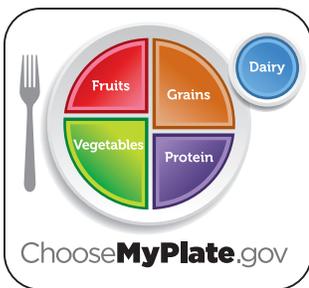


MyPlate Lesson

Jack and the Hungry Giant Eat Right with MyPlate by Loreen Leedy



NUTRITION Children will learn about MyPlate and why eating healthy foods from each group is a healthy way of living.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY Skip to the Plate or Musical Foods

SNACK MyPlate Cracker Stacks or MyPlate Mini Pizzas

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Children will be able to do the following

1. Name the five food groups.
2. Give an example of a food that fits into each food group.
3. State why it is healthy to eat foods from all of the food groups.

LESSON ORDER

The lesson should be taught in this order

1. Introduce MyPlate
2. Read a children's story book
3. Talk about MyPlate and nutrition
4. Play a physically active game
5. Make and enjoy a healthy snack

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Jack and the Hungry Giant Eat Right with MyPlate by Loreen Leedy book
- MyPlate Chart, Poster or Plate
- Plastic Poly Dots
2 sets. Remove yellow dots; you will use them in a different lesson.
- MyPlate Pocket Chart and included food cards
- If teaching Skip to the Plate race activity : Half sheet food cards
Laminated cards in kit. Remove yellow cards for sometimes foods; you will use them in different lesson.

OR

- If teaching Musical Foods activity: “Alive with 5” song downloaded to mobile device.
Download here: choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/populartopics/Song-alivewithfive.mp3
- If teaching Musical Foods activity: I-pad speaker and I-pad mini

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

Not to be taught as part of the lesson—this is for instructor only so he/she has background knowledge

MyPlate: Balance your plate with choices from each food group

USDA’s MyPlate is based on the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. It is a visual representation of how to choose foods in a flexible, balanced way at meals, which will create a healthful eating pattern and provide a variety of nutrients from each food group. MyPlate is divided into five food groups: Fruits, Vegetables, Protein, Grains, and Dairy. MyPlate has several key nutrition messages to help people make the healthiest choices in each group:

- Include more fruits and vegetables at meals. MyPlate recommends filling half of our plates with these nutritious foods. Fruits and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, are important for long-term health, and may reduce risks of chronic disease development.
- Choose a variety of colorful vegetables to get more nutrients. Different colors of vegetables (i.e., red-orange and dark green) contain different nutrients. MyPlate categorizes vegetables according to subgroups based on color and nutrient content, and recommends that people aim for a certain amount from each group each week to get a greater variety of nutrients.
- Eat more whole fruits rather than 100% fruit juice. Although 100% fruit juice is considered a fruit, whole fruit contains more fiber and less calories than 100% juice. Fiber is important for our digestive system. It helps us stay full longer, and it is important for heart health.

- Choose whole grains for at least half of your servings of grains each day. Whole grains such as brown rice, whole-wheat products, quinoa, and oatmeal contain fiber, B-vitamins, and minerals, which are lost in the refining process when grains are processed to become more shelf-stable.
- Select low-fat or fat-free dairy products. These products contain the same amount of protein, vitamins, and minerals (such as calcium), with less fat and saturated fat, than the full-fat versions.
- Choose a variety of protein options including lean meats and poultry, fatty fish, and plant-based protein sources. Fatty fish (i.e., sardines, trout, and salmon) contain heart-healthy fats and plant-based protein sources (i.e., beans, peas, and soy foods) contain dietary fiber and are generally low in saturated fat.

Fat and oils are not considered a separate food group; however, they are important because they provide essential fats, which our body cannot make, and they are needed to absorb fat-soluble vitamins. However, they are needed in much smaller quantities than the foods found in each food group and they are often found in other foods (i.e., fatty fish and avocados). And the type of fat we choose matters. MyPlate recommends that we choose primarily unsaturated fats, which are liquid at room temperature, because they are beneficial for heart health. This includes oils and fats found in certain foods—fatty fish, avocados, nuts, and seeds. In contrast, saturated and trans fats, which are solid at room temperature, such as butter, lard, and fat present in red meat, should be reduced.

MyPlate also recommends that we reduce our intake of added sugars and sodium. Sugar is found naturally in some foods (i.e., lactose in milk products and fructose in fruit); however, much of the sugar we eat is added to foods. By 2021, all Nutrition Facts Labels will specify the grams of added sugar found in the food. Added sugars can also be identified by looking for

different forms of sugar in the ingredient list such as corn syrup, corn syrup solids, honey, maple syrup, and maltose. Similarly, reading the Nutrition Facts Label can also help you identify foods that are lower in sodium. In contrast to what many people think, adding salt to food is not the primary source of sodium in our diet, but rather it is sodium that is added to food when it is processed.

USDA's MyPlate provides recommendations for the number of servings of foods from each food group children and adults should consume to maximize nutrition. These recommendations are based on age, estimated number of calories required, and daily physical activity level. Individual needs and recommendations vary. For specific guidelines go to <https://www.choosemyplate.gov>.

References

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TEACHING THE LESSON

Sample Instructor Narrative

Instructor text is in blue

Today we will read a book together, talk about MyPlate, make a healthy snack, and play a fun physically active game. We are learning about MyPlate. (Show MyPlate chart, poster or plate.) Have you heard about MyPlate? We are going to read the book *Jack and the Giant Eat Right with MyPlate* (show the book). We will learn more about MyPlate in the book.

Tips for Reading to a Group of Children:

- Make sure to read the book yourself ahead of time so you are familiar with it.
- Sit in a chair or on the floor in the center. Ask children to sit around you in a semi-circle. Ask kids to “sit on their pockets.”
- Read the book holding it up.
- Hold book up high and slowly show it around the entire circle so all kids can see.
- Speak loudly with a clear voice – articulating voices for characters, etc., when it applies.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: This is a longer book. You do not need to read every food that is on each page. You might want to stop at “Waldorf’s Tips for Healthy Eating” and skip the last two pages as these topics will be covered in other lessons.

Tips for Increasing Engagement While Reading the Book

- Ask the kids to “stomp their feet like a giant” when they hear the word giant.
- When the giant says, “Are you hungry too? Let’s have a healthy meal. ...” Ask the kids what they think he might have for a healthy meal.
- On each of the pages that show a food group, ask the kids, “Which foods do you like on this page?”
- When Waldorf “chopped and poured and stirred,” ask the kids to do chopping, pouring, and stirring motions.

AFTER READING THE BOOK

Sample Instructor Narrative

Instructor text is in blue

Hold up the MyPlate pocket display. (It is large– so you may want to ask a student or teacher to hold the other side of it.) **This is MyPlate which helps us to know how to eat in a healthy way. It reminds us that we should eat food from each of the food groups each day. Foods are divided up into five different food groups: Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Protein, and Dairy. Each food group is a different color. What color is the Vegetable group? (Let kids answer—Green!), Fruit group (Red!), Grains group (Orange!), Protein group (Purple!), Dairy group (Blue!). Great job! Try to remember these colors because we are going to play a game using them later.**

In the book we read, the giant asked Jack to help him make a healthy meal. He asked Jack to choose his favorite foods in each food group. I brought some pictures of foods with me. (Show small food cards that came with MyPlate chart. Tear them apart before lesson.) **Can you help me put them in each food group?** Mix up the pictures, pull them out one at a time and show each picture to the children. For each picture, ask the children the following:

1. **What is this food?**
2. **Which food group does it belong in?**

(Show at least 10 pictures (at least two from each food group) and put them in the appropriate clear plastic food group pocket on the MyPlate display.)

OPTIONAL: To make the activity more interactive, ask for a volunteer to come forward and place the food picture in the correct pocket each time you show a picture.

The foods in each of these food groups are healthy for us because they give us different nutrients. That’s a big word. Can you say that with me? NU-TREE-ENT. Nutrients are found inside of foods and when we eat them, they help our bodies grow and stay healthy. We will talk more about these NU-TREE-ENTS that we get from foods in other lessons. In addition to nutrients, food gives us the energy we need to run, play, think, talk, swim, and do all of the other fun things we do each day. Speaking of energy, let’s use our energy to play a fun relay game.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: SKIP TO THE PLATE

You will need two sets of the poly dots and the laminated food cards (remove the yellow dots and food cards; you will use them in a different lesson). Split the students into two groups and ask them to form two lines. (Make sure there is space between the two lines so students will not run into one another.) Place one set of the poly dots several feet away from each line of students. You can gauge the distance based on the age of the children and setup of the room. Set a stack of food group cards next to the first person in each line, face down. Say to the students:

We are going to play a skipping relay game. When I say go, the first person in line should pick up a food card. You will look at your card and then you will skip across the room to the dots and put the card on the dot that is the color of the food group that the food belongs in. Let's practice. If your card is a strawberry, a strawberry belongs in what food group? (Allow the kids to answer—Fruit group!) Good, and what color is the fruit group? (Allow kids to answer—Red). Great. So you would put the strawberry card on the red dot. When you place your card, skip back to the line and tag the next person in line. That person draws a card and goes next. The line that gets done first with the most answers correct wins!

Alternate game: Musical Foods

This may work best for younger children

You will need one set of the poly dots (remove the yellow dot).

EXPLANATION: This game is similar to “hot potato.” You will need the “Alive with 5” song downloaded to your mobile device and the plug-in speaker (see the materials section to download). Ask the students to sit in a circle with one student in the middle. The student in the middle is the MyPlate King or Queen. Give ONE set of poly dots to the student in the middle. You will start the music. When the music starts, the MyPlate King or Queen (student seated in the center of the circle) will hand one of the poly dots (of his/her choice) to the nearest student to start passing it around the circle. You will randomly stop the music. When the music stops, the child holding the dot has to name a food that is in the food group which corresponds to the color of the dot. (For example, if he/she is holding a red dot, he/she should name a fruit.) If the student correctly names a food that falls into the food group, he/she becomes the MyPlate King or Queen and gets to move into the middle of the circle and will start passing the next dot when the music starts. If he/she answers incorrectly, he/she stays in the same spot and the student in the middle remains the MyPlate King/Queen. Play at least five rounds of the game so each color is passed around at least once.

HEALTHY SNACK

NOTE ABOUT FOOD ALLERGIES: Check with parents before any snacks are served to see if there are any food allergies. If a snack has an ingredient known to be a common allergen, such as peanut butter, make sure to have an alternative such as a low-fat ranch dip.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Please instruct children to wash hands prior to eating. NEA should wear disposable gloves when preparing food.

OPTIONAL (IF THERE IS TIME): As you are preparing the snack, or as the children are eating their snack, ask the children to name the food group that each ingredient belongs in. For example, as you are making the pizza, explain that instead of just a pepperoni pizza, this pizza has lots of healthy foods on top. Ask the children to name which food group each component of the pizza belongs in.

MYPLATE CRACKER STACKS

Ingredients

For each cracker stack

- Whole grain cracker
- 1/4 slice of cheese
- 1/4 slice of deli meat (i.e., turkey)
- 1 spinach leaf or 1 baby carrot
- Thin apple slice *(or 2 grapes)
- Small plates
- Disposable gloves

Instructions

Ahead of time: Wash all fruits and vegetables (unless purchased pre-washed). Cut each slice of cheese and deli meat into fourths (one slice is enough for four stacks).

At lesson: Put on disposable gloves. On top of each cracker, layer a piece of spinach (if using), a slice of deli meat, and a slice of cheese. Serve the apple slice or grapes and baby carrot (if using) on the side.

** If you are prepping food prior to the lesson, you may want to use two grapes instead of the apples to prevent browning.*

Alternative recipe idea

MYPLATE MINI PIZZAS

Ingredients

- Whole-wheat English muffins, mini whole-wheat bagels, or whole grain baguette sliced into 1/2 -inch thick slices
- Can of pineapple tidbits (packed in 100% juice), drained
- 15 oz. can tomato sauce
- Deli meat (turkey or ham), cut into small squares
- Mozzarella cheese, shredded
- Tomatoes, diced; cherry tomatoes, halved; or red bell pepper, diced

Equipment Needed

- Toaster oven
- Small baking sheet (for toaster oven)
- Spatula
- Strainer

Instructions

Ahead of time: Wash the top of canned products. Open and drain canned pineapple tidbits in a strainer. Cut the deli meat into small squares. Dice tomatoes or bell pepper or cut cherry tomatoes in half. If using the whole-grain baguette, slice into 1/2-inch thick slices. If using mini bagels or English muffins, separate into halves.

At lesson: Put on disposable gloves. Arrange bread on a toaster oven baking sheet. Spoon 1 Tbsp. of tomato sauce onto each piece of bread, muffin, or bagel. Add a couple of pineapple tidbits, a few pieces of deli meat, and a couple of tomato or bell pepper pieces. Top with 1-2 Tbsp. of mozzarella cheese. Bake in the toaster oven at 350 degrees until cheese is melted (about 3-4 minutes).

**This recipe may not be appropriate for a large group of students because of the time involved in toasting the pizzas. The MyPlate cracker stacks would be appropriate for a large group.*

WHILE ENJOYING THE SNACK REVIEW THE LESSON

MyPlate helps us to know how to eat in a healthy way. It reminds us that we should eat food from each of the food groups each day. Foods are divided up into five different food groups. Who remembers the names of the different food groups? Hold up one of the poly dots and say, **Who remembers what the BLUE group is called?** (Let the kids answer—Dairy!) Go through the rest of the good groups. Fruit group - red; Vegetable group - green; Grains group - orange; Protein group - purple; Dairy group - blue.

That's right. The food groups are Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Protein and Dairy. The foods in each of these food groups are healthy for us because they give us different nutrients, which help us grow and stay healthy. They also give us the energy we need to run, play, learn, and do all of the other fun things we do each day.

OTHER BOOKS CHILDREN MIGHT ENJOY

- Oh, the THINGS you can do that are GOOD for you! by Tish Rabe



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