

# Fruits and Vegetables

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

"Mom, what makes a tomato a fruit? My teacher said it wasn't a vegetable." Casey asked his mother.

"Well, why did you think it was a vegetable?" She asked.

Casey shrugged. "They're not sweet like apples and stuff."

"But fruits don't have to be sweet, even though they usually are."

"Still, fruits are usually sweet, right?"

"Fruits are really just something that covers a seed."

"Not bananas!" Casey protested.

Mom grinned. She liked it when he tried to find holes in her arguments, but she was ready. "Sure they do. Bananas have little tiny seeds inside. If you bite into it you can see them."

"So all fruits have seeds in them?"

"Yes, but vegetables are different. They are parts of a plant, like a stem, a leaf, a root, or just the seed."

"A leaf?" Casey grimaced. It was odd to imagine chewing on tree leaves.

"Like spinach is a leaf." Mom elaborated.

"I don't like spinach."

"Lettuce?"

"That's good in salads and burgers. So if it's not a leaf, what were the other options again?"

"Stems, like celery, or roots, like the radishes and potatoes."

"Weird." It was odd to think of eating stems.

Mom shrugged. "They can be seeds, too, like corn or peas, because those are the seeds. Fruit have that fleshy covering around the seeds, though."

"So green peppers and cucumbers are actually fruits..."

Mom nodded. "I suppose they are, but we usually don't think of them that way, do we? According to the scientific definition, they are. According to how we cook, the culinary sense, they aren't really."

Casey sighed. It was hard to remember it all. "It's a little confusing, but I think I get it."

"Just remember, if it's a seed with an edible covering, it's probably a fruit. If it's part of a plant, it's likely a vegetable." Mom summarized.

"I've got it." Casey smiled. "But, I wonder why strawberries have seeds on the outside instead of the inside?"

Mom laughed. "There's another weird exception. Things are never easy, are they?"



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. At the beginning of the story, what food is Casey surprised to learn is a fruit?
  - A. a potato
  - B. a raisin
  - C. a tomato
  - D. spinach
2. What part of the plant does mom NOT say are actually vegetables?
  - A. Seeds
  - B. Leaves
  - C. Stem
  - D. Fruit
3. Which of the following are examples of vegetables?
  - A. spinach and corn
  - B. spinach and celery
  - C. celery and tomatoes
  - D. potatoes and tomatoes
4. Which of the following are actually examples of fruits?
  - A. corn and peas
  - B. green peppers and cucumbers
  - C. carrots and potatoes
  - D. sweet potatoes and pineapples
5. Which fruit has seeds on the outside instead of the inside?
  - A. bananas
  - B. onions
  - C. cherries
  - D. strawberries

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