

Kids' Club Session Plan



Introduction

We're on a mission to help everyone discover how amazing beans and pulses are. They may be small, but they are MIGHTY! They are super for our bodies, great for the planet, and delicious too!

We have created many Full of Beans activities and resources to help people discover, explore and celebrate beans and pulses through growing, tasting and cooking.

This Session Plan will support you to deliver a 2 hour Full of Beans tasting session with children and young people in holiday clubs, school clubs or youth groups. Remember, the most important things are to have fun and increase opportunities for children and young people to taste beans and pulses. Repeated tasting is the most powerful way to increase the likelihood that a child will continue to eat a food in the future.

Quick facts: why we're celebrating beans and pulses

- **Nutritional powerhouses** – beans and pulses are rich in protein, fibre and essential nutrients which support growth and development.
- **Environmentally friendly** – they use less water to grow, improve soil health and have a lower carbon footprint compared to animal sources of protein.
- **Tasty and versatile** – from dips and stews to salads and snacks, beans and pulses can be enjoyed in lots of different ways.
- **Affordable and accessible** – they're budget friendly and widely available dried and in tins or cartons.

Adapting your session

This session plan is designed to be flexible and can be easily adapted for future sessions. The time allocated for each task represents the minimum required, but feel free to adjust them to best suit your club's needs. Whether you're planning follow-up tastings, cooking activities, or interactive games, the [Full of Beans Resource Collection](#) offers a wide range of ideas to keep children and young people engaged.

Important note on dietary restrictions and allergies

Remember to consider any dietary restrictions or allergies the children may have and provide alternative foods to try where necessary. Find out more [here](#).



Materials

Food items:

- Tins or cartons of pulses (kidney beans, butter beans, chickpeas)
- Vegetable oil or spray oil
- All-purpose seasoning (or an alternative seasoning of your choice)

Kitchen equipment:

- Air fryer or oven
- Bowls or cups (for preparing and serving pulses)
- Paper towels or clean cloths (for drying pulses)
- Sieve
- Spoons or spatula

Stationery:

- Paper (for team logos and handmade certificates)
- Pens, pencils, crayons, markers
- Stickers or decorative items (optional)

Printed resources (if you have the facility to print):

- Measuring success poster
- Full of beans certificates

Alternatives if printing is not available:

- Use a whiteboard, flipchart, or large sheet of paper to record baseline and follow-up responses
- Invite children to design their own certificates using blank paper and creative supplies



Session Overview

TASK 1 Introduce Full of Beans to your club (10 minutes)

TASK 2 Full of Beans warm-up game (15 minutes)

TASK 3 Measuring success – baseline questions (10 minutes)

TASK 4 Put children into beans teams (10 minutes)

TASK 5 Bean rotation stations (45 minutes)

Take a look at pages [18 and 19](#) for top tips for tasting activities

TASK 6 Measuring success – follow-up questions (10 minutes)

TASK 7 Full of Beans celebration (20 minutes)



Task 1

Introduce Full of Beans to your club

10
mins

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE MISSION

We're on a mission to superpower our city and make us all Full of Beans! First, we're on a discovery mission. Who knows what legumes are?

(give children the opportunity to answer)

I don't know many adults that know what legumes are! Legumes are plants that grow pods. Inside those pods are seeds. Does anyone know what types of seeds grow in the pods?

(give children the opportunity to answer)

There are four main types: beans, chickpeas, lentils and peas. Now, for a tricky question. Does anyone know what a pulse is? Not the heartbeat pulse... there's another type of pulse.

(give children the opportunity to answer)

They come from pods that have been left on the plant to dry, and the seed dries. This dried seed is called a pulse. I bet there's a type of pulse that you all know.

(give children the opportunity to answer)

Do you need a hint? Can anyone think of a type of pulse that's often served at school?

(give children the opportunity to answer)

Baked beans! Does anyone know the names of any other pulses?

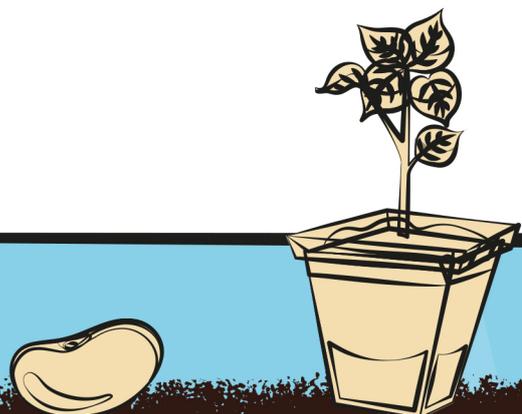
(give children the opportunity to answer)

There's so many! As well as chickpeas, there's green peas, yellow peas, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans, haricot beans, pinot beans, cannellini beans, butter beans, green lentils, brown lentils, red lentils, and many more! They come in all sorts of different colours and shapes. Does anyone have some beans and pulses at home? Dried, in cans or cartons?

(give children the opportunity to answer)

You can buy them dry and cook them at home. Dry pulses can be stored for years! Or you can buy them ready cooked in cans, cartons or jars. There are so many types of beans and pulses, and they are awesome. In today's Full of Beans mission we're going to discover more about them.

You'll even get to taste them!



Task 2

Warm-up game



15
mins

This is an active game so you need a large enough space for children to spread out (can be indoors or outdoors).

It's the perfect game to play to get children excited for the activities to follow.

Instructions

1. Gather the group and explain the game.
"We're going to play a game called The Full of Beans warm-up game! In this game, each type of bean has a special action. When I call out a bean name, you'll do the matching action. For example, if I say 'Jumping Bean,' you'll jump up and down! If I say 'Runner Bean,' you'll run on the spot. There are lots of beans and fun moves, so listen carefully and get ready to move. Let's learn the actions together first!"
2. Demonstrate the actions for each bean (ask young leaders or helpers to help demonstrate).
3. Once the group knows the actions, call out different bean names in a random order and the children follow the correct action.
4. Gather the group and reflect briefly, what was your favourite bean?

Jumping Bean

Jump up and down on the spot

Coffee Bean

Stir a mug of coffee

Runner Bean

Running on spot

Bush Bean

Trek wearily across the hot ground as if in the outback

Bean Pod

Hold arms up and clasp hands together over head, puff cheeks out, as if you're a pod full of beans

Chilli Bean

Shiver as if cold

Bean Pole

Hold an invisible pole and look up straining to see how high it is

Baked Bean

Fan yourself as if you're really hot from being in the sun

Jelly Bean

Wibbly wobble

Mixed beans

Let the children choose which bean & action they all want to do – perfect to end the game

French Bean

Wave and say "Bonjour!"

Butter Bean

Skating and slipping about

Broad Bean

Arms out to the side with slow and heavy movements



Task 3

Measuring success - baseline questions

10
mins

HOW TO INTRODUCE THIS ACTIVITY

"To measure how well we do on our mission, we need to measure our starting point. This is also known as the baseline. Then, at the end of the session we'll go through our follow-up questions. By measuring at the start and again at the end we can see what has changed and will be able to see how much we've achieved. Let's find out who's already a little Full of Beans!"

Ask children to respond to these questions.

Put your hand up if you've ever eaten:



Kidney beans? These are the dark red beans. You often get these in a chilli con carne, rice and peas, and bean burgers.



Butter beans? These are quite big white beans that are flat.



Chickpeas? These are round and light yellow. You can get them in chickpea curries, or in hummus which is mushed up chickpeas.



Lentils? These are very small, and you can get them in different colours including red, green and brown. You often get them in curries like daal where they are cooked a lot and sometimes go a bit mushy. You can also get them in soups and salads.

Recording responses

If you have the facility to print the Measuring Success Poster, please record how many children were present at the session and note down how many children raised their hands for each pulse.

If you don't have the facility to print the Measuring Success Poster, please use a whiteboard, flipchart, or a large sheet of paper to record how many children were present at the session and note down how many children raised their hands for each pulse.

*Take a picture of your recorded responses and send to the Food System Team by emailing FoodSystemPH@birmingham.gov.uk.



Task 4

Put children into bean teams

10
mins

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE TASK

"We're now going to start our Full of Beans mission! Today, you'll be working in Bean Teams to complete fun activities, try new foods, and celebrate your achievements.

Throughout the session, you'll have the chance to earn certificates for things like trying new beans, showing great teamwork, being creative, and more. At the end, we'll celebrate your progress and hand out certificates to recognise your efforts!"

Bean team setup

- Divide children and young people into teams (4–6 per team).
- Ask each team to:
 - Choose a Bean Team name
 - Design a team logo

Whilst teams are being set up, begin prepping the pulses for the tasting station

1. Clean and sanitise food preparation and tasting station areas and utensils.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Drain and rinse kidney beans, butter beans and chickpeas.
4. Pat dry thoroughly with paper towels.



Task 5

Bean rotation stations

45
mins

Rotate children and young people in their Bean Teams around three activity stations (15 minutes at each station). Encourage creativity, teamwork, and curiosity. See the guidance below on how to run the activities at each station. and see page 3 for the list of materials needed.

15
mins

STATION 1: TASTE TESTING AND SENSORY EXPLORATION

Ask children to wash their hands thoroughly before they touch any food.

Remember to consider any dietary restrictions or allergies the children may have and provide alternative foods to try where necessary.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE TASK

"It can take trying a food 10-15 times to develop a liking for it. Sometimes when we try a new food, we don't know what to think about the taste and texture. Our brains say, "what's this?!" However, the more we try it, the more familiar it becomes, and the more we start to like it. We just need to train our taste buds to start liking it! Today, we're going to explore kidney beans, butter beans and chickpeas."

Instructions

1. Invite children to take turns:
 - Drizzling oil (pre-measured) over each bowl of pulses.
 - Sprinkling all-purpose seasoning, or the alternative seasoning of your choice, evenly across the beans
 - Mixing gently with spoons or spatulas until the beans are coated.
(Encourage children to describe what they see and smell as they mix)
2. Air fry the pulses at 200°C for 5-6 minutes (or use an oven and for 8-10 minutes). While the pulses are cooking, lead a short discussion:
 - Ask: "Do you know the five senses?" Let them answer: sight, smell, feel, taste, hear.
 - Ask: "Which part of the body do we use for each sense?" Let them respond.
3. Let the pulses cool slightly before serving.
4. Serve small portions of each air-fried pulse in labelled cups or bowls to the bean teams.

5. Encourage the children to try each pulse and ask them to consider their senses as they explore the food.

Sight: What do you see? (e.g., colour, red, green, brown, white, shape, round, spherical, curved, long, flat, size, small, texture, shiny, smooth, what it looks similar to)

Smell: What can you smell? (e.g., mild, strong, no smell, salty, metallic, musty, flowery, fruity)

Feel: What is the texture?(e.g., hard, soft, smooth, crunchy, gritty, juicy, lumpy, powdery, squishy, wet, slippery)

Taste: What is the flavour? (e.g., sweet, salty, mild, strong, fresh, sour, refreshing)

Hear: What can you hear? (e.g., silent, loud, quiet, wet, crunchy)

6. Encourage the Bean Teams to discuss the beans and pulses and ask questions such as, 'did it taste like anything you've eaten before?' or 'how did it feel in your mouth?'
7. Remind children that you can train your taste buds to like a food, and it can take 10-15 tries before it happens.
8. Provide each child with something to write on and ask them to rate each bean and pulse based on their experience and write down their comments.



Joke

I lost one pea from
my plate at dinner
the other day

It was an escape-pea!



STATION 2: RECIPE AND MENU DESIGN

Provide paper, colouring pencils, and markers.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE TASK

"Welcome to the Recipe & Menu Design Station! Today, you're going to become chefs. Your challenge is to create a delicious and imaginative menu using beans and pulses as the star ingredients.

You'll be designing three dishes, one for breakfast, one for lunch, and one for dinner. Each dish should include beans or pulses, and you'll bring them to life by drawing what they look like on the plate and writing a mouthwatering description that makes people want to eat them right away!"

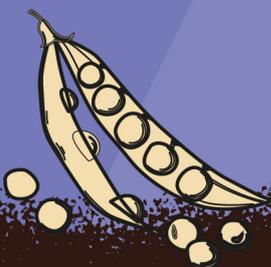
Instructions

1. Provide paper, pencils, colouring pencils and markers.
2. Explain the task using the introductory text above.
3. Guide the children through the activity:
 - Ask children to name each dish creatively.
 - Encourage them to draw each dish, showing what it looks like on the plate.
 - Prompt them to label the ingredients, these can be real (e.g., chickpeas, lentils) or imaginative (e.g., rainbow beans).
 - Support them in writing a delicious-sounding description for each dish. Use words that describe taste, texture, and appeal.
4. Wrap up the activity by inviting children to share one of their dishes with the group.

Joke

How do you address an
audience full of pulses?

Ladies and lentil-men...



15
mins

STATION 3: THE FULL OF BEANS QUIZ

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE TASK

"Welcome to the Full of Beans Quiz! This is where your Bean Team gets to show off your brainpower and bean knowledge. You'll be working together to answer fun, surprising, and sometimes silly questions all about beans, pulses, legumes, and the amazing things they do for our bodies and the planet."

Instructions

1. Provide paper and pens.
2. Ask the children to work in their Bean Teams to write their answers down on the piece of paper. Teams can then mark each other's answers at the end of each round.

Round 1

1. What is a legume?

Answer: It's a plant that grows pods.

2. What is the name of the storybook character who grows a giant beanstalk using some magic beans?

Answer: Jack

3. Name a legume pod or seed that we eat fresh (rather than dried).

Answer: Accept the following answers... peas, runner beans, green beans, broad beans, string beans, French beans, mangetout, sugar snap peas.



4. What is a pulse?

Answer: It's a dried seed. Pulses are seeds from legume pods that have been left on the plant to dry out before harvesting.

5. Name four types of pulses.

Answer: Beans, chickpeas, lentils and peas. (Give a point for each)

6. In 2022, The Jelly Bean Factory removed one flavour of jelly bean from their range of 36 different flavoured beans. What was the flavour they removed? Was it

- A. Strawberry
- B. Blueberry
- C. Cinnamon
- D. Baked Bean?

Answer: C. Cinnamon

Round 2

1. If there's a food you're not sure that you like, how many times do scientists say you have to try it to start liking it?

Answer: 10-15 times. *(Teams with an answer between 10 and 15 get a point.)* Sometimes when we try a new food we don't know what to think about the taste and texture. Our brains say, "what's this?!" However, the more we try it, the more familiar it becomes, and the more we start to like it. We just need to train our taste buds to start liking it!

2. True or false, beans count as one of your five a day of fruits and vegetables?

Answer: True. Around 3 tablespoons of beans counts as a portion of fruit and vegetables because they are high in fibre.



3. True or false, beans and pulses are a type of protein, along with meat, eggs, nuts and seeds?

Answer: True. Beans and pulses are a fantastic source of protein, they have lots of nutrients our bodies need, and they are low in fat, salt and sugar.

4. What do beans and pulses help our bodies do? Name as many as you can remember.

Answer: (Give a point for each of the following answers – up to 11 points)

- 1 Grow tall
- 2 Build strong muscles
- 3 Build strong teeth and bones
- 4 Grow long hair
- 5 Help us feel fuller for longer
- 6 Give us energy slowly so we have enough fuel for the day
- 7 Run fast
- 8 Play all day long
- 9 Get better when we get hurt
- 10 Help our tummies digest food
- 11 Keep our hearts strong and blood pumping

5. The longest-ever green bean was grown in America in 1996. It won the Guinness World Record! How long was this green bean in centimetres? (Hint: It's between 50 and 150cm.)

Answer: 121.9 cm/48.75 inches. (Team with answer closest to the answer wins the point.) This is the size of a 7 year old!



Round 3

1. The Guinness World Record for the heaviest ever runner bean was broken in the UK in 2022 during the National Giant Vegetables Championships in Worcestershire. How heavy in grams was this runner bean? (Hint: It's between 100 grams and 200 grams)

Answer: 176 grams or 6.2 ounces. That's about the weight of a mobile phone. *(Team with the closest answer wins the point)*

2. What are the three ways beans can be stored?

Answer: Dried, canned, or frozen. *(Give a point for each)*

3. True or false, dried beans need to be soaked in water before they can be cooked and eaten?

Answer: True. Dried beans need to be soaked for a few hours, or overnight, to make them ready to be cooked. This makes them soft enough to eat.

4. What do beans and pulses do for our planet? Name as many as you can remember.

Answer: *(Give a point for each of the following answers – up to 5 points)*

- 1 Make our soil better
- 2 Support better farming methods
- 3 Use less water
- 4 Release fewer gases/help stop climate change
- 5 Protect natural habitats and nature



5. How many cans of baked beans would it take to fill up an Olympic size swimming pool? (standard approximately 400 gram size cans)

Answer: 6,281,407 cans. Six million, two hundred and eighty one thousand, four hundred and seven cans. *(Team with closest answer wins the point)*

Joke

Why can't you trust a legume with a secret?

They always spill the beans!



Task 6

Measuring success - follow-up questions

10
mins

HOW TO INTRODUCE THIS ACTIVITY

"We've been on a mission today to superpower our city and make us all Full of Beans! We're now going to record our achievements. To measure how well we have done we need to go through our follow-up questions. Now we're going to see if we've eaten more beans and pulses and become Full of Beans."

Ask children to respond to these questions and also note which beans and pulses were offered during your Full of Beans session.

Put your hand up if you tried eating the following beans and pulses today:

- Butter beans?
- Kidney beans?
- Chickpeas?
- Lentils?

Put your hand up if you would like to try eating the following beans and pulses again:

- Butter beans?
- Kidney beans?
- Chickpeas?
- Lentils?

Recording responses

If you have the facility to print the Measuring Success Poster, please use this sheet to note down how many children raised their hands for each question.

If you don't have the facility to print the Measuring Success Poster, please use a whiteboard, flipchart, or a large sheet of paper to note down how many children raised their hands for each question.

*Take a picture of your recorded responses and send to the Food System Team by emailing FoodSystemPH@birmingham.gov.uk.



Task 7

Full of Beans celebration

20
mins

Celebrate children's participation and teamwork by awarding certificates - either printed or handmade.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE TASK

"You've all done an amazing job on your Full of Beans mission today!

Now it's time to celebrate your achievements. We're going to hand out certificates for things like trying new beans, showing great teamwork, and being creative."

If you have the facility to print the Full of Beans certificates:

Call up each child or team to receive their certificate and give a round of applause.

If you don't have the facility to print the Full of Beans certificates:

Invite children to design their own certificates using paper, pens and crayons.

Provide simple templates or prompts:

- "Our Bean Team was awesome because..."
- "I tried a new bean today: (name it!)"

Encourage children to decorate and personalise their certificates.



Joke

What did one chickpea
say to the other?

Hummus a tune!



1.

Make it a group activity

Taste testing in group settings, such as at school or at kids' clubs, is a fantastic way to expose children to a variety of different flavours, textures and food combinations. It's a safe environment where you can offer small, non-threatening portions of food in a way that's fun, interactive, and creates a positive and playful environment with friends. This is really key in helping children and young people to develop a healthy relationship with food.



2.

Don't force children to try food

Children should not feel forced to try any foods – the motivation to try them needs to come from within the child for it to have a positive effect long term. If they feel forced to try them, they will develop a negative association with the food.

18 Top Tips for Taste Testing Activities

3.

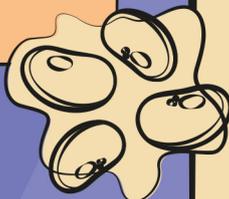
Praise "giving things a go"

Rather than praising a child for trying a particular food, praise the trait of being adventurous and "giving things a go". This means they are more likely to take on that trait as part of their identity and "give things a go" in other situations.

4.

The word "like" doesn't always mean what we think it does

Adults often interpret children saying "like" or "not like" as permanent opinions, but children's tastes and preferences change over time. Younger children also say they "don't like" something because they haven't developed the language yet to communicate what they mean, and sometimes they are trying to say, "I don't want it right now", "I feel nervous so I don't like that feeling" or "I'm full". Support children with exploring what they think about foods.



5.

You have to try it to know if you like it

Remind children they can't know if they don't like something if they've never tried it. It might be their new favourite food!

6.

Move towards "Not sure about it...yet"

Avoid language such as "not liking" a food, and instead say "not sure about it yet". This changes the focus from a simple "like/dislike" opinion about the food, and towards a sliding scale where they could try it again in the future and discover like it more.



7.

Small portion sizes

Keep the portion sizes small, to avoid overwhelming the child. This can be as little as one bean, or a tiny piece of broccoli.

8.

Provide alternatives for allergies

Consider dietary restrictions and allergies and provide alternatives so they can still participate in the activity.

9.

Break down food categories

Children often categorise food under general labels, for example, "I don't like vegetables". It's important to give them opportunities to break down this label, and realise that they do like raw carrots, for example. Once they realise that they do like some foods from that category, it makes it easier to introduce more foods. Also, you can break down the label of a particular food and suggest that they might like it more when prepared or cooked in a different way. This means they are more likely to give that food a go in different contexts as they might discover they like it.

10.

Don't focus on negatives

If a child doesn't want to try a food, don't focus on it, and instead say, "That's no problem – I know you're adventurous so I bet you can do it next time!" and move on to praise someone who is doing well.

11.

Reward progress

Praise children for making individual progress rather than focusing on all children achieving the same thing. Children will have different responses to taste testing due to previous exposure, or lack of, to the food. A child who tries a food that they've never tried before has made huge progress.

12.

Train your taste buds to like food

Remind children that it can take 10-15 tries to develop a liking for a food, and sometimes when we first try a food our brain doesn't know what to think. We need to train our taste buds to like a food!

13.

Praise individual milestones

If a child has never tried a food before, then them touching and exploring the food with their hands, or touching it with their tongue, should be celebrated. Tailor praise to the child and their individual progress even if it's a small step.

14.

Provide water to drink

Provide water for children to cleanse their palate.

15.

Praise role models

Praise those who are doing well, especially those who are role models to other children and young people. Those who are nervous about trying the food often respond more to what a role model does than an adult encouraging them to try the food.

18.

Don't make nervous children the focus of attention

Give plenty of opportunities for a child to try a food without them being the focus of attention. They will often give it a try when no one is looking if they can see others enjoying the food and getting praised and rewarded.

16.

Have engaging discussions

Encourage engaging discussions whilst trying food, for example by sharing interesting facts about the foods being tasted.

17.

Discuss experiences as a group

Encourage the children and young people to discuss what they have tried and share their thoughts with the group. This is a good opportunity to highlight positive experiences and for children to share how they have overcome challenges.



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This Session Plan will support you to deliver a 2 hour Full of Beans tasting session with children and young people in holiday clubs, school clubs or youth groups.



A Birmingham Food Revolution Initiative

