



Celebrating our food and cultures

Onyinye says she would ask herself *why is it important to celebrate our culture of food together?* And her answer is *because our culture and our identity, is everything, and food is a massive part of everyone's identity.* Knowing your children, invite them to tell you about the dishes they love to eat. If they are having a special party, what dishes do they have? Are there things that are similar and / or different about the dishes? You could involve families, asking everyone to send in a picture or recipe of a dish that is special in their home. The children could make these into a class picture or recipe book. And you could even have a go at making these dishes with the children and sharing them together.

Secret ingredients!

In *The Best Jollof Rice Ever*, Kamsi and Kwame play tricks on each other, adding extra things to each other's dishes. Can the children remember what Kamsi and Kwame add - nettles, caterpillar, ants, dried up chewing gum, muddy puddle water. Look at the pictures and see if they can spot any other extras. Together, use lots of vocabulary to describe how the dishes might taste/feel with all those secret ingredients in them - itchy, bitter, crunchy, slimy...

In their talking partners, invite the children to imagine they are helping Kamsi and Kwame. What other secret ingredients would they add? Provide white boards and pens so they can make a list of their ideas. Come together to share what they came up with - yuk!

Write a recipe

Onyinye's favourite page is where the children are helping their mums to make Jollof rice. Look at this page with the children. Check understanding of vocabulary - grill, blend, season, aroma. Why is it important that they do things in order? At the back of the book, Onyinye has included *Kamsi and Kwame's Best Jollof Rice Recipe*. Look at this together. Discuss what a recipe is. What does it include - ingredients, equipment, instructions. Invite the children to write or draw a recipe. They could base this on their own favourite dish; they could use recipe books or the internet to help them; or you could provide them with pictures of some ingredients and ask them to draw/write a recipe using those items. And don't forget to have a go at making Kamsi and Kwame's Best Jollof Rice following Onyinye's recipe!

What languages do we speak?

Onyinye and Laura talk about the languages that are important to them, and how language is part of your identity and your culture. Onyinye knows English, Italian, and Igbo. Laura talks about English and St Lucian Creole. Invite the children to share what language/s they speak? Perhaps they understand a language more than they can speak it? Where do they speak a language, who do they speak it with? Look on the map for the different countries where these languages are spoken. Can they share ways to say words in different languages - 'hello', 'happy', 'friend'. This conversation might lead on to talking about our names. In *The Best Jollof Rice Ever* the boys, Kamsi and Kwame, have names to reflect their heritages. Knowing your children, talk about and celebrate their names. Onyinye says *I hope that this book allows children to feel hey, you can be proud of your name and be proud of who you are.*

My Skin, Your Skin – written by Laura and illustrated by Onyinye

Laura and Onyinye talk about the book *My Skin, Your Skin*, which they worked on together. Get a copy of *My Skin, Your Skin* from your local / school library, or purchase it to have in your setting. Laura says that many people have told her that although this is a book for children, it has been a starting point for them as adults in their understanding about Race and Racism. Read *My Skin, Your Skin* yourself, and reflect on what Onyinye shared in the podcast about her feelings growing up. You could also read [A Beginner's Guide to Anti-Racism](#) by Liz Pemberton.

Go on to read *My Skin, Your Skin* with the children, giving time for children to open up conversations about Race, identity, and to share how they are feeling.

Activities for

The Best Jollof Rice Ever!

Written and Illustrated
by **Onyinye Iwu**