

NEVER NOT EVER?

Theme: Give It a Try

Overview: This series of activities encourages students to try new foods. The first activity features an interactive read-aloud and discussion of the story I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child**. The second activity asks students to recall the foods from the story that the main character, Lola, does not want to try and to tally up the number of students who have tried those foods. In the third activity, students name one food they would like to try and draw a picture of themselves eating it!

** If this book is not part of your classroom library or available at the public library, you can easily modify the lesson using one of the books below:

- Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban
- D.W. the Picky Eater by Marc Brown
- Eat Your Peas, Louise by Pegeen Snow
- Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
- Gregory, the Terrible Eater by Mitchell Sharmat

Vocabulary:

- Energy: What we need to move, work and play. Some activities require more energy than others.
- MyPlate: A way to help us remember what to put on our plate each day.

Activity 1: New Foods Can Be Fun!

Type of Activity: Energy to Read

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Social Emotional

Students will:

- Listen to a read-aloud story about trying new foods.
- Make up fun new names for foods.
- List reasons why it's fun to try new foods.

Materials:

- I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child** – *The story is about a little girl who does not want to try new foods, especially not tomatoes. Then her older brother makes up funny names and stories about several foods, and she agrees to try them. No surprise -- she likes them!*
- Flip Chart

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- Three to five foods from different food groups that students are not likely to have tried
- Plates
- Napkins
- Hand sanitizer

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. On small plates, place 3-5 foods from different food groups that you think students may have never tried. Examples include kiwi, beans, cauliflower, and Swiss cheese. Ask students to name the foods and to share whether or not they have ever tried them.
 2. Show students the cover of the book and say the name of the title. Ask students what they think the book might be about, based on its title and the front cover art.
 3. Explain that the story is about a little girl who doesn't like to try new foods. Ask students to give thumbs up if they like to try new foods.
 4. Begin reading the story. As you read, do the following:
 - Point out pictures of the foods and ask students to name them.
 - Ask students what Lola's brother does to get her to try the new foods. Ask: *Would you ever want to try orange twiglets from Jupiter or green drops from Greenland or cloud fluff from the pointiest peak of Mount Fuji?*
 - Ask students what happens when Lola tries the new foods. As needed, guide students to understand that Lola likes the foods and she has fun while eating them.
 5. Direct students to look at the foods from the beginning of the lesson. Ask: *How would you describe each food? What color is it? Is it big or little?*
 6. Together, or in small groups, challenge students to come up with a fun new name for each food, just like Lola's brother did.
 7. Have each student point to one of the foods on the plates and say its new fun name.
- Optional enrichment:** Allow student volunteers to taste the foods.

Activity 2: I Have Tried It! Have You?

Type of Activity: Energy to Read/ Energy to Discover

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Social Emotional

Students will:

- List the foods that Lola did not want to try in the story I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato.
- Describe the foods from the list that they have tried.
- Tally up the number of students who have tried each food.

Materials:

- I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child
- Flip Chart
- Markers

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. List the names or pictures of some or all of the foods that Lola did not want to try on a flip chart (peas, carrots, potatoes, mushrooms, spaghetti, eggs, sausages, cauliflower, cabbage, baked beans, bananas, oranges, apples, rice, cheese, fish sticks and tomatoes).
2. Create a column next to each food.
3. Point to each food, one at a time, and ask students to stand up who have tried the food. For example, the first food is peas. Ask: *How many of you have ever tried peas?* If you have, stand up. Give positive reinforcement to those who are standing with applause or cheers. Ask student volunteers who are standing to share what they would tell the other students (and Lola!) about how peas taste. If students did not like the food, discuss other ways it could be prepared or share other foods that come from it. For example, French fries come from potatoes.
4. With teacher support, ask students to count the number of classmates who have tried peas and call on a volunteer to write tally marks in the first column to represent those students.
5. Repeat the exercise with each food.
6. When all foods have been tallied, count the tally marks beside each food with the class. Encourage students to use language and math skills by asking the following questions:
 - How many friends have tried _____ (each food name)?
 - Which food has the biggest number of friends tried?
 - Which food has the smallest number of friends tried?
 - Did more friends try ____ or _____?
 - Which food would you like to try?

Activity 3- I'm Ready to Try!

Type of Activity: Energy to Read, Energy to Create

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Social Emotional

Students will:

- Name one new food they will try.
- Complete a sentence or draw a picture with a pledge to eat a new food.

Materials:

- I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child **
- Flip Chart
- Markers
- Papers and art materials (paper, crayons, markers)
- Several different foods or pictures of foods (optional)

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

1. Go back to the list from the previous activity of the foods from the story. Ask each student to name one new food that they will agree to try. It can be a food from the list or another food. If students do not want to try a food from the list, you may want to give them pictures of foods to get some ideas.
2. Write the words, “Trying new foods can be fun! I will try a _____.” on the flip chart. Write each student’s name and ask him or her to name a food they will agree to try.
3. Distribute art materials and ask each student to draw a picture of themselves eating their new food.
4. Ask students to share their pictures with the class. Display the pictures in the classroom to remind students about the foods they have agreed to try. Optional enrichment: Invite students to explain why they chose the foods they did.
5. Tell students to let you know when they have tried the new food and ask them to report back to the class about how it tasted! You can encourage students to try new foods by having a round of applause or distributing a sticker each time a new food is tried. You can even fill a clear bowl or container with small balls or beads each time a food is tried. When the bowl is filled to a certain height, the class can be rewarded with extra play time.

Modifications:

Pump It Up for Older Students

- If students have been introduced to MyPlate, they can name the food group of the food they have selected or point to where it would be placed on a MyPlate graphic.
- Count the different number of foods in each of the food groups based on what each student has promised to try in Activity 3.

Cool It Down for Younger Students

- Have students paste pictures of the foods they are willing to try onto construction paper instead of drawing or writing the names of the foods.

NAEYC Standards Alignment:

- **2.A.10** The curriculum guides teachers to incorporate content, concepts, and activities that foster social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and integrate key areas of content including literacy, mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety, and social studies.
- **2.K.01** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, rest, good nutrition, exercise, hand washing, and tooth brushing.
- **2.E.04** Children have varied opportunities to (a) be read books in an engaging manner in group or individualized settings at least twice a day in full-day programs and at least once daily in half day programs; (g) engage in conversations that help them understand the content of the book.
- **2.E.07** Children are given opportunities to recognize and write letters.
- **2.F.02** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to build an understanding of numbers, number names, and their relationship to object quantities and to symbols.
- **2.F.03** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to categorize by one or two attributes such as shape, size, and color.
- **2.J.06** Children are provided many and varied open-ended opportunities and materials to express themselves creatively through (a) music and (d) two- and three-dimensional art.

Be Smart from the Start at Home!

Preschool-aged children are not expected to understand calories or how their bodies use energy, but they can begin to learn foundational information to help them make healthy decisions around diet and exercise. The Smart from the Start lessons are a set of flexible activities designed to introduce and reinforce these concepts, and we encourage you to integrate the rest of the activities in Me and My Choices and Give it a Try! into your existing curriculum. Throughout these activities, children will learn about energy they need to work and play; to make healthy choices about what they eat and drink from a variety of food groups; and how to move throughout the day with fun activities that help keep their hearts strong and healthy.

As your students progress to elementary school, the [Healthy Decisions, Healthy Habits Together Counts™ curriculum](#) can help them focus on more rigorous concepts related to self-esteem, decision-making, healthy nutrition and regular physical activity.

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HEALTHY DECISIONS. HEALTHY HABITS.

Energy at Home

This week we read a story called I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child. It is about a little girl who does not want to try new foods. Her older brother makes up funny names and stories about the foods and she agrees to try them. She likes them!

Picky eating is very common for children, and preschool is a common time for this type of behavior. Some children need to sample foods at least 10–15 times before they will have a true interest.

One way to help children eat a healthy, balanced diet is to encourage them to try new foods from different food groups. Your child named one food that they would like to try during the activity today. Ask your child what food he or she named. If possible, give him or her opportunity to try it at home!

Here are some ideas to help get your child to try new foods!

- Let your children see you try new foods.
- Serve new foods with foods your child already loves.
- Try different colors, textures, and shapes.
- Make eating fun! Make up stories and fun names for new foods your kids are reluctant to try.
- Serve a small portion and offer one new food at a time.
- Encourage children to help make the food.
- Be patient.
- Eating together can be fun. Have everyone try a new food together!

If your child tries the new food, consider writing a note back to the teacher with your child's answers to the following questions:

- What food did you try?
- What did it taste like?
- Would you eat it again?
- What other food did it taste like?
- Were you happy you tried it?

For more recipes and tips, go to www.kidseatright.org.