

THE POWER OF VEGGIES

Theme: Give It a Try

Overview: This series of activities introduces students to the power of vegetables! They listen to a read-aloud and answer questions about the book [Growing Vegetable Soup](#) by Lois Ehlert.** They plant their own vegetables and learn about the super powers vegetables have to help us stay strong and help us grow.

** 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:

[From Seed to Plant](#) by Gail Gibbons

[One Bean](#) by Anne Rockwell

[Pumpkin Pumpkin](#) by Jeanne Titherington

[The Tiny Seed](#) by Eric Carle

[Who Grew My Soup?](#) by Tom Darbyshire

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: Veggie Power

Type of Activity: Energy to Discover, Energy to Perform, Energy to Move

Domain: Cognitive, Language, Social Emotional, Physical

Students will:

- Be introduced to the importance of eating vegetables.
- Name and describe different vegetables.
- Learn a song about how vegetables give them power.

Materials:

- Blanket or cape
- Letter “V” made from construction paper
- Song, “Veggie Superhero” (Note: Song is included at the end of this activity)
- Several different vegetables: real food, models, or pictures
- Picture of [MyPlate](#):
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers/HealthyEatingForPreschoolers-MiniPoster.pdf>
- Additional construction paper for capes and letter “V’s” (optional)

Time Frame: 20-30 minutes

Directions:

Note Before students enter the room, place a small blanket or jacket around your neck to act as a cape and a large letter V made of construction paper on your chest.

1. As students enter the room, they may ask why you are wearing a cape! Explain that you are a superhero! Point out the letter V on your chest and have students say the letter and make the sound. Explain that the word “vegetable” starts with a V, and your superhero name is Captain Vegetable. When you say your name, make a muscle so students can see how strong you are!
2. Ask students if they can guess how you got to be a superhero! Give them a hint that it has something to do with vegetables.
3. Tell students that you became a superhero by eating the vegetables on your plate. Vegetables help make us strong and help us grow!
4. Ask students if they know the names of any vegetables. Every time they say a vegetable, encourage them to make a muscle so they can show how strong they are too.
5. Show students the vegetables (or models or photographs) you brought to class today. Ask students if they know the names of the vegetables. Lead a discussion about each vegetable’s color, size, how it feels on the outside, and whether students have ever tried it.
6. Direct students to the picture of MyPlate. Point out the section for vegetables and remind students that they should have some vegetables on their plates every day!
7. Tell students that all of the vegetables can help them be a superhero, too! Sing the “Veggie Superhero” song for students and teach them the words. If possible, allow each student to make and wear a cape and a Superhero letter “V” from construction paper.
8. Sing the song several times!

Activity 2: Seeds of Fun

Type of Activity: Energy to Read, Energy to Discover, Energy to Create

Domain: Cognitive, Physical, Social Emotional

Students will:

- Listen to the read-aloud story about a child who grows vegetables for soup.
- Identify the lifecycle of a vegetable plant.
- Grow lima bean sprouts.
- Draw and document changes in the lima bean seed.

SMART FROM THE START

HEALTHY DECISIONS. HEALTHY HABITS.

Materials:

- Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert- *The story helps young children learn about the life cycle of a plant as they see vegetables being grown in preparation for vegetable soup!*
- Flip chart
- Lima beans
- Paper plates
- Masking tape
- Marker
- Zipper bags
- Paper towels
- Water source
- Art materials (paper, crayons, markers)
- Small shovel or cup - optional
- Watering can or cup - optional
- Potting soil – optional

Time Frame: 30-40 minutes

Directions:

1. Show students the front of the book and read its title and author aloud.
2. Ask students to predict what the story will be about and anything they already know about growing vegetables. While students are sharing, write down facts on chart paper.
3. Read the story aloud. As you read, point out the tools needed to grow plants and each vegetable's name that is being grown. Periodically ask students which vegetables they have tasted.
4. After reading the story, ask students what they remember about how to grow a vegetable.
5. Draw the lifecycle of a vegetable plant on a flip chart using arrows or numbers. Encourage students to help you remember each step:
 - Plant the seed
 - Give the plant water
 - Make sure it gets sun
 - Watch it grow
 - Eat it!
6. Then, tell students they are going to get to plant their very own vegetables and watch them grow! First, fold a paper towel in half. Pour water on the towel and place it on a paper plate.
7. Place a plate and two or three beans in front of each child. Invite the children to place the beans on top the paper towel.

SMART FROM THE START

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8. Help the children fold their paper towels in half so the beans fit between the moistened paper towels. Slide the plates and beans into a gallon-size plastic zipper bag. Write the child's name on their bag with masking tape and a marker.
9. Set the plates in a warm area or beside a window. Remind students that vegetable seeds need water and warmth to grow. The paper towel provides the water and the sunny window is the heat or warmth.
10. Check the bean plants daily. Give students paper and crayons or markers to draw and document the changes in their seeds. They should see the beans become larger and then break open to form a sprout.

Optional Enrichment: Fill plastic cups with moist potting soil. Help the children make a one-inch deep hole in the center of the soil with a pencil. Give each child their plate and bean sprout. Plant the bean so that the initial sprout that emerges, which is the taproot, points down into the soil. Place the cups in a sunny, warm window. Set aside daily time for students to water their sprouts and document the changes taking place with the lima bean plant as it begins growing.

Modifications:

Pump It Up for Older Students

- Older students can make a vegetable garden outside with several different types of vegetable seeds. They can also chart and graph the growth of different plants.

Cool It Down for Younger Students

- For younger students, you can create one class plant rather than each student having his or her own plant.

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.G.02** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to learn key content and principles of science such as (a) the difference between living and non-living things (e.g., plants versus rocks) and life cycles of organisms (e.g., plants, butterflies, humans)
- **2.G.05** Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to collect data and represent and document their findings (e.g., through drawing or graphing)

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- **2.J.06** Children are provided many and varied open-ended opportunities and materials to express themselves creatively through (a) music.

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.

Veggie Superhero

(Sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It")

If you're a Veggie Superhero, flex your arms [make a muscle with both arms]

If you're a Veggie Superhero, flex your arms

If you eat the veggies on your plate

You're growing strong and feeling great

If you're a Veggie Superhero, flex your arms

If you're a Veggie Superhero, jump so high [jump in the air]

If you're a Veggie Superhero, jump so high

If you eat the veggies on your plate

You're growing strong and feeling great

If you're a Veggie Superhero, jump so high

If you're a Veggie Superhero, run so fast [run in place]

If you're a Veggie Superhero, run so fast

If you eat the veggies on your plate

You're growing strong and feeling great

If you're a Veggie Superhero, run so fast

If you're a Veggie Superhero, stretch so tall [stretch your arms to the sky]

If you're a Veggie Superhero, stretch so tall

If you eat the veggies on your plate

You're growing strong and feeling great

If you're a Veggie Superhero, stretch so tall

Energy at Home

We learned all about the power of vegetables!

Students learned how vegetables can help them get big and strong. They learned a song about being a Veggie Superhero and planted their own lima beans. Ask your child to sing you the song!

Then, during your next meal, ask your child to point to the vegetables he or she is eating. For breakfast, it could be some vegetable juice. For lunch, it could be a handful of carrots. For dinner, it could be a potato. There are so many different kinds of vegetables. They all help give us energy and power!