Butternut soup with sage sandwiches

This recipe involves a number of processes so children may split up the tasks rather than all attempt to work on all steps together. This will make better use of the session time.

Equipment
- Chopping boards
- Frying pan
- Baking trays
- Sieve
- sharp knives
- rolling pin
- stick blender
- tea towels

Ingredients:
- 2 tablespoons (tbs) olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 kg butternut, peeled & chopped
- 4 cups vegetable stock
- 300 ml cream
- fresh nutmeg, to grate
- 50 ml olive oil, plus extra to brush
- I bunch sage
- 6 slices sandwich bread

Method

1. Set aside 9 large sage leaves and reserve for the sandwiches.

2. Make the sage oil by stripping the remaining leaves from their stalks and plunging them into a saucepan of boiling water for 1 second before removing them with a slotted spoon to stop the cooking process and to retain the colour of the leaves. Dry them with a clean tea towel and then whiz in a blender with the oil until the oil begins to turn green. Strain through a fine mesh sieve and set aside.

3. For the soup, heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the onion and gently cook, stirring, for 5 minutes.

4. Add to the chopped pumpkin to the pan and stir to combine. Cover and reduce heat to low. Cook for 10 minutes over low heat, stirring occasionally so the pumpkin doesn't stick.

5. Add the vegetable stock and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for about 15 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
6. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 190°C. Slice the crusts off the bread. Then, using a rolling pin, flatten the bread slices and trim the edges to neaten. Divide the sage leaves between 3 of the slices of bread, leaving a 3cm border around the edges, and season. Place the remaining 3 slices of bread on top to make sandwiches and lightly run the rolling pin on top to seal.

7. Place the sandwiches on a lightly oiled baking tray (do not substitute baking paper). Brush the top of the sandwiches with olive oil and cover with baking paper. Place a second tray on top to weigh down and bake for 15-20 minutes or until crisp. Slice sandwiches in half diagonally.

8. Meanwhile, add the cream to the soup and stir. Blend using a stick blender and then bring back to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper and grate over some nutmeg.

9. Ladle soup into bowls. Swirl over a little of the sage oil and serve with sage sandwiches.