

Veg Biryani

This recipe is inexpensive, nutritious, non-perishable, easy to post and is suitable for vegetarians and those on halal diets! The accompanying activity focuses on healthy eating and what is required for a balanced diet.

What you will send:

White rice (for speedier cooking)

Cashew nuts

A selection of spices. I wrapped a teaspoon of each of the following in tin foil: cumin, coriander, garam masala, garlic granules, medium chilli powder, ginger and nutmeg

Crispy onions, dried mushrooms

Vegetable stock cube

Fresh coriander

Laminated Eatwell Plate & dry wipe pen



The dried vegetables will rehydrate when cooked. I used mushrooms and crispy onions as these are most readily available, but you can purchase all sorts of varieties online if you so wish.

For this recipe, the participants will need: a bowl, a spoon, a microwave, kettle, small amount of oil

Icebreaker: what would you want for your last meal?

Cooking activity: start by making the spice paste! Take your time opening each of the spice wrappers so as not to spill, and smell all of them in turn. Ask them to choose their favourites to make their own personalised spice blend. Don't be stingy with the spices – pour out those you like into the bowl and add a little bit of oil to make a paste.

Add all other ingredients except coriander. The mushroom is strong-smelling, so may put some off, but encourage use! Pour over some freshly boiled water so it covers the rice mixture by about 2 centimetres.

Cover and microwave for 12 minutes. Check during the last 2 minutes to make sure the water hasn't all evaporated.

When the rice is cooked through, add fresh coriander and eat.



Accompanying activity:

While the biryani is cooking, get out the laminated Eatwell Plate and dry-wipe pen.

- Ask if anyone can identify the food groups of the ingredients you've used today (rice: carbohydrate, mushrooms and onions: vegetables, cashews: protein).
- Although this meal includes all of the 3 main food groups, it doesn't do so in the right quantity. How could you rectify that?
- A great feature of this meal is how easily you can substitute each ingredient for another of the same food group. Ask for suggestions. NB: you couldn't safely add meat and microwave, but you could pre-cook.