Playtime from the Kitchen

Kids love to spend time in the kitchen when school is out. Use the time to teach kids important lessons about cooking, cleaning and kitchen safety. They won’t even think about school even though they are learning!

Apply fractions by measuring ingredients. For example, teach them that 4 Tablespoons equal \( \frac{1}{4} \) cup.

Four of the \( \frac{1}{4} \) cup measures equal one cup.

Practice being neat in the kitchen.

Put out a piece of wax paper or newspaper to catch spills when measuring flour.

Clean up as you go.

The job is not finished until everything is cleaned and put away.

Here are two recipes for salt dough ornaments and playdough.

**Salt Dough Ornaments**

**Cooked Play Dough**
Salt Dough Ornaments

Ingredients

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup salt
- food coloring
- water to moisten

Instructions

1. Mix the flour and salt.
2. Add food coloring, using quite a bit if you want a darker color. Add just enough water to moisten the dough, stirring well (or kneading in the bag) until the dough sticks together. Add water a little bit at a time, if necessary, until the dough forms a ball.
3. Roll the dough. Make it at least 1/4” thick. If it is too thin, the dried ornaments will be more likely to break.
4. Poke a hole near the top of each ornament. Using a straw makes this easy.
5. Cut out desired shapes with cookie cutters or the top of an empty can and place on a pan to dry for at 24-72 hours.
6. When shapes are completely dry, paint with acrylic paint. Allow paint to dry. Spray with a sealer to preserve if desired

Hints:

make the dough in a large zip-lock bag and save clean-up

replace liquid food coloring with unsweetened drink mix

cut ornaments into circles, squares, triangles, etc; let the little kids have fun sorting
Cooked Play Dough

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups cold water
- 1 Tablespoon cream of tartar (this is optional, but adding it will make the dough more stretchy)
- food coloring

Instructions

1. Mix all of the ingredients together, and stir over low heat.
2. The dough will begin to thicken until it looks like mashed potatoes.
3. When the dough pulls away from the sides and clumps in the center, take the pan off the heat and allow the dough to cool enough to handle.
4. Store it in a plastic bag.

Hints:

-if the play dough is sticky, it means you need to cook it longer
-this dough will last a long time if you store it in a plastic bag
-saw an old wooden broomstick handle into pieces to make little rolling pins
-put an old plastic tablecloth or shower curtain under the table; it will make clean-up easier
-this is a fun party even that costs very little