



## **25min Three Sisters Workshop Grade 3 Facilitator Notes**

**Objective:** Students will learn about companion planting through the story and practice of using the Three Sisters (corn, bean and squash.)



**Recipe Category:** Plants & Gardening,



**Cooking Time:** 25 mins



**Level of Difficulty:** Grade 3



**Recipe Ingredients:**

Beans

Corn

Squash



## Curriculum Links:

Grade	Subject Area	Ontario Curriculum Links
3	Science and Technology	<i>Understanding Life Systems: Growth and Changes in Plants</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Observe and compare the parts of a variety of plants</li><li>▪ Assess the impact of different human activities on plants, and list personal action they can engage in to minimize harmful effects and enhance good effects</li></ul>
	The Arts	<i>Drama</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Demonstrate an awareness of ideas and emotions expressed in drama works from communities around the world (e.g., ethics and values found in Aboriginal plays)</li><li>▪ Engage in dramatic play and role play, with a focus on exploring themes and issues from diverse communities</li></ul>
	Social Studies	<i>Heritage and Citizenship: Early Settlements in Upper Canada</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Describe what early settlers learned from First Nation peoples that helped them adapt to their new environment (e.g. food and farming)</li></ul>

## **Introduction: (5 mins)**

- Introductions (who you are and what you're all about)
- Overview of the workshop/ what to expect from the next 20mins
  - Traditional teaching of the Three Sisters
  - Tableau/Movement piece
  - Scientific understanding of Beans, Corn and Squash

## **Activity One: (10 mins)**

- ❖ Ask students to guess who the three sisters are (perhaps guiding them to think of vegetables if they do not guess in this direction). (*Beans, Corn and Squash*)
- ❖ Once the three sisters are established orally tell the story of the sisters:

The “Three Sisters” comes from the Haudenosaunee creation story. The earth began when Sky Woman who lived in the Upper World peered through a hole in the sky fell to the lower world, which was endless sea. The water animals saw her falling. They gathered earth from the bottom of the sea and spread it onto the back of a giant turtle. This gave Sky Woman a safe place to land. This “Turtle Island” is also called North America.

Sky Woman had become pregnant before she fell. When she landed she gave birth to a daughter. When the daughter grew into a young woman she also became pregnant (by the West Wind) and gave birth to twin boys. Sadly she died while giving birth. Sky Woman buried her daughter in the “new earth.” From her grave grew three sacred plants- corn, beans and squash. These plants provided food for her sons, and later for all of humanity. These gifts ensured the survival of the Haudenosaunee.

- ❖ Have the students divide into groups of five and choose a scene from the story and act it out.

## **Activity Two: (10 mins)**

*What do you think the word “companion” means?*

- ❖ Have a short conversation with the students re: companion planting. *Plants that when planted together support and improve their growth*

- ❖ Explain that the corn supplies a place for the beans to climb up and grow stronger. The bean plant supplies nitrogen to the soil which makes the corn stronger. Finally, the squash sends out very long, winding vines, but stays close to the ground. This helps to keep the weeds away as well as protect the shallow roots of the corn.
- ❖ Hand out small bags to each student so they can touch and taste the beans, corn and squash.