



Continuing Education and Local Support for Schools (CELSS) Resource Manual

Food and Nutrition Activities

A Well-Balanced Meal

(adapted from Teachers.net at <http://www.teachers.net/lessons/posts/3697.html>)

Grade Level: Pre-School – 3rd grade

Concepts Taught: Grouping, Classifying, Comparing, Taste, Nutrition, and Critical Thinking

Introduction: After this lesson, the children should understand the importance of the five food groups. They should also understand how to create a properly balanced meal with real food.

(Note: In this lesson, sweets, fats, and oils have been omitted to reinforce healthy eating habits. However, children should be aware of the nutritional content of these types of foods.)

Objectives: This lesson will teach children how to make a properly balanced meal from all five of the food groups. This objective will be measurable by the foods that the children choose to both eat and glue on their plates.

Equipment needed:

Non-Edible:

Paper Plates

Glue

Pencils, Markers, or Crayons

Napkins

Cups

Food Pyramid Diagram

Food Names and Food Group

Labels

Showdown at the Food Pyramid

by Rex Barron

Edible (Choose from the following):

Grains: oats, bread, crackers, rice, cereal, noodles

Vegetables: carrots, broccoli, lettuce, tomatoes, corn, potatoes, spinach

Fruits: apples, bananas, oranges, strawberries, juice (100%), peaches, raisins

Dairy: cheese, milk, yogurt

Meats and Beans: eggs, tuna, beans (cooked)

Note: Oils are not a food group, but you need some for good health. Get your oils from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as corn oil, soybean oil, and canola oil.

Directions:

1. The teacher may start off this lesson by reading Showdown at the Food Pyramid by: Rex Barron. Be sure to allow time to ask the students reading comprehension questions that will aid in your discussion on the importance of the food pyramid. Also, be sure to emphasize the many groups of the pyramid (this will help the students with their grouping and critical thinking skills later in this activity).

2. Once the teacher feels that the students have a good understanding of what the food pyramid is, he or she may begin to ask the students to label and or name the foods that are displayed on the table. Ask the students to taste some of the foods. Which foods taste sweet, bitter, bland, salty, squishy, hard, etc?
3. Once the students have tasted and named all of the foods that are displayed on the table, the teacher may aid the students in grouping the foods by the five food groups as listed on the food pyramid. The teacher should guide the students when they are classifying and grouping the foods.
4. When all of the students have placed the proper food labels on the foods displayed in the five food groups, the teacher may then allow the students to pick one food from each of the groups to create their own well balanced meal.
5. Be sure to supply the students with paper plates, glue, pencils, markers, and crayons. It would also be good idea to have something healthy for the children to drink in case they get thirsty while snacking during this lesson. Also, be sure to supply napkins because there is sure to be a mess!
6. Once all of the students have glued their selected food onto their plate, then they may attach the group labels next to the food that it describes. For example: A child will put the fruit label next to the apple that is glued onto the plate. By having the students place labels onto their selected foods it will again reinforce their understanding of this activity.

Assessment Tool(s):

1. The completed well balanced meal plate
2. Observations
3. Pictures

Modification for Diverse Learners: If required, work one-on-one with a student or assign the student with a “study buddy”.

Lesson Labels (Use Clip Art)

napkin	corn
cup	potatoes
plate	spinach
grains	apples
vegetables	bananas
dairy	oranges
protein	strawberries
fruit	juice
crayons	peaches
crackers	raisins
oats	cheese
bread	milk
rice	yogurt
cereal	eggs
noodles	tuna
carrots	beans
broccoli	nuts
lettuce	glue
tomatoes	

Food and Nutrition Activities

Egg Hunt

(An Educator's Reference Desk Lesson Plan at <http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Health/Nutrition/NUT0014.html>)

Grade Level: Preschool-2

Concepts:

Health/Nutrition

Brief Description of the Lesson:

Unhealthy foods are frequently advertised to children. Parents and teachers desire to encourage children to choose healthy alternatives to snack foods containing high sugar and fat content. Students in early elementary grades can learn about nutrition through story-telling, songs, and a familiar hunting game.

Background Information for the Teacher:

This lesson was designed for a 60-minute period; it was field-tested with first and second graders in a Birmingham-area church school.

Concepts Covered in this Lesson:

Identification of healthy foods for daily meals and snacks, basic reading and communication skills

Equipment needed:

1. Teacher resource textbook, e.g., "Comprehensive School Health Education: Second Edition" by Linda Meeks, Philip Heit, & Randy Page (1996), Meeks Heit Publishing Co., or pamphlet or videotape on nutrition education.
2. Children's book about foods and eating, e.g., "My Eating Book" by Jane Gelbard and Betsy Bober Polivy (1989), Grosset & Dunlap, or "Berenstain Bears and Too Much Junk Food" by Stan and Jan Berenstain.
3. 3-4 dozen hollow plastic Easter eggs.
4. 3-4 dozen small slips of paper.
5. Photographic, magazine, or clip art illustrations of foods.
6. Crayons and markers.
7. Small paper lunch bags.
8. Glue or tape.
9. "Healthy Foods Songsheet";.
10. A healthy snack food, e.g., juice or milk, apples, raisins, or carrots.
11. Coloring sheets featuring healthy and unhealthy food choices.
12. "Healthy Foods Song" (sung to the tune of London Bridge is Falling Down). Prepare as a large-print songsheet to be taken home to parent-guardian.
"Healthy foods are good for me, good for me, good for me.
Healthy foods are good for me, each and every day."

Directions:

1. Review teacher resource material on nutrition education obtained from the library, health department, extension agent, or pediatrician.

2. Adapt content by selecting key messages to write on small pieces of paper. Sample messages include:

"I can eat 5 fruits and vegetables each day!"

"Crunchy foods like carrots and celery build healthy teeth."

"Milk helps me to grow tall and strong!"

"It is fun to take care of myself by eating healthy foods."

3. Insert these printed messages into plastic Easter eggs as fortunes hidden inside of fortune cookies. Hide the filled eggs around the classroom, or outside in the school yard.

4. Prior to class, select an early elementary book that emphasizes healthy eating habits to read aloud at the beginning of the lesson. Begin class by introducing the topic of nutrition and good health. Read the children's book aloud, including key messages about healthy foods.

5. Provide students with paper lunch bags, crayons, markers, glue or tape, and illustrations of healthy foods. Include a variety of foods, those that are familiar to most children, e.g., bananas, strawberries, bread, chicken, and less common foods, e.g., kale, kiwi, fish filet. Omit foods with high sugar and fat content, e.g., frosted cereals, potato chips, bacon. Invite students to decorate their paper bags using hand-made drawings and illustrations of healthy foods they would like to eat.

6. Sing the "Healthy Foods Song" while boys and girls seek and find the hidden eggs with surprise messages. Direct students to return to an assigned starting point when time is called. Students will open their eggs and remove the nutrition message. Read aloud messages while serving a healthy snack of water, milk, or fruit juice and sliced vegetables or fruits to reinforce the concepts covered in this lesson. Distribute the "Healthy Foods Songsheet" and sing together with students. Encourage students to bring the plastic eggs, nutrition facts, lunch bags, and songsheet home to share with parents or guardians and siblings.

Assessment:

(optional) Devise a coloring sheet for students to complete with adult supervision featuring paired selections of healthy and unhealthy foods, (e.g. baked chicken versus fried chicken).

Assist students to consider choices and circle only healthy foods. This activity could be completed at home together with parents or guardians.

Food and Nutrition Activities

Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner with Gregory

(www.eduref.org Educator's Reference Desk Lesson Plans)

Grade Level: K-2

Description: Create a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and dinner and feed Gregory the goat.

Goals: Students will recognize the importance of nutritious meals through reinforcement class activities.

Objectives: Students will locate the components for a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Equipment needed:

Mitchell Sharmat (1989) Gregory the Terrible Eater

Food Pyramid

Magazines

Newspapers

Optional (Internet)

Directions:

(Before you begin)

Create a Gregory goat- using an image of a goat's head, enlarge it if needed so it is approx. the size of one sheet of paper, color and black with cardboard or card stock. Cut a hole in the mouth of the goat. Place a 2 gallon baggie on the back of the goat's head so it opens to the mouth. This baggie will hold the food pictures found by the children.

This lesson will span over 3 days:

1. Read the story "Gregory the Terrible Eater". Gregory eats foods like you and I. How can we make sure his meals are healthy?
2. Using the food pyramid, review with children the number of servings that are allowed from each group for one day.
3. The children will be divided into five groups, each group will be assigned a different food group from the pyramid.
4. Each group will locate foods from a magazine newspaper, or Internet, appropriate from their food group.
5. Items located will be placed together on a paper plate with the heading "breakfast".
6. Children will discuss items found. Answering questions such as : Is that a good choice for breakfast? Is it an OK choice for everyday? Make certain that children have allowed for drinks with their meal

7. Children will mark off servings used from their food group as they use them. The children will locate foods for lunch on the second day and dinner on the third. The foods will be placed on plates like breakfast meal.
8. Children will take turns feeding Gregory. Children will say the food and where it belongs on the food pyramid as they feed the goat.
9. Children take foods out of baggie and create new meals for Gregory.

Assessment: Have students work in groups and create new meals using all of the food groups.

Food and Nutrition Activities

Nutrition

(An Educator's Reference Desk Lesson Plan at <http://www.eduref.org/Virtual/Lessons/Health/Nutrition/NUT0007.html>)

Grade Level: 2-3

Concepts:

Health/Nutrition

Prerequisites:

Students must know that food choices affect how they feel and how their bodies develop.

Students must be familiar with the Food Pyramid.

Objectives:

Students will be able to list the better food choices for a healthy body. Students will then be able to make a menu for a fictitious restaurant that contains good food choices from each of the areas of the Food Pyramid.

Equipment needed:

Poster of the Food Pyramid, menus from local restaurants, folders, writing paper, markers, pencils.

Organization:

Students will be divided into groups of 3.

Directions:

1. Students will be motivated by the teacher reading several menus from local restaurants. The teacher will begin asking the students whether those meals sounded healthy, why and why not?
2. Students will be divided into groups of 3.
3. Teacher will discuss with the students the food pyramid and each of its areas.
4. The teacher will discuss with class a few beginning suggestions of healthy foods they might want to see on a menu when they go out to eat.
5. Teacher will instruct students to come up with a creative name for their restaurant, design the cover of the menu, and to come up with at least two meals and/or desserts that include items from each of the groups on the Food Pyramid.

Variations:

Students could, as a class, make a new lunch menu for a week, and suggest it to the school Principal. The students could keep a journal of the foods that they eat each day for a week and write a short report on how healthy their choices were.

Teaching Tips:

Have literature that is related to healthy foods and healthy choices for the students to read.

Assessment:

Teacher will walk around room and observe each students contribution to the group, and look at each group's menu and pay attention to creativity, neatness, and how accurately each falls into the areas of the Food Pyramid.

Food and Nutrition Activities

What's on the Poster?

(USDA nutrition for children at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson1.pdf)

Grade Level: 3-4

Objectives: Students will learn that foods are divided into food groups. They will also learn the colors that represent the food groups. They will learn the importance of daily physical activity as a part of good health.

Concepts:

Thinking skills- categorization

Thinking skills- analyzing information presented in a chart

Understanding symbols

Conceptualizing complex things as whole, and as simplified parts

Equipment needed:

MyPyramid for Kids classroom poster

MyPyramid for Kids black-and-white handout for each student

Directions:

1. **Point out that foods on the poster are arranged in groups.** Help students use the key to learn which color represents which food group. Which of the colored stripes are the largest? Point out that these are foods that children should choose more often. Which are the smallest? These are foods that children should choose less often.
2. **Point out that everyone needs food to live and grow.** But if people eat too much of some foods high in sugar and fat, they don't have enough room to eat other foods that are good for them. Ask students to name healthy choices from each of the food groups.
3. **Discuss each food group in turn.** Ask students to identify the foods they know that are shown on the poster. What are some other foods from each group that they know about?
4. **At this age, some students may not know what a "grain" is.** Grains come from plants like wheat, corn, and oats. They are used to make foods like bread, cereal, tortillas, and corn muffins. Popcorn is a grain-group food, too.
5. **What's the thin yellow stripe?** It represents oils, which can be found in foods like nuts or fish or added to foods as soft as margarine or salad oil. Note how thin the stripe is. Most people need to limit the amount of oils they eat.
6. **Why are there stairs?** They represent physical activity. Look at the variety of activities shown on the poster. How many do you see? Part of being healthy is keeping physically active. Ask students to describe some of the ways they stay active. (Remind them that walking the dog, doing household chores and other daily activities, count, as well as sports activities.

7. **Give each student a copy of the *MyPyramid for Kids* handout.** Using the wall poster as a reference, have students match the colors on the poster. In the space provide have students draw or paste a picture of a smart food choice from each group and write in the name of the food group. You may want to have students bring in pictures of their own food choices fro healthy eating from each group and make their own pyramid.

Food and Nutrition Activities

Fruit and Veggie Diary

(http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson3.pdf)

Grade Level: 3-4

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify fruits and vegetables in their diet.
- Learn to graph the number of fruits and vegetables they eat.

Curriculum Connections:

Math, Science, Health,
Language arts

Student Skills Developed:

- Graphing
- Recording data in a chart
- Making predictions

Equipment needed:

- *My Fruit and Vegetable Diary* reproducible for each student
- Holepunch
- Scissors for each student
- Yarn or string
- *Fruit and Vegetable Challenge Kit*

Directions:

1. Point out that fruits and vegetables are foods children need to grow and be healthy.
2. Ask children to look at the list they just developed. Are there any fruits or vegetables they have never tried? Introduce additional foods they may not have identified.
3. Distribute the *My Fruit and Vegetable Diary* reproducible to each student. Have students cut out the pages and put them in the correct order. Punch a hole through the upper-left-hand corner and have children tie the diary with yarn or string. Every day for a week have students write (or draw a picture of) all the fruits and vegetables they ate that day.
4. At the end of the week, ask students to name the foods they ate. Talk about the variety of fruits and vegetables.

Food and Nutrition Activities

Shop 'til you Drop

(www.ncpe4me.com/pdf_files/k-5-Energizers.pdf)

Grade Level: 3-5

Formation: Partners

Equipment needed: Scrap piece of paper for every 2 students, 6 pieces of paper with the following information (* indicates healthy options and is for teacher us only, do not put * on paper posted around the room)

- **Bread/cereal/grains-** *whole wheat bread, white bread, *Cheerios, *spaghetti, *rice, cocoa puffs, *tortillas, *popcorn, cinnamon rolls, *bagels
- **Meat/poultry-** *grilled fish, fried chicken, hot dogs, *meat loaf, *baked chicken, chicken fried steak, *lean hamburgers, sausage, bacon, *eggs
- **Dairy-** *cheese, *skim milk, *yogurt, ice cream, whole milk, *cottage cheese, cream cheese, *frozen yogurt.
- **Fruit-** *apples, *bananas, *orange juice, *grapes, Fruitopia, Hi-C, Jungle Juice, *100% apple juice, *apple sauce, *dried apricots, *canned peaches in their own juice, canned pairs in heavy syrup.
- **Fats/oils/sweets-** Twinkies, pop tarts, butter, candy bars, chips, cookies, brownies, cake, salad dressing, soda.

Directions:

1. Teacher labels 6 areas of room with each food group listed above, including the food choices.
2. Students must pick 1 item at a time and move to the next food group, planning a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner.
3. Partners circulate and plan a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner from the options listed.
4. Partners write down their menu for each meal
5. After sufficient time, have partners return to desks and discuss meals as a class.
6. Review food guide pyramid
7. Make sure students move quickly from one area to another.

Suggestions:

1. Have students travel from one area to the next using different movements (march, gallop, jump, skip, hop, etc.)
2. Have children choose the unhealthiest meal they can.

Food and Nutrition Activities

For more information on food and nutrition activities...

CDC Healthy Youth- <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/nutrition/index.htm>

Harvest of the Month- <http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/>

USDA Team Nutrition- <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/educators.html>

My Pyramid- <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mypyramidclassroom.html>

The New York Times Learning Network- <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/index.html>

Eat Smart Play Hard Kids- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardkids/>

Teachers' Color Way Curriculum-
<http://www.pbhfoundation.org/educators/teachers/curriculum/colorway.php>

Teacher developed activities-
http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/Lesson_Plans/Health/index.shtml

The Educator's Reference Desk-
<http://www.eduref.org/cgi-bin/lessons.cgi/Health/Nutrition>