

THINKING ROUTINE

with

MAPLE SYRUP

Excerpt from Integration with Maple Syrup from ACORN March 1, 2024

We found many ways to learn about maple syrup, including hands-on experiences that were both intentional and spontaneous, and that were all fun and informative. In learning about maple syrup we practiced many other concepts and skills that are an integral part of our program.

-We began with a thinking routine. Thinking routines are student-centered, in that they help children take charge of their learning by organizing it within a structure. For us, it is the KWL structure - What do you KNOW? What do you WANT to know? What did you LEARN? Children's responses are in italics.

What do you KNOW?

It tastes sweet

It is sticky

It tastes great on different foods

You can put it on a pancake

You can put it on a waffle

What do you WANT to know?

Why is it brown?

What does it taste like?

What does it taste like on pancakes?

What does it taste like on beef?

What did you LEARN?

It comes from trees.

You have to tap the maple tree.

You have to drill a hole in the tree. And then you hang your bucket.

Sap comes from the tree, but only when it is warm.

You can put maple syrup over snow and eat it.

Added benefits of this activity are that children see their thoughts written down on the white board, and learn that thoughts can be written. This is a pre-reading and writing activity in itself.

As children become used to the KWL thinking routine over time, it becomes automatic, and helps children to structure their individualized approach to learning.