Minestrone is a hearty Italian soup that has been made for centuries. During the Middle Ages, tomatoes from the Americas became a common ingredient in many Italian foods, including minestrone. Minestrone means “big soup” to many Italians, but the word itself comes from the word ‘minestra,’ meaning “to serve.”

Today there are many versions of minestrone in Italy, depending on the region and season. This version uses kale, a highly nutritious dark leafy green, along with other vegetables, beans, and whole wheat pasta. The vegetables can be varied, substituting cabbage, spinach or Swiss chard for the kale, kidney beans for the white beans, or dried herbs rather than fresh.

Bread is served at most Italian meals, especially as an accompaniment to minestrone and other soups. Italian breads come in many shapes and sizes, depending on the region—and sometimes even the town. Thin, crispy breadsticks, known as ‘grissini,’ are said to have originated in the 17th century in the northwestern city of Turin. Now popular throughout Italy, grissini are prepared plain or with a variety of seasonings, including cheese, herbs, or spices. This version uses dried rosemary as additional seasoning.
Grades 2–3: Minestrone Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives

Students will learn (knowledge):
• An important way to be healthy is to eat a variety of foods.
• Different kinds of foods contain different nutrients.

Students will learn how to (skill):
• Practice literacy skills.
• Explore healthy foods through hands-on activities.
• Work in cooperative groups.
• Practice food preparation.
• Exercise choice about eating.

Essential Questions
• Why might it be a good idea to eat new or different foods?
• How can cooking new or different foods change people’s lives?

Introduction and Discussion (20 minutes)

1. Discuss
• Who can tell us what minestrone is?
• What are some of the vegetables we are using today?
• Who knows where minestrone was first made? Who knows where Italy is located?

2. Use the Student Materials
• Read some or all of the Beans and Greens page with the students. Use the questions on the page for discussion.
• Use the map in the student activities to locate Europe, Italy, and the Mediterranean Sea.
• Review additional student activities for use during the time when the food is cooking.

3. Review Safety & Sanitation
• Demonstrate knife techniques and safety before students begin cooking.
• Review hand washing and cleaning procedures.
Food Preparation (60 minutes)

4. Get Organized
   • Make sure that long hair is tied back and that everyone has washed their hands.
   • Divide students into groups. There should be at least one adult in each group of students.
   • Assign a recipe to each group, and review the classroom recipes to show what each group will do.

5. Prepare the Food
   • Direct students to read and prepare the recipes.
   • Allow students to do as much food preparation as possible. Be sure an adult oversees the use of knives and heat in each group.
   • Check in with each group frequently to keep students on task and ensure that the food will be ready on time.
   • Ask each group to clean up their tables and cooking equipment.
   • Direct students to complete the student activities OR lead an enrichment activity until the food is ready.

Eat Together & Clean Up (40 minutes)

6. Serve the Food & Eat Together
   • Briefly discuss ways to show good manners. Remind the class to wait until everyone has been served before eating.
   • Invite several students to help serve the food.
   • Thank everyone for their help! Before eating, invite everyone to say, “Buon appetito (BWOHN app-uh-TEE-tō),” which means “good eating” in Italian.
   • Play music while students are eating.

7. Clean Up
   • Ask students to help wash the tables, dispose of trash, and clean up the floor. If your school makes compost, take the scraps to the compost area.

Try one of these great enrichment activities:
   • Read Stone Soup by Marcia Brown.
   • Work with students to group minestrone vegetables by part of the plant (bulb, leaf, stalk, root, etc). Use real food examples if available.
   • Grind wheat berries with a grain mill.

Additional Resources
   • Italy (Lands, Peoples, and Cultures Series) by Greg Nickles.
   • We Came to North America: The Italians by Greg Nickles.

Have fun practicing these Italian phrases with each other!

Buon appetito! “Good eating”
Grazie! “Thank you”
Prego! “You’re welcome”

Music Recommendations
   • Italy: Folk Songs from Naples.
   • Funiculi Funicula. Italian Mandolines.
   • Italian Cafe. Putumayo.

Tasting and eating are always voluntary! The best way to encourage a child to try something new is to allow choice.
## Shopping List

**Minestrone**
- 4 cups broth chicken or vegetable
- 1 (15-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 2 cans (15-ounce) white beans (cannellini, navy or kidney)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1½ cups small whole wheat pasta
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
- Salt & black pepper
- 6 parsley sprigs
- 4 thyme sprigs
- 2 carrots
- 2 zucchini
- 1 medium onion
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 celery stalks
- 4-5 kale leaves (about 1½ cups chopped)
- 2 cups frozen Italian green beans
- 4 ounces Parmesan cheese

**Breadsticks**
- 2 teaspoons yeast
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- Salt
- Baking powder
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 2½ cups unbleached white flour
- Additional olive oil and kosher salt

**Optional Display Items:**
- Dried pasta shapes and colors for display
- Dried beans for display
- Grain mill
- Wheat berries for grinding

### General Equipment & Supplies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Kitchen Equipment</th>
<th>Medium skillet</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(pg. 18-19)</td>
<td>Medium saucepan with lid (for cooking pasta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot plate (2 burners)</td>
<td>Vegetable scrubbers (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric griddle</td>
<td>Pastry brush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockpot with lid</td>
<td>Ladle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bowls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stainless steel spoons or plastic spoons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Napkins</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Equipment for Each Recipe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minestrone Part 1</th>
<th>Minestrone Part 2</th>
<th>Breadsticks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry &amp; liquid measuring cups</td>
<td>Dry &amp; liquid measuring cups</td>
<td>Dry &amp; liquid measuring cups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measuring spoons</td>
<td>Measuring spoons</td>
<td>Measuring spoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting boards</td>
<td>Cutting boards</td>
<td>Cutting boards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stainless steel mixing bowls</td>
<td>Stainless steel mixing bowls</td>
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<td>Mixing spoons</td>
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<td>Ruler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stockpot with lid</td>
<td>Vegetable scrubber</td>
<td>Vegetable scrubber</td>
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<td>Vegetable scrubber</td>
<td>Colander</td>
<td>Colander</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colander</td>
<td>Micro grater</td>
<td>Micro grater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can opener</td>
<td>Medium skillet</td>
<td>Medium skillet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.cookingwithkids.org  
Cooking with Kids  2-3
### Helpful Tips for Making Minestrone with 2–3 Students

#### Shopping Tips
- Use ¼ teaspoon dried thyme in the soup if fresh thyme isn’t available.
- Use frozen green beans if you can’t find Italian green beans.
- Fresh rosemary or cracked black pepper are excellent substitutions for dried rosemary in the breadsticks.

#### During Class
- This soup recipe is very flexible! Don’t worry too much about the exact order of adding the ingredients—add them as soon as they are ready.
- The breadstick dough should be stiff and dry enough that no additional flour is needed while rolling.
- **Roll with it!** If the students in one of the minestrone groups finish their food preparation before the other groups, direct them to help roll breadsticks.
- The breadsticks cook on an electric or stovetop griddle. Students like to work with a partner to brush them with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, and experiment with tongs to turn the breadsticks while they cook.
- **Save your sponge!** Fill the breadstick dough bowl with cool water and let it soak before washing.

#### Before Class
- Kale needs to be cleaned thoroughly before use. Wash greens once before class to make sure all the dirt and grit has been removed. A second washing won’t hurt!
- The lesson and recipes are designed to be completed in two hours, but if you are worried about time:
  - Cook the pasta before the class begins. This will save time, especially if you are working on a hot plate and there are only two burners.
  - Start to heat the broth before the class begins.

#### Keep Things Safe

##### Cutting Vegetables
- Carrots, celery, and zucchini can all be cut with a butter knife. Cut lengthwise into long thin strips about ¼-inch wide.
- Use a sharp knife to cut the onions—*it produces fewer tears!*
- Mincing garlic is a safe and easy way to use a sharp knife with children.
- If you end up with various sized piece of vegetables, don’t worry; it will all get cooked!

##### Caution!
- Can openers and graters are sharp tools and need adult supervision.
- Serving hot soup: Ladle the soup into bowls and let cool slightly before passing out the bowls, especially if students are helping to serve.
Minestrone Classroom Recipes

Minestrone Soup Part 1
Minestrone Soup Part 2
Breadsticks
Minestrone Soup Part 1

Ingredients for Broth
- 4 cups broth, chicken or vegetable
- 4 cups water
- 1 can (15-ounce) crushed tomatoes
- 1 bay leaf
- 6 parsley sprigs
- 4 thyme sprigs

Ingredients for Soup
- ½ teaspoon (tsp) dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon (tsp) dried oregano
- 1½ teaspoons (tsp) salt
- ½ teaspoon (tsp) black pepper
- 2 carrots
- 2 zucchini
- 2 cups frozen Italian green beans
- 2 cans (15-ounce) white beans

Directions
1. **Make the broth:** In a pot, combine broth, water, tomatoes, bay leaf, parsley and thyme sprigs. Bring to a boil over high heat.

2. **Make the soup:** Measure the basil, oregano, salt, and pepper into a small bowl.

3. Cut the carrots into ¼-inch pieces. Cut the zucchini lengthwise into quarters and then cut into ¼-inch pieces.

4. Measure the green beans into a bowl. Open the cans of white beans. Do not drain them.

5. Add the spices, carrots, zucchini, green beans, and white beans to the pot. Stir and cover.

**Note:** The students working with the Minestrone Part 2 recipe will finish preparing the soup.
Sopa *minestrone*: primera parte

**Ingredientes para el caldo**
- 4 tazas de caldo, de pollo o de verduras
- 4 tazas de agua
- 1 lata (de 15 onzas) de tomates machacados
- 1 hoja de laurel
- 6 ramitas de perejil
- 4 ramitas de tomillo

**Ingredientes para la sopa**
- ½ cucharadita (tsp) de albahaca seca
- ¼ cucharadita (tsp) de orégano seco
- 1½ cucharaditas (tsp) de sal
- ½ cucharadita (tsp) de pimienta negra
- 2 zanahorias
- 2 calabacitas zucchini
- 2 tazas de frijoles verdes congelados, estilo italiano
- 2 latas (de 15 onzas) de frijoles blancos

**Instrucciones**

1. **Prepare el caldo**: En la olla, mezcle el caldo, el agua, los tomates, la hoja de laurel, y las ramitas de perejil y tomillo. Póngalos a hervir a fuego alto.

2. **Prepare la sopa**: Mida la albahaca, el orégano, la sal, y la pimienta negra y póngalos en un tazón pequeño.

3. Corte las zanahorias en trozos de ¼ pulgada. Corte las calabacitas a lo largo, en cuartos, y luego en trozos de ¼ pulgada.

4. Mida los frijoles verdes y póngalos en un tazón. Abra las latas de frijoles blancos pero no escurra el líquido.

5. Agregue las especias, las zanahorias, las calabacitas, los frijoles verdes y los frijoles blancos a la olla. Mezcle y tape la olla.

**Nota**: Los estudiantes que están preparando la receta *Sopa minestrone: segunda parte* terminarán la sopa.
Minestrone Soup Part 2

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 celery stalks
- 3 tablespoons (tbsp) olive oil
- 4-5 kale leaves
- 3 cups cooked whole wheat pasta  
  (1½ cups dry - prepared in advance)
- Parmesan cheese for topping

Cook's Checklist:

- Are your hands washed?
- Do you have all your ingredients?
- Do you have all your kitchen tools?
- Are the vegetables and fruits washed?

Note: The students working with the Minestrone Part 1 recipe will get the broth started for the soup.

Directions

1. Cut the onion into ¼-inch pieces. Peel and mince the garlic. Cut the celery into ¼-inch pieces.

2. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic, and celery and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes until softened. Add the sautéed vegetables to the pot and cover. When the soup returns to boiling, reduce the heat to medium. Simmer the soup for 15 to 20 minutes, partially covered, until the vegetables are tender.

3. While the soup is cooking, tear or chop the kale leaves into 1-inch pieces to equal 2 cups. Grate the Parmesan cheese and set it aside.

4. Add the kale to the soup last and cook for several minutes, until the greens are wilted. Remove from the heat. Discard the bay leaf, parsley, and thyme sprigs.

5. To serve: Add the cooked pasta to the soup. Ladle hot soup into bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.
Sopa *minestrone*: segunda parte

**Ingredientes**
1 cebolla mediana
4 dientes de ajo
2 tallos de apio
3 cucharadas (tbsp) de aceite de oliva
4 ó 5 hojas de col rizada
3 tazas de pasta de trigo integral, cocida
   (1 1/2 tazas de pasta seca - preparada antes de la clase)
Queso parmesano para espolvorear sobre la sopa

**Nota:** Los estudiantes que están preparando la receta *Sopa minestrone: primera parte* empezarán el caldo para la sopa.

**Instrucciones**

2. Caliente el aceite de oliva en un sartén a fuego medio-alto. Agregue la cebolla, el ajo, y el apio y salteélos hasta que se ablanden, de 3 a 5 minutos. Agregue las verduras salteadas a la olla sopera y tápela. Cuando la sopa vuelva a hervir, reduzca el fuego a medio. Hierva la sopa parcialmente cubierta por 15 a 20 minutos, hasta que las verduras se ablanden.

3. Mientras la sopa hierva, rompa o pique las hojas de col rizada en trozos de 1 pulgada hasta obtener 2 tazas. Ralle el queso parmesano y póngalo a un lado.

4. Por último, agregue la col rizada a la sopa y cocine por varios minutos, hasta que las hojas se marchiten. Retire del fuego. Saque de la olla la hoja de laurel y las ramitas de perejil y tomillo.

5. **Para servir:** Agregue la pasta cocida a la sopa. Vierta un cucharón de sopa caliente en cada tazón y espolvoree con queso parmesano.
Breadsticks

**Ingredients**
- 1¼ cups warm water
- 2 teaspoons (tsp) yeast
- 2 tablespoons (tbsp) olive oil
- 1 tablespoon (tbsp) honey
- 1 teaspoon (tsp) dried rosemary
- 1½ teaspoons (tsp) salt
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ¼ teaspoon (tsp) baking powder
- 2¼ cups unbleached white flour
- Additional olive oil and kosher salt

**Note:** If the students in the other groups have finished their recipes, share some of the pieces of dough with them so they can roll out some breadsticks, too!

**Directions**

1. In a bowl, combine the water and yeast. Let sit for a minute or two, until the yeast is dissolved. Add the olive oil, honey, rosemary, salt, and whole wheat flour, stirring well.

2. Add the white flour, 1 cup at a time, along with the baking powder, stirring until a soft dough forms. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured clean surface and knead for 3 to 5 minutes, until smooth. This is a stiff dough.

3. Flatten the dough into a disc about 6 inches in diameter. Cut the dough into 4 equal pieces.

4. Form each piece of dough into a disc about 5 inches in diameter. Cut each piece into 8 equal pieces. You should have a total of 32 pieces.

5. **Make 32 total breadsticks:** Roll each piece of dough into a cylinder that is about 8 inches long.

6. Cook the breadsticks on a hot griddle for about 10 minutes, turning when lightly browned and almost crisp. While the breadsticks are cooking, lightly brush the breadsticks with olive oil and sprinkle lightly with kosher salt. Let cool before serving.
### Varillas de pan

**Ingredientes**

1 1/4 tazas de agua tibia  
2 cucharaditas (tsp) de levadura  
2 cucharadas (tbsp) de aceite de oliva  
1 cucharada (tbsp) de miel  
1 cucharadita (tsp) de romero seco  
1 1/2 cucharaditas (tsp) de sal  
1 taza de harina de trigo integral  
1/4 cucharadita (tsp) de polvo de hornear  
2 1/2 tazas de harina blanca, sin blanquear  
Aceite de oliva adicional y sal kosher

**Nota:** Si los estudiantes de los otros grupos han terminado de preparar su receta, comparta con ellos algunos pedazos de masa para que también puedan hacer varillas de pan.

**Instrucciones**

1. En un tazón, mezcle el agua y la levadura. Déjelos reposar uno o dos minutos, hasta que se disuelva la levadura. Agregue el aceite de oliva, la miel, el romero, la sal y la harina de trigo integral, revolviendo bien.

2. Agregue la harina blanca, 1 taza a la vez, junto con el polvo de hornear, revolviendo hasta que se forme una masa blanda. Sobre una superficie limpia, espolvoree un poquito de harina y amase la masa de 3 a 5 minutos hasta obtener una masa suave. Esta es una masa firme y lisa.

3. Aplane la masa formando un disco de unas 6 pulgadas de diámetro. Corte la masa en 4 pedazos iguales.


5. **Prepare 32 varillas de pan:** Con cada pedazo de masa forme un cilindro de unas 8 pulgadas de largo.

6. Cocine las varillas de pan sobre una plancha caliente por unos 10 minutos, girándolas cuando se doren ligeramente y estén casi crujientes. Mientras se cocinan, píntelas con una pequeña cantidad de aceite de oliva y espolvoreelas con un poquito de sal kosher. Déjelas enfriar antes de servir.
Student Activities

Minestrone and Breadsticks

Minestrone y varillas de pan

Today I learned. . .
Hoy aprendí. . .

Student activities are in the copy masters.
Los frijoles y las verduras de hojas verdes

Datos de nutrición
Tanto los frijoles frescos como los secos contienen muchos nutrientes. Los frijoles secos son parte del grupo alimenticio de la carne y los frijoles, mientras que los frijoles verdes frescos son parte del grupo alimenticio de las verduras. Los frijoles secos contienen más proteína que los frijoles verdes. La proteína le ayuda a nuestros cuerpos a crecer fuertes.

La col rizada es una verdura de hojas verdes que es parte de la familia de los repollos. La col rizada es rica en vitamina A y C, y también contiene hierro.

Los frijoles y las verduras de hojas verdes en la historia
Los frijoles son uno de los alimentos más antiguos que se conocen. Los frijoles rojos, los negros, los pintos, los blancos y las habas crecieron primero en México. Cuando los exploradores europeos vinieron a las Américas a comienzos de los años 1500, llevaron estos frijoles de regreso a Europa.

La col rizada creció primero alrededor del Mar Mediterráneo. Hace miles de años, habían personas que cultivaban y comían col rizada y otras verduras de hojas verdes. Ya en aquellos tiempos, sabían que las verduras de hojas verdes eran alimentos saludables.

La sopa minestrone
El minestrone es una sopa que se ha cocinado en Italia desde hace mucho tiempo. Probablemente se preparaba con frijoles, verduras de hojas verdes y otras verduras que crecían allí. Hoy en día, es común que le agreguen tomates, pasta y carne.

Palabras de vocabulario
- nutrientes
- contiene
- Mar Mediterráneo
- probablemente

Preguntas para discusión
➤ ¿Dónde creció primero la col rizada?
➤ ¿Qué contienen los frijoles secos que le ayuda a nuestros cuerpos a crecer fuertes?
➤ ¿Qué es el minestrone?
Beans and Greens

**Nutrition Facts**
Fresh and dried beans give us lots of **nutrients**. Dried beans are part of the meat and beans food group, and fresh green beans are part of the vegetable food group. Dried beans have more protein than fresh green beans. Protein helps our bodies grow strong.

Kale is a leafy green vegetable that is part of the cabbage family. Kale has lots of vitamin A and C, and also **contains** iron.

**Beans and Greens in History**
Beans are one of the oldest known foods. Kidney beans, black beans, pinto beans, lima beans, and white kidney beans first grew in Mexico. When explorers came to the Americas in the early 1500s, they took these beans back with them to Europe.

Kale first grew near the **Mediterranean Sea**. Thousands of years ago, people grew and ate kale and other leafy greens. Even then, people knew greens were healthy foods.

**Minestrone**
Minestrone is a soup that has been made in Italy for a long time. It was **probably** made from whatever beans, greens, and other vegetables that grew nearby. Today, tomatoes, pasta, and meat are often added to the soup.

**Vocabulary Words**
- nutrients
- contains
- Mediterranean Sea
- probably

**Discussion Questions**
- Where did kale first grow?
- What do dried beans have that helps our bodies grow strong?
- What is minestrone?
Europe is one of the seven continents. Europe is made up of many countries.
➤ Find Italy and color it.
➤ Name three countries that border Italy.

Grade 2 CCSS:
ELA.LITERACY.RI.2.1 / RI.2.5 / RF.2.3

Grade 3 CCSS: ELA.LITERACY.RI.3.1 / RI.3.7
Student Activities

La planta de frijol

➤ Encuentre las partes de la planta de frijol. Una con una línea el nombre de la parte de la planta con el dibujo.

la hoja
la vaina de frijol
la raíz
la flor
el tallo

➤ Dibuje más raíces, hojas y vainas en la planta de frijol.

Bean Plant

➤ Find the parts of the bean plant. Draw a line from the name of the plant part to the drawing.

leaf
bean pod
root
flower
stem

➤ Draw more roots, leaves, and bean pods on the bean plant.

Grade 2 CCSS:
ELA.LITERACY.RI.2.5 / RI.2.7 / RF.2.3

Grade 3 CCSS:
ELA.LITERACY.RI.3.1 / RI.3.4 / RI.3.7
Breadstick Math

➤ Draw a picture to show your work. Then write the equation.

Example: 4 breadsticks + 4 breadsticks = ______ breadsticks.

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\includegraphics[width=0.2\textwidth]{breadsticks}
\end{array} \]

\[ 4 + 4 = 8 \]

12 breadsticks – 6 breadsticks = ______ breadsticks.

5 breadsticks + 2 breadsticks = ______ breadsticks.

➤ Read the word problem and answer the questions.

Ms. García’s cooking class made 20 breadsticks. While Sam and Elise were cooking the breadsticks, 7 breadsticks got burned. Sam threw them away. While Elise was carrying the rest of the breadsticks to the table, 3 breadsticks fell on the floor. Elise threw them away.

How many breadsticks were left?

10 breadsticks

➤ Draw a picture to show your work. Write number sentences to show what happened.

\[ 20 - 7 = 13 \]

\[ 13 - 3 = 10 \]
Student Activities

Writing and Drawing Activity

➤ Draw a picture of three vegetables that we cooked today. Write two or three sentences about how the vegetables were used.

Actividad para escribir y dibujar

➤ Dibuje tres verduras que cocinamos hoy. Escriba dos o tres oraciones para contar cómo se usaron estas verduras.

Grade 2 CCSS:
ELA.LITERACY.RI.2.1 / W.2.6 / W.2.8

Grade 3 CCSS:
ELA.LITERACY.W.3.2 / W.3.3 / W.3.8

Notes