit it is, where it came from, the flavor of the juice, the type of chocolate. It can also be fun to think of all the things that occurred to bring the food to them—the people who grew it, the trucks that carried it, and so on.

Then enjoy the snack!

VARIATIONS & INTEGRATION

Try serving a local food that may not be something the children eat regularly. Have you had a persimmon? A star fruit?

Allow students to collect items from outdoors to decorate their placemat.

Combine activity with Community Circle (p. 110), identifying who provides them with food in their community.