

Children's Learning Activities Using Dry Beans

Bean Buffet (ages 4 and older)

Skills: Sensory tasting, comparing, decision-making

Materials: Variety of prepared dry bean dishes such as baked beans, lima beans, refried beans, black-eyed peas, etc., plates and utensils for tasting; graph for recording which liked best.

Activity: Prepare a variety of beans. Have dried beans beside dish so children can compare cooked to dried product. Have children write down by smiles and frowns, which bean dishes, they liked.

Sorting and Comparing (ages 2 and older)

Skills: Sorting, comparing, small motor skill development

Materials: Different varieties of dry beans such as: kidney, fava, lentil, navy, pinto, chickpea, lima, black-eyed, split peas, etc.; egg cartons

Activity: Give small paper cup filled with beans. Sort into the egg carton. Ask: What makes one bean look different than another? Which beans do you have the most of? The least of? About the same amount?

Pour and Measure (ages 3 and older)

Skills: Quantitative analysis, fine motor development, observation, size & shape determinations, comparison skills

Materials: Provide dry beans, funnel, dishpan, containers of different sizes (cup, pint, quart, gallon) measuring cups and spoons.

Activity: Using measuring equipment, fill containers with dry beans. Use words such as: full, empty, half, whole, how much, how many spoons or cups, level, more, less.

How Many Beans? (ages 4 and older)

Skills: Decision making, estimation, and counting, understanding least to most comparison skills

Materials: Clear jars of different sizes, rubber bands, dry beans, pencil and paper
Activity: Place rubber bands around different sized clear jars. Have students place beans in jars filling up to the rubber band line. Let students guess which jars have the most beans which the least. Record each guess. After

guessing have students count exact number of beans. Return the beans to the jars and place in order from the most beans to the least.

Discuss the activity: Which jar contains the most beans?
The least beans? Why? Which have the same number?
What made some jars look like they had more than others?
Did any jars surprise you with the number of beans they held?

Bean Germination/Wake Up Little Beans (ages 4 and older)

Skills: Language skill development, fine motor skills, following direction; prediction and observation

Materials: Tall clear glasses or jars (at least 4" with straight sides); dark colored construction paper, paper towels, dry bean seeds (limas work well); water; warm spot (65-75°F)

Activity: Line the inside of each glass with construction paper. Trim off the top edge of the paper so it is even with the glass. Crumple paper towels and put into the glass. Slip a bean between construction paper and each glass side about half way up the side of the glass. Slowly pour water into the center of the paper towels until the construction paper is wet but not underwater. Put glass in a warm place. Keep the paper towels moist and check the seed's progress daily.

Dried Bean Dominos (ages 4 and older)

Skills: Following direction, counting, matching, fine motor skill development

Materials: 26 index cards, dry beans, glue, marking pen

Activity: To make dominos, draw a line through the middle of each index card. Glue beans on the card to make the domino dots. Each half can have zero to six dots, no two cards should have the same combination of numbers. When the glue has dried, allow the children to use the cards to play dominos.

Food Collages (ages 3 and older)

Skills: Fine-motor skills, gluing, creativity

Materials: Package of mixed dry beans, glue and sturdy paper

Activity: Have children place glue on their papers. Cotton swabs can be used to spread glue on the paper and create designs. Place dried beans on glued area.

Beans, Beans, Beans Marching Song (ages 3 and older)

(Tune: *A Marching Song*)

Beans, beans, green beans, lima bean, pinto beans,
Baked beans, jumping beans, all kinds of beans.

Chorus: Beans, beans, beans, beans,
 Beans, beans, beans, beans,
 Beans, beans, beans, beans,
 All kinds of beans!

Beans for dinner, beans for lunch,
Beans for breakfast, beans for brunch. (Chorus)

Pork and beans, string beans, mung beans, navy beans,
Kidney beans, pole beans, all kinds of beans. (Chorus)

Bush beans, snap beans, soybeans, wax beans,
Runner beans, fava beans, all kinds of beans! (Chorus)

Bean Tambourine (ages 4 and older)

Skills: Fine and gross motor skills, rhythm and music

Materials: 2 paper plates or aluminum pie pans, crayons, ribbon or yarn, crepe paper, construction paper, dry beans, masking tape, glue.

Activity: Decorate paper plates or aluminum pie pans with crayons, construction paper, yarn and/or ribbon.
Put a handful of dry beans on one paper plate. Lay the other paper plate down over the first and tape around the edges. Add crepe paper ruffles or streamers.



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