

Theme Three:

Cooking is Minimally Processed

Try saying 'minimally' three times really quickly. It's tricky isn't it! Luckily, cooking minimally processed isn't as hard as it sounds. When we cook from scratch, we use real, whole foods like fruit, vegetables, grains, meat and beans. These foods help our bodies grow strong and stay healthy. Cooking this way means we use less 'ultra-processed' food. This is the kind of food that often has lots of ingredients that you wouldn't find in your kitchen cupboard! Instead, we get meals that are more filling, more nutritious, and more tasty too.

Actions covered in this theme:

Bronze

BFE2, BFE5, BCP2, BFO1, BFO3, BFO4

Silver

SFE2, SFE5, SFO1, SFO3

Gold

GFE1, GFE2, GFO1, GFO3



Cooking is Minimally Processed

Hearty Meals

Cooking from scratch can help us eat less ultra-processed foods, which is why schools working towards Silver or Gold must serve 75% of food that is cooked from scratch.

Cooking hearty meals from scratch can be nutritious, delicious, and even meat-free! Try out our Lentil Ragu recipe (**BFE2, SFE2,GFE2**). You could use this recipe to teach pupils about the environmental impact of pulses versus meat (**GFE1**). For more inspiration, check out our BeanMeals resources.

If you're fancying something quick, try our Noodles in a Mug recipe for a minimally processed alternative to packet noodles that you would find at the supermarket. (**BFE2, SFE2,GFE2**)



Cooking is Minimally Processed

Baked Goodies

Everyone loves a sweet-treat, but shop-bought ones can sometimes have lots of extra ingredients that aren't always the best for us.

The good news? You can make your own treats using more natural, minimally processed ingredients. That means more goodness, and sometimes even veggies! Try our Chocolate and Beetroot Muffins or our Chocolate Courgette Cake (**BFE2, SFE2, GFE2**). These would also make perfect lunchbox additions to replace shop-bought biscuits, or chocolate bars (**BFO4**)

If you fancy something fruity, our Slow Cooker Fruit Crumble is super tasty and easy to make. (**BFE2, SFE2, GFE2**)



Cooking is Minimally Processed

The Whole Truth

Shop-bought snacks like biscuits, crisps, and fizzy drinks are quick and tasty, but our food system often makes unhealthy choices the easiest to grab. We believe it should be the other way around. Minimally processed foods like fruit, veg, beans and nuts should be the easiest to find, just as nature intended.

Encourage pupils to explore the ethical side of food by looking at issues around food choices (**SFE1, GFE1**) and food production (**SFE5**). To bring their learning to life, why not turn it into a letter-writing activity? Pupils can write to their local MP to share why eating more minimally processed food matters.

