

# EXPLORING CARROTS

PreK-Grade 3 | 1 Class Period



## OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will use a KWL chart to take a deep dive into carrots. They will practice comparing and contrasting colors, shapes and sizes, and learn about nutrition and health benefits.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is a root vegetable?
- What foods can you think of that grow underground?
- What types of carrots have you seen and eaten?
- Do carrots come in a variety of colors, shapes and sizes?

## MA STATE FRAMEWORKS

### Nutrition and Balanced Eating [PK.1.NE]

1. Identify situations when a nutrition-related decision needs to be made (e.g., when trying new foods, choosing snacks and beverages, eating breakfast).

5. Explain benefits of health-promoting eating choices and habits (e.g., staying hydrated, eating fruits and vegetables, eating nutrient-rich foods, limiting foods high in added sugar).

### Nutrition and Balanced Eating [3.1.NE]

1. Identify principles of balanced eating (i.e., moderation, eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, consuming nutrient-rich foods, limiting processed foods and foods high in added sugar, drinking water, limiting sugary beverages) when making nutrition-related decisions.

## MATERIALS

- KWL chart
- [Let's Explore Carrots](#) by Jill Coella
- Variety of carrots, different sizes and colors
- Paper plates

## PROCEDURE

### Lesson Prep

Prior to the lesson, gather a variety of carrots. Look for carrots of different colors, sizes, shapes, etc.

Determine the number of groups you will make within your classroom & preset plates with a variety of carrots on them.

You could also do this as a whole group depending on the size of your class.

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## PROCEDURE, CONT.

### Warm Up

Use a KWL chart to kick-off the activity. Complete this as a whole group.

Fill in K: What do you **know** about carrots?

Fill in W: What do you **want to know** about carrots?

Hold a class survey about carrots and tally the results on the board:

- Who likes carrots?
- Who has never tried them?
- How do you like to eat them?

### Main Activity

Students will listen to a read aloud of the book Let's Explore Carrots by Jill Coella. As you read, pause to examine the images and engage students with questions.

After reading the story, break students up into groups to explore their variety of carrots. Give groups 10 minutes to explore. Remind them that they will regroup to share.

Guiding questions:

- What do you notice about your carrots?
- How are they similar? How are they different?
- Are you surprised about anything you see?

Regroup and share student observations.

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## PROCEDURE, CONT.

Share some facts about carrots with the class.

### History

Carrots are believed to have originated in Central Asia, specifically in the region of modern-day Iran and Afghanistan 3,000 years ago. Today, they are grown all over the world. (Take time to look at a world map and locate Iran and Afghanistan.)

### Appearance

Carrots are root vegetables that are usually long and orange, but they can also be white, yellow, red, or purple. They are firm and crisp, and have smooth skin that may have wrinkles.

### Nutrition

Carrots are a good source of vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber. They contain beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A. Carrots also contain potassium and vitamin B6, which can help with blood pressure regulation and immune health.

### Health benefits

Carrots can help with vision, memory, digestion, skin, and dental health. They may also help prevent cancer, stroke, and heart disease.

### Preparation

Carrots can be eaten raw or cooked in many ways, including baked, boiled, roasted, steamed, or juiced. They can be used in salads, stews, soups, sauces, and cakes.

### Growing

Carrots grow best in loose, cool to warm soil.

Fill in the last part of your KWL Chart: "L" Learn.

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## EXTENSIONS & VARIATIONS

If you have access to outdoor space, try to grow some carrots. First, prepare the bed by loosening the soil. Carrots need loose soil to grow straight and deep. Remove any rocks or clumps that could prevent root growth. Incorporate compost or other organic matter to improve soil structure. Carrots do not like soggy soil, so make sure your soil drains well.

Carrots are typically sown directly into the garden rather than started indoors. Sow seeds thinly in shallow trenches about a quarter inch deep and space seeds about 1/2 inch apart in the row. Cover them lightly with soil. Rows should be spaced 12-18 inches apart. Water the soil gently after planting, ensuring it remains moist but not soggy. Once the seedlings are 2-3 inches tall, thin them out to 2-3 inches apart in the row.

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HANDOUT

KWL Chart



KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED