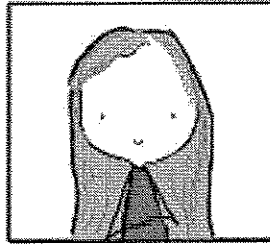


A Cooking Competition for Teens



By Amy Belanger

The television show *Master Chef* is wildly popular among adults and young people alike. Some young fans at a YMCA in Halifax wanted to recreate the show for themselves and host their own Master Chef Cookoff, and worked with the staff to create the program. This is a great activity for youth who enjoy cooking, developing teamwork skills, healthy cooking and healthy competition!

Goals and Learning Objectives:

- Develop teambuilding skills
- Understand the importance of keeping a clean and organized work space
- Work creatively to prepare unique dish
- Time management skills

How It Works:

Four teams of four people have a set amount of time to prepare one dish. While they are cooking, judges will observe and take notes on their teamwork, methods, creativity, and presentation. When time is up, everyone can walk around the room to

see the dishes. The judges taste the dishes, highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each team, and announce the winners.

What you need:

What you need will depend on how you choose to structure your cooking competition. You may ask participants to bring their own ingredients, to cook a single item, or choose a less involved method and make salads or smoothies. This decision can be made according to what resources are available to you. If you can, try to find a catering company or “foodie” friend who can loan their aprons and hot plates. Ingredients can be pooled from staff and youth.

Non Food Items:

- Aprons (if possible but not necessary)
- Extension cords
- 4 stove top elements
- 4 cutting boards
- 4 pots or pans (depending on what you make)
- 8 knives (4 large and 4 pairing)
- 4 stirring spoons

- 4 spatulas
- Prize/ Movie passes
- Friends with cooking experience who are qualified judges to participate for the day

Food in the Pantry



- Salt & Pepper
- Garlic & Onion
- Cumin
- Cinnamon
- Cooking oil
- Flour
- Butter
- Peppers
- Dried chili
- Coconut milk
- Carrots
- Potatoes

Food in the Surprise Box

- Choose something interesting like herbs, fruits, meats to surprise the teams.

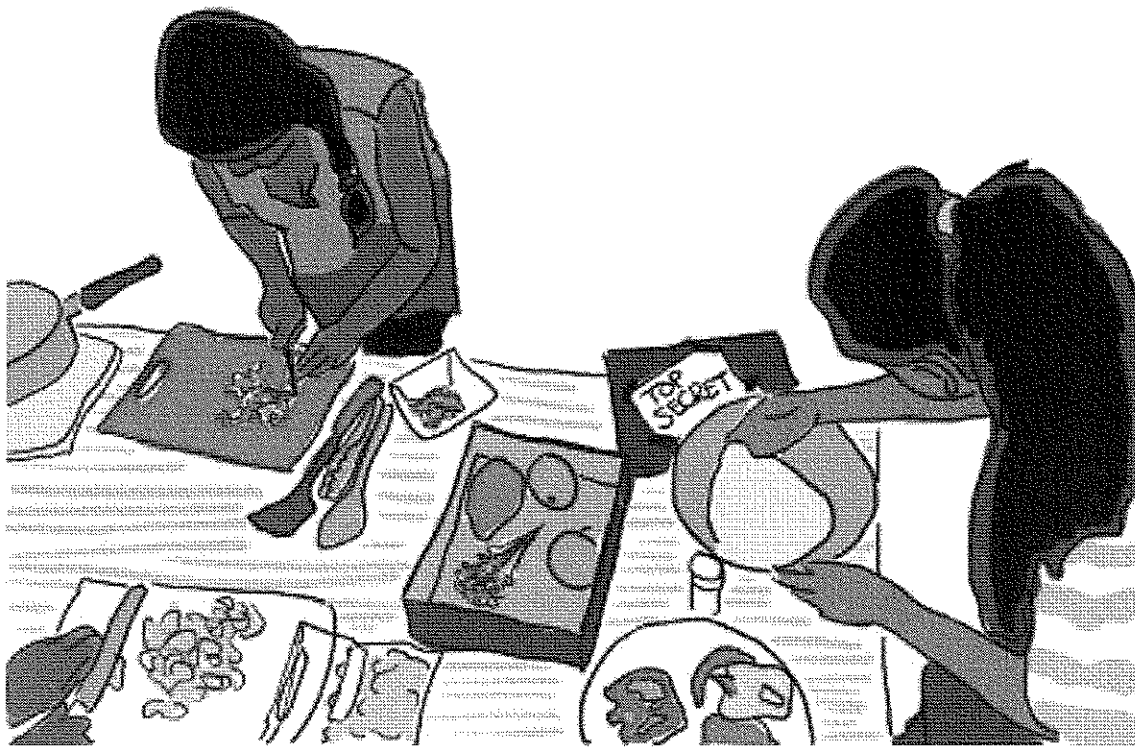
Rules

- Only 1 person from each team may go to the pantry
- Items taken from the pantry must be used or returned back to the pantry for others to use
- Be very careful with the knives! If cut tell someone right away!
- Clean up your station, knives, cutting boards etc. if they come in contact with raw chicken
- Each item in the surprise box must be used
- Wait your turn to use the kitchen sink
- Audience members stay within the tape marked areas and do not interfere with the cooks (allow audience to get up in small groups to walk around and watch)
- Communicate and listen to your team
- Have fun and good luck!

Structure of the day

- Arrive early to set up the stations
- Ask teams to arrive 15 minutes early to ensure the program starts on time
- 15 min. – Say hello, introduce the judges, explain the rules, judging criteria and answer any questions

- 15 min. – Teams assess the ingredients and come up with a recipe and plan
 - 1.5 hours (Varies depending on the competition) – Teams prepare a meal, have their stations clean and a dish presented at the end of their table
 - 5 min. – Everyone can look at the presented dishes
 - 15 min. – Judges walk around to each group and taste their dishes
 - 15 min. – Judges discuss the teams based on the judging criteria and choose a winner
 - 10 min. – Go over the criteria discussed with the teams and announce the winner
 - 15 min. - Final clean up
- Total of 3 hours plus set up



Rubric/ judging notes:

Teamwork	/10
Methods (including methods used to prepare food and cleanliness)	/10
Creativity	/10
Presentation	/10
Taste	/10
Total	/50 x 2 = /100