



LESSON PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Every Bite Counts

This unit is all about food — the fuel your body needs to grow and be active. Different types of food help your body in different ways. That's why it's important to eat a variety of different foods from the five food groups. This unit is designed to introduce this concept to young children in gentle and creative ways.

It's important to remember that every child develops eating habits at a different pace. Preschool age children all develop at different rates and approach food in different ways. Allow children to choose from a variety of nutritious foods where possible. Encourage them to try new foods, but don't force them. Preschool-age children often try a food many times before they decide whether they like or don't like it.

For variety or if any of your students are allergic to peanuts or tree nuts, consider using soy nut butter or sunflower butter as an alternative to peanut butter.

Some foods may present a choking hazard for children if they are not cooked or cut up correctly. Cut raw vegetables into small pieces and cut round fruits (grapes, cherry tomatoes, etc.) in half. Spread peanut butter thinly.

Every Move Counts

The second unit, Every Move Counts, focuses on fitness and play. Healthy eating and physical activity go together like two peas in a pod! Encourage your students to do both daily to stay healthy and strong. Here's an example of the type of teacher "talking points" you'll find in the lessons:

"You don't have to like all the foods in all the different food groups. But it's good to eat something from each of the food groups every day. That's the best way to get all the healthy food and beverages we need to help us grow and be strong."

"What's the other thing our bodies need each day to keep us healthy and strong?"

Answer: We need to play! Every day, we need to run around, exercise, dance, play ball, play on a playground, do whatever kind of activities you like. Our bodies need nutritious food and physical activity every day to grow and be healthy."



LESSON PLAN A

FOOD GROUP FUN

Time Frame: 30-45 minutes

Children will:

- Learn the names of the five food groups.
- Experience and try foods from each food group.
- Understand the benefits (keeps you healthy and strong and gives you energy) of eating foods from each of the five groups on a daily basis.
- Understand that exercise is another important component in keeping us healthy.
- Engage in games and activities involving sorting, color matching and creative thinking.

Materials:

- Large Food Groups Icons sheet (2 copies)
- Small Food Groups Icons sheet
- Plate Pieces (curved triangle food pictures) sheet
- Laminator (optional)
- Play food items
- Pictures of food from magazines and supermarket flyers

Overview:

Children are introduced to the five food groups and play games to help them learn and remember which foods belong in which groups. These games also involve sorting, color matching and creative thinking.

Preparation:

- Print out one copy of the **Large Food Groups Icons** sheet to use as a teaching tool.
- Print out and laminate a second copy of the **Large Food Groups Icons**. Cut out each icon to use for card games.
- Print out one copy each of the **Small Food Groups Icons** sheet and the **Plate Pieces** sheet to use for card games. Laminate both sheets (if possible) and cut out the individual shapes. One sheet of each will make enough cards for one game set. Children can take turns playing this, or you can print out two or three sets so that more children can play at the same time.

Part A. Five Food Groups Lesson

Hold up the sheet showing the MyPlate icons that represent the five food groups. Lead a discussion about the different food groups, prompting with examples of familiar foods and drinks where helpful.

Talking Points:

Today we're going to learn about the different food groups: Fruits, Vegetables, Grains, Protein and Dairy.

Point to the **Fruits** icon. Which fruits do you see here?

Answer: *Banana, grapes and an apple.*

What are some other fruits that belong in this food group? (*oranges, peaches, mangoes*)

Point to the **Vegetables** icon. Which vegetables do you see here?

Answer: *Carrot, broccoli (or is it cauliflower?), lettuce (or is it spinach?), peas.*

What are some other vegetables that belong in this food group? (*potatoes, sweet potatoes*)

Point to the **Protein Foods** icon. Which protein foods do you see here?

Answer: *Fish, a piece of meat, beans, and what's that, a jellyfish? I think it's an egg!*

What are some other protein foods that belong in this food group? (*tofu, peanut butter*)

Point to the **Grains** icon. Which grain foods do you see here?

Answer: *Bread, popcorn and rice.*

What are some other grains that belong in this food group? (*pasta, oatmeal, cereal*)

Point to the **Dairy** icon. Which dairy foods do you see here?

Answer: *Milk and yogurt.*

What are some other dairy foods that belong in this food group? (*cheese, pudding and frozen yogurt*)

You don't have to like all the foods in all the different food groups. But it's good to eat something from each of the food groups every day. That's the best way to get all the healthy food and beverages we need to help us grow and be strong.

What's the other thing our bodies need each day to keep us healthy and strong?

Answer: *We need to play! Every day, we need to run around, exercise, dance, play ball, play on a playground, do whatever kind of activities you like. Our bodies need nutritious food and physical activity every day to grow and be healthy.*

Part B. Food Groups Card Games

Memory Game (all ages)

- Use 10 cards (2 of each food group) for one game
- Use all 15 cards for older children for an extra challenge

Talking Points:

- Show one of each type of card and ask students to identify each one.
- Show the Activity card last and ask why it's included with the food group cards.
- The answer: Because the healthy foods from the 5 food groups are what give us the energy to run and play! Being active every day helps our bodies grow and be healthy and strong.

Instructions:

Explain that the Memory Game is all about remembering the pictures on each card and where you've seen them. So, you need to watch carefully, even when it's not your turn!

Start with 6 cards (2 of 3 different colors). Model how to play this game, along with one student as a helper. Explain the steps as you play:

1. Lay the cards in two rows, picture side down.
2. Flip over any two cards. Say the name of each card as you flip them.* For instance, "Fruits" or "Grains."
3. If the two cards match, you get to keep them for the rest of the game. If they don't match, turn them back over.
4. Now the other player flips over two cards and follows the same steps.
5. Continue to play until all the cards have been matched.

*Teachers may prompt the first few times the students play the game.

If that was difficult for your students, play the game again, asking for another student to volunteer as your helper. If it was easy, play again with more pairs of cards.

Food Matching Activity (all ages)

Model how to do this activity, and then let students play with it one at a time.

Use one of each of the Food Group cards (5 total) plus one of each of the curved Plate Piece cards (5 total) for this activity.

Instructions:

1. Lay the five Food Group cards in a row face up.
2. Now select a Plate Piece card and place it on top of the matching Food Group card.
3. To extend the game, children may also use play food or pictures of food to match them up to the different food groups. You might suggest they place the objects in vertical rows under each Food Group card.

Color Matching Activity (ages 2–3)

Use one of each type of the five Food Group cards (5 cards total)

Select one card of each color and lay them face up in a row. Use the remaining cards to match the colors: red, green, orange, blue and purple.

Teacher Reference:

Q: Why does the ChooseMyPlate.gov website include tomatoes and avocados in the Vegetable Group instead of the Fruit Group?

A: A number of foods that are considered fruits by botanists are part of the Vegetable Group. For example, tomatoes, avocados, eggplants, cucumbers, green peppers, zucchini, butternut squash and others are classified as fruits by botanists because they are the fleshy plant part surrounding its seeds. However, for nutritional and culinary purposes, these foods are considered to be vegetables rather than fruits. The nutritional classification of foods considers not just botany, but a food's nutrient content, use in meals, and taste. The Fruit Group includes botanical fruits that are sweet and/or tart in taste — those which are usually thought of as fruits by consumers. The Vegetable Group, on the other hand, includes those botanical fruits that are not sweet or tart and are usually consumed along with other vegetables or as a vegetable.

Family Connection:

Suggested Resources for Parents and Caregivers:

- [MyPlate Tips for Preschoolers](#)
- [Healthy Eating for Preschoolers](#)
- [MyPlate Snack Tips for Parents](#)
- [Kid-friendly Veggies and Fruits](#)
- [Be a Healthy Role Model for Children](#)

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

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, science, and health and safety.

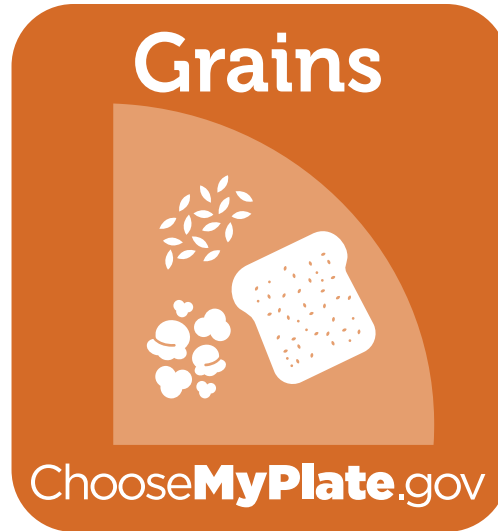
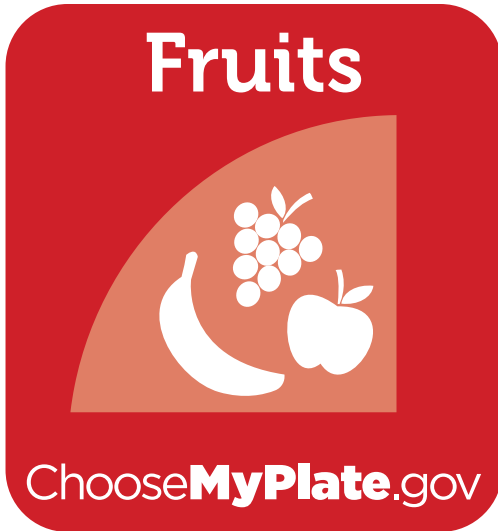
2.F.03 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to categorize by one or two attributes such as shape, size and color.

2.J.06 Children are provided many and varied open-ended opportunities to express themselves creatively through (a) music and (d) two- and three-dimensional art.

2.K.01 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, and good nutrition.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework 2.4 (Prekindergarten): Distinguishes food on a continuum from most healthy to less healthy. 2.5 (Prekindergarten): Eats a variety of nutritious foods.

Worksheets & Downloads:





Fruits

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Vegetables

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Grains

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Protein

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Dairy

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Activity

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Fruits

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Vegetables

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Grains

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Protein

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Dairy

Choose**MyPlate.gov**

Activity

Choose**MyPlate.gov**





LESSON PLAN B

SMART SNACKS & SILLY SONGS

Time Frame: 30-45 minutes

Children will:

- Understand the concept of balanced eating, using MyPlate as a visual aid.
- Develop healthy snacking habits.
- Learn how snacks can be quick, healthy and easy to prepare.
- Recognize the MyPlate pattern and what each section represents.

Materials:

- Printout of MyPlate template (color) for teacher, laminated if possible
- Copies of MyPlate template (black and white) for each student
- Crayons (a set of “food group” colors – red, green, orange, purple and blue – for each pair of children)
- Measuring cups
- Your choice of foods from the Grains, Fruits, Vegetables, Dairy and Protein Foods groups

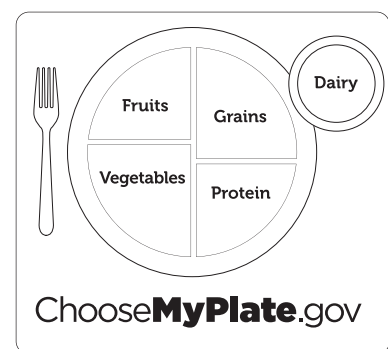
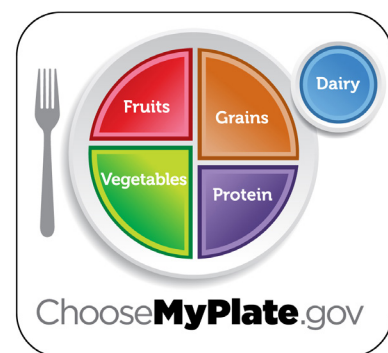
Overview:

Students begin by coloring their MyPlate coloring pages, following the color template as a guide. The teacher gives a brief lesson, explaining which food groups are represented where on the plate pattern. Then, students use measuring cups and scoops to serve themselves a well-balanced snack, following the suggested menu from MyPlate (see below).

Part A. MyPlate Coloring Page Activity

Instructions:

- Hold up the color copy of the MyPlate template to show students the full-color version. Then pass out copies of the black-and-white coloring page.
- Ask students, “Do you remember the names of the 5 food groups? Here is where they go on our plates.”
- This MyPlate placemat reminds us that we should eat a variety of different foods from these groups every day.
- Today we’re going to color in our own placemats and then use them for a special snack session.
- Color in each section of your plate and cup, using the **same colors** to match the MyPlate sections.
 - Which group will you color in red? (Fruits)
 - Which group will you color in green? (Vegetables)



ChooseMyPlate.gov

- Which group will you color in orange? (Grains)
- Which group will you color in purple? (Protein Foods)
- Which group will you color in blue? (Dairy)

While they color, continue the conversation by asking for examples of each food group. Prompt them with examples, such as:

- Grains (whole-grain bread, rice, crackers, oatmeal, pretzels, cereal)
- Protein Foods (beans, meat, fish and chicken)
- Dairy (milk, yogurt and cheese)

Ask questions like, “Can you name a Dairy food that you drink in a cup or glass?” Answer: Milk. “What about soy milk?” Yes, that’s a Dairy food, too.

“Can you name a Dairy food you eat with a spoon?” Answer: Yogurt

Part B. Fun Food Songs & Music Videos

Music is a great way to liven up these food lessons. You could a) play the food songs from this site while students color and then b) follow by showing the music videos on a projector. Younger children might enjoy singing the “Old MacDonald” song (below) to reinforce the food groups message, while the older set might like the faster paced “Alive With Five” song used in the K-2 lessons.

PBS Kids: Fizzy’s Lunch Lab | Food Songs & Videos

<http://pbskids.org/lunchlab/music/forget-nuts>

These funny videos and songs with clever lyrics will keep students engaged while learning about the food groups. Songs include: Fruit is Nature’s Candy, Veggie Fever, Calcium Yum Yum, and Wheat is Sweet. You have the option of watching the video or just downloading the song. Play these songs while students are coloring. If they really like them, play them a second time when they’re through or watch the animated music videos.

Alive With Five

Download the [Alive With Five](#) song here. Play this song after your snack session, and encourage kids to get up and dance!

Old MacDonald Had a Food Farm (for younger preschoolers)

Younger students may enjoy this silly sing-along. Sing this as a group to the tune of “Old MacDonald Had a Farm.”

Hold up a piece of play food or a picture of a food item. Use this in the second line of the song and then come up with a “sound word” for lines three and four. For instance: replace carrot/crunch with apple/chomp, watermelon/slurp, banana/mush, milk/drink, juice/sip, chicken/chew, ice-cream cone/lick, taco/crunch...

Older children can take turns calling out different kinds of food, while younger children can take the lead from the teacher.

Old MacDonald had a food farm, E-I-E-I-O,

And on that farm he had some (carrots), E-I-E-I-O,

With a crunch, crunch here and a crunch, crunch there,

here a crunch, there a crunch, everywhere a crunch, crunch

Old MacDonald had a food farm, E-I-E-I-O.

Repeat over and over, using different foods and sounds.

Part C. Smart Snack Combos

Preparation:

Select and prepare snack foods in advance, following the recommendations from MyPlate for the age of your class. (Note that recommendations can be broken down further, by gender and level of daily physical activity, but the numbers are averaged in this table to keep things simple in a group setting.)

MyPlate Snack Pattern

	Option A Morning Snack	Option A Afternoon Snack	Option B Morning Snack	Option B Afternoon Snack
Age 2				
(1,000 calories a day)	½ ounce Grains ½ cup Fruit	¼ cup Vegetables ½ cup Dairy*	½ cup Fruit ½ cup Dairy*	¼ cup Vegetables ½ cup Fruit
Age 3–4				
(1,200–1,400 calories a day)	1 ounce Grains ½ cup Fruit 1 ounce Protein Foods	½ cup Vegetables ½ cup Dairy*	½ cup Fruit ½ cup Dairy*	½ cup Vegetables ½ cup Fruit 1 ounce Protein Foods
Age 4–5				
(1,400–1,600 calories a day)	1 ounce Grains ½ cup Fruit 1 ounce Protein Foods	½ cup Vegetables ½ cup Dairy*	½ cup Fruit ½ cup Dairy*	½ cup Vegetables ½ cup Fruit 1 ounce Protein Foods***

*Offer children milk, yogurt and cheese.

** ½ ounce Grains = 1 ½ cups popcorn, 3 ½ saltine crackers, 2 ½ whole-wheat crackers

*** 1 ounce Protein Foods = 2 tablespoons hummus, 1 tablespoon peanut butter, 1 hard-boiled egg

Instructions:

1. Choose one of the suggested snack combinations from the MyPlate recommendations above.
2. Set up serving bowls and plates, along with measuring cups or scoops to measure serving sizes.
3. Explain that everyone is welcome to share a well-balanced snack, following the suggested menu from MyPlate.
4. Show students the snack foods and portions, and demonstrate how to measure a serving.
5. Show what a ½ cup measuring cup looks like compared to a 1 cup measuring cup, and explain that two ½ cups make a whole cup.
6. Allow them to serve themselves. But tell them in advance to hold off on eating until they've counted the items on their plate.
7. Before you eat, ask: What does one serving of fruit look like? How many berries/pieces/slices are in ½ cup? Ask the same about a grain, vegetable or protein portion as well.
8. While you're eating, ask questions like: How many food groups are on our plates?

9. Explain that by combining at least two of the five food groups, you get a wider range of nutrients. Add some protein, and you'll be less hungry and feel full for longer.
10. What are some tasty combinations that children like to eat? Ask if they'd like to try whole-grain crackers with cheese, cereal with milk or yogurt and fruit, or veggies with hummus. Combining different food groups makes things more interesting!

Extension:**Alive With Five**

Download the [Alive With Five](#) song here. Play this song after your snack session, and encourage kids to get up and dance! What are the takeaways?

- Healthy foods give us energy to move!
- Healthy foods and fun exercise are a winning combo!

Family Connection:

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2.F.05 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that help them understand the concept of measurement by using standard and non-standard units of measurement.

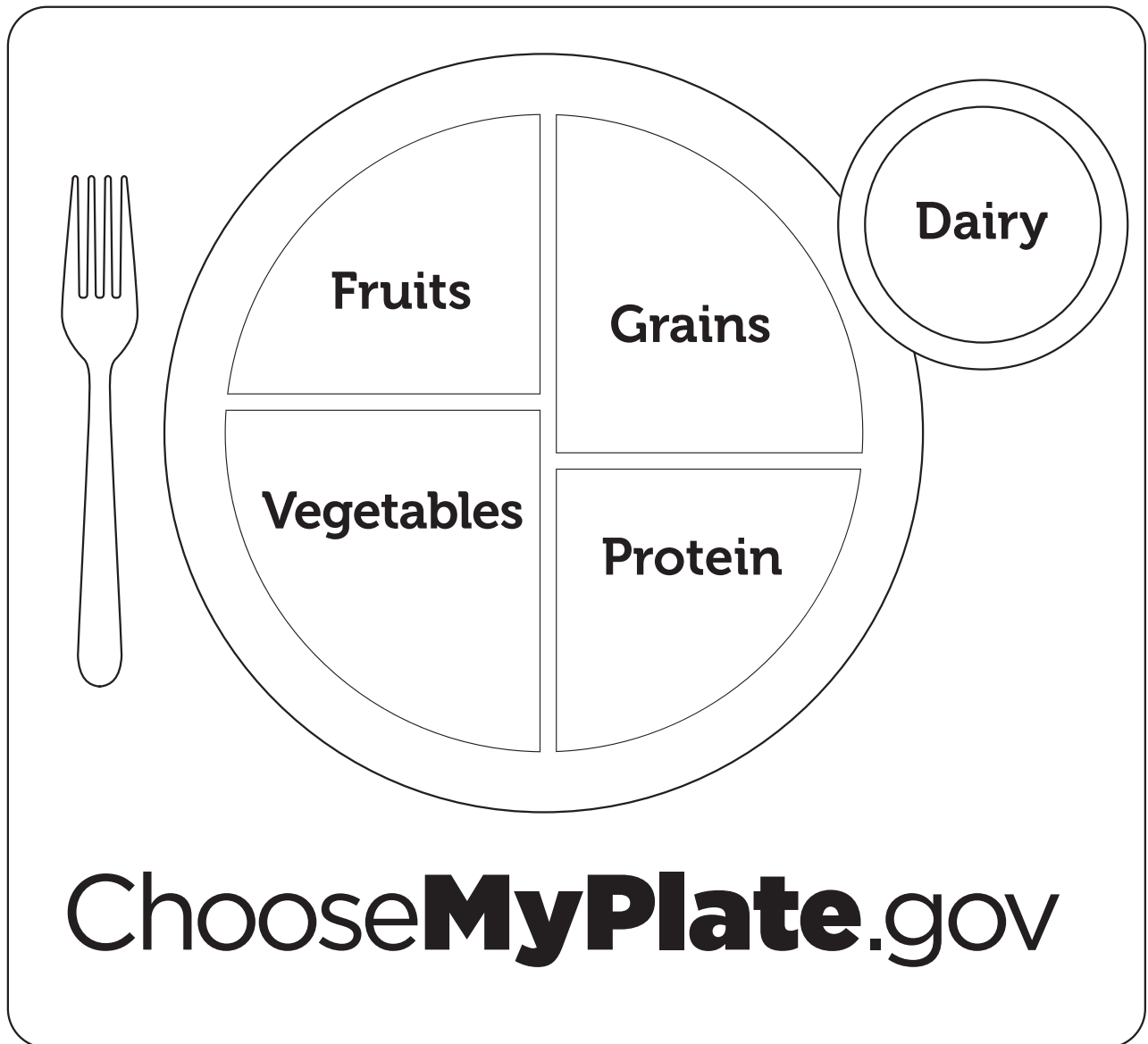
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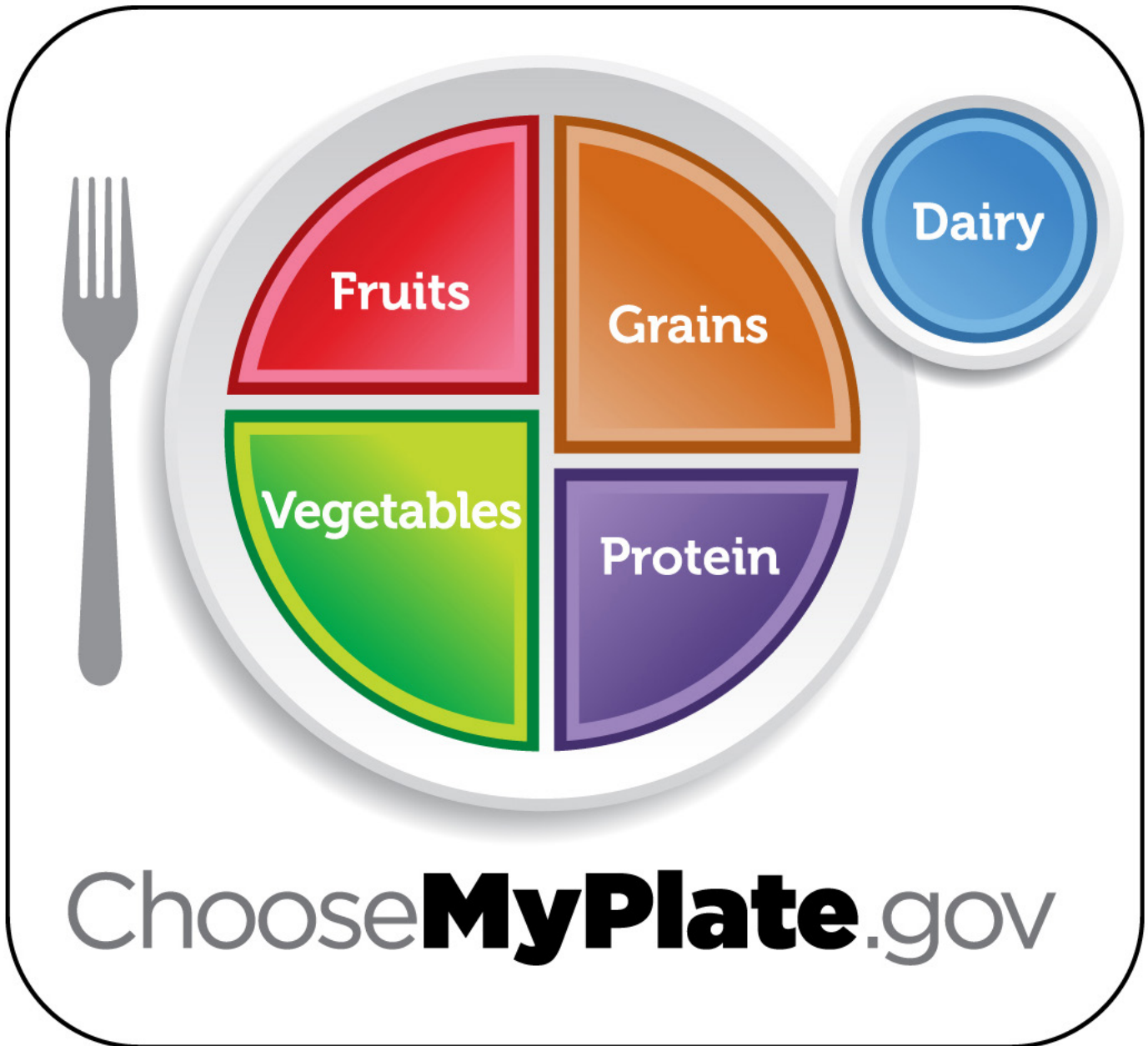
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Worksheets & Downloads:



<https://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/audiences/ColoringSheet.pdf>
MyPlate Coloring Page – B/W version



Color version of MyPlate placemat – for teachers to print and use as reference display
https://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/printablematerials/myplate_white.jpg



LESSON PLAN C

FRUIT FACES & VEGGIE MONSTERS

Time Frame: 30 minutes

Children will:

- Be able to correctly identify the names of each fruit and vegetable used on their edible art project.
- Follow simple steps to complete edible art using the specified number of items from each food group.

Materials:

- Assorted fruits and raw vegetables
- Optional accessories for edible art: String cheese, cheese chunks, thin pretzel sticks, dry spaghetti, black olives
- Paper plates
- Cutting board
- Blunt knives
- Toothpicks

Overview:

Children have fun with edible art!

Preparation:

Cut fresh fruit and vegetables into slices and chunks. Think of some fruit slices that could work as a face: slices of whole oranges, kiwis, apples (the core can be a nose!). Think of others that could work as eyes, ears, noses: blueberries, raisins, strawberries, banana slices... and hair: broccoli, cauliflower, baby carrots?

Part A. Funny Fruit Faces Activity**Instructions:**

1. Choose 3–5 different kinds of fruit pieces. Arrange them on a paper plate.
2. Make eyes, noses, mouths and ears out of different cut-up pieces of fruits.
3. Take a picture of your fruit face. Give it a name!
4. Now pair up with another student and compare your two funny faces.
5. Introduce your fruit friends to each other. "This is my pet kiwi, Bob. He has blueberries for eyes and a strawberry mouth."

Part B. Veggie Monsters Activity

Instructions:

1. Create your own creature using 3–5 different pieces of cut-up vegetables. Arrange them on a paper plate.
2. Use foods from the other food groups to accessorize your monster. What can you use for hair? Broccoli, cauliflower, dried spaghetti or string cheese? Be creative!
3. Teachers may help children use toothpicks to make creatures three-dimensional.
4. Use words to introduce your creature to the other children in the class. For instance, “This is my carrot monster, Clarabelle. She has string-cheese hair and angry eyebrows made from black olives.”

Standards Alignment:

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LESSON PLAN D

WHOLE FOODS WORKOUT

Time Frame: 30 minutes

Children will:

- Find success in preparing healthy and single-ingredient snacks.
- Learn how to safely use kitchen utensils while building fine motor skills.
- Follow directions and simple steps in food preparation.

Materials:

- Oranges or clementines
- Eggs
- Grapes
- Apples
- Plastic knives

Overview:

Prepping your own snack is a fun activity in and of itself. Plus, it motivates children to try more foods. Activities include peeling an orange and a hard-boiled egg, washing an apple and then slicing it with a blunt knife, counting the number of seeds in an apple, etc.

These activities help develop fine motor skills, building strength and dexterity in the fingers. It's satisfying and rewarding work that also fosters confidence and independence.

Suggested Activities:

Peel an Orange

Is it hard to get started? Use a plastic knife to cut an X shape at the top of the orange. Then dig your thumb under the skin to get the peeling process started. Peeling oranges is a wonderful sensorial experience as well, and the fragrant scent entices children to want to choose them as a snack.

Younger children might start with a clementine or tangerine, which are easier to peel. But for four- and five-year-olds, oranges are a good challenge and a great workout for the fingers!

Pluck Grapes off the Vine

Serve seedless grapes in clusters, rather than separated individually, and let little hands do the picking. They'll be

honing dexterity while engaging in the process. If you usually cut grapes in half for this age group, then show them how to do this themselves with a plastic knife.

Who Likes Hard-Boiled Eggs?

Many kids might say no at first, but once they get to peeling them on their own and cleaning off all the tiny bits of shell, they see them as not just a food but a fun activity too. Fine motor and practical life skills are developed while peeling hard boiled eggs (check about allergies first), and it's a good high-protein snack.

Here's a tip to make them easier to peel (and to ease frustration!): Add vinegar and salt to the water before boiling. Put your eggs in a pan, cover them with cold water, and then add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vinegar and a teaspoon of salt. Boil gently for 10 minutes and remove from heat. Then place the eggs in a bowl of ice water. Tap them gently if you like to slightly crack the shells. Once they're cooled, you can peel the eggs.

Family Connection:

Kitchen Prep Activity

Let your children help with meal preparation at home. Favorite tasks include:

- Husking corn
- Snapping green beans
- Opening snap peas

Suggested Resources for Parents and Caregivers:

- [MyPlate Tips for Preschoolers](#)
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LESSON PLAN E

MONSTER MASH

Time Frame: 30 minutes

Children will:

- Hear vegetable-themed music to boost their interests and engagement.
- Follow a simple recipe or directions to prepare a healthy snack.
- Use their fine motor skills to peel, mash, squash, mix and stir ingredients.

Materials:

- Potato mashers or whisks
- Forks
- Wooden spoons
- Frozen butternut squash, canned or raw vegetables (see below)
- Spoons and bowls for sampling
- Computer with Internet or CD player
- “Monster Mash” and “Mashed Potatoes” songs

Overview:

It's hard to resist veggies when you get to mash them yourself! Prepare some foods in advance (slice avocados; steam squash; boil, bake or microwave sweet potatoes), and then let children help with the rest. Their main job is to do the mashing! Play one or both of these songs to get kids in the spirit.

Mashed Avocados

Scoop avocado with a teaspoon and smash it with a masher or fork. Spread the pulp on whole-wheat crackers or whip up some guacamole (add a squeeze of lime and a dash of garlic salt or plain salt) to serve with whole-grain corn chips.

Mashed Sweet Potatoes

Baked sweet potatoes with the peel on and let them cool. Allow the children to peel the skin off of the sweet potato and use a masher to squash it until it's a smooth texture. Serve with butter and cinnamon for a sweet treat. Or add a dollop of sour cream or plain Greek yogurt and sprinkle some chives on top for a savory snack.

Mashed Butternut Squash

Microwave or steam some butternut squash chunks in advance. Add some cinnamon for sweetness. Don't care for squash on its own? Try half squash, half applesauce.

Applesauce Mash

Ingredients: (4 servings)

4 apples, peeled and chopped

2 tablespoons of water

¼ teaspoon of cinnamon

1 teaspoon of brown sugar (if using tart apples)

Instructions:

1. Peel and chop apples into 2-inch pieces.
2. Place the apple pieces and water in a medium sized microwaveable bowl. Cover and microwave for about 4 minutes or until softened. (If using more or fewer apples, figure on 1 minute per apple.)
3. Add the cinnamon and brown sugar (optional) and let the apples cool to room temperature.
4. Now let students mash the softened apples with a whisk or masher or fork as long as they like. Do they like it chunky or smooth?

Songs:

The Original Monster Mash

Bobby "Boris" Pickett & The Crypt-Kickers (1962)

<https://itunes.apple.com/ca/album/the-original-monster-mash/256225830>

Mashed Potato Time by Dee Dee Sharp

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTa_GUQCfM4

Family Connection:

Mashed Bean Dip

Extend the "monster mash" theme to the home with some fun recipes like this bean dip. Let the kids mash the beans and stir in a bit of olive oil or Greek yogurt, a squeeze of lemon and a dash of garlic salt. Or follow this recipe to be more precise. (6 servings)

- 1 (15-oz) can of cannellini or other white beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil or ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
- Juice of half a lemon (or 1 tablespoon of bottled lemon juice)
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder and ¼ teaspoon salt

Adults should handle can opening, rinsing and draining of beans. Place beans in a large, shallow bowl and then let kids gently mash them with a fork. This process should be slow and steady, so that the beans stay in the bowl and siblings can have a turn mashing. Helping out in the kitchen can be fun!

Mashed Berry Jam

2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced into 1/2-inch pieces

1-2 tablespoons of sugar

Place strawberry pieces in a large microwave-safe bowl and toss with sugar.

Heat in the microwave for 6 minutes, pausing every 2 minutes to give the mixture a stir. Put the bowl in the fridge to cool it down for 10-15 minutes. Now let your child gently mash the fruit with a whisk, potato masher or fork. You might suggest an apron, as the berry juice can get messy!

Spread on whole-grain toast with nut butter for a filling breakfast with three of the five food groups: Fruits, grains and protein. Have it with a glass of milk and get one of your dairy servings as well!

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

2.F.05 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that help them understand the concept of measurement by using standard and non-standard units of measurement.

2.K.01 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, and good nutrition.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

2.4 (Prekindergarten): Distinguishes food on a continuum from most healthy to less healthy.

2.5 (Prekindergarten): Eats a variety of nutritious foods.



LESSON PLAN F

RAINBOW CONNECTION

Time Frame: Two 30-minute sessions

Materials:

See Activity A and Activity B

Overview:

Teach about the food rainbow and how to “eat a rainbow” through hands-on cooking and art activities.

Part A. Rainbow Foods & Friendship Bracelets

Children will:

- Be introduced to a variety of textures and flavors.
- Understand that it is healthy to eat a variety of different foods.
- Learn the names of different fruits and vegetables in a range of colors.

Materials:

- Color illustration of a rainbow to display
- Pipe cleaners in rainbow colors:
 - Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple
- Raw fruits and veggies in the 6 colors (2 types of each if possible)
- Checklist to track which students have tried which foods

Children help prepare and then try samples of a variety of fruits and veggies in a rainbow of colors. By playing a key role in the prep activities, they learn practical life skills. While trying different foods, they expand their horizons and discover new tastes and textures.

After trying one food from 5 of the 6 colors of the rainbow, they can choose one pipe cleaner to make into a bracelet. If they choose to do another round and eat another 5 samples (from 5 of the 6 rainbow colors), they can choose a second pipe cleaner, in a second color. Then they can twist the two pipe cleaners around each other to make a bracelet.

Discussion:

Begin these activities with a quick lesson about a favorite topic: rainbows! Start with a lesson or review of the colors

of the rainbow, along with the letters that help them remember: ROY G BIV. Start with “Red” in a low voice and say the following colors (Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue...) as your voice gets higher and ends on “Indigo Violet!”

The “Roy G Biv” song is a short and catchy song for little kids. You can download the song on iTunes or listen to it for free here:

“Roy G Biv” —They Might Be Giants

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gf33ueRXMzQ>

Instructions:

1. Prepare a variety of fruits and veggies in a rainbow of colors. Serving sizes should be small, as the emphasis is on trying a variety of different foods.
2. Make prep time a key part of this activity by getting preschoolers to help with the cleaning, sorting or chopping. Let children help in different ways, for instance:
 - a. Age 2–3: Scrub vegetables like carrots with a sponge or vegetable scrubber. Wash apples and peppers.
 - b. Age 3: Practice pouring, using small pitchers of water into cups. Chop some fruits and vegetables with a blunt knife, under teacher supervision.
 - c. Age 4–5: Peel carrots and cucumbers with a peeler, under teacher supervision.
 - d. All ages: Wash tables with a soapy sponge before and after, wash and dry cutting boards, wash fruits and vegetables and wash everyone’s hands.
3. Set up a table with different foods on different plates, categorized by color. Line up the plates in the order of the colors in a rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple.
4. Tell students they may try one serving of food from each plate. (Decide on the serving size based on the amount of food available. Make them small enough so that they can have seconds the next time around. For example: Two grape halves, one banana chunk, two baby carrots...
5. Each time they try a different food, make a check mark next to their name.
6. For every 6 different colors of food they try, they can get one pipe cleaner in the color of their choice to make a bracelet.
7. Then they can have a second round, eating one food from each color group again.
8. When they’ve had one from each of the 6 colors, they get another pipe cleaner in their choice of color.
9. Then they can twist the two colors together to make a friendship bracelet.



They Might Be Giants Video

Part B. Rainbow Painting

Children will:

- Build fine motor skills while holding a paintbrush to draw a rainbow.
- Practice sorting items based on color and quantity.

Materials:

- Paper plates
- Rulers and pencils
- Scissors
- Paint in 3 colors (if color-mixing): red, yellow and blue
- Or paint in 6 colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple

- Paint brushes
- Cotton wool
- Glue

Preparation:

Teachers may cut paper plates in half in advance and cut the semi-circles as well. Or, they can use a ruler to draw a line down half of each plate and a paper cup to outline a semi-circle, and have students do the cutting themselves.

For older students, you may wish to model all of these steps while giving instructions and let them complete all steps on their own: "Cut the paper plate in half. Then cut a small semi-circle from the center. You may use the other half of your plate as a palette for your paints."

Instructions: (easy version)

1. Teachers: Set up all your paint colors, and show children how to do the same.
2. Model how to paint rainbow stripes, following the arch of the plate.
3. While the paint is still wet, show children how to stick some cotton at the bottom of each side to make clouds. Or wait until the paint has dried and glue the cotton on then.

Instructions: Color-Mixing (more challenging)

1. Explain and demonstrate how to mix colors: red and yellow to make orange; blue and yellow to make green; and blue and red to make purple.
2. Start by painting the yellow stripe, as that's the lightest color.
3. Then add a dot of red to the yellow paint on your plate and mix it together to make orange. Paint the orange stripe. Then paint the red stripe.
4. Now add some blue to your red paint and mix together to make purple. Paint the purple stripe at the bottom of your rainbow. Remember to leave enough space for two stripes after that.
5. Clean your paintbrushes and dry them with a paper towel.
6. Now paint the blue stripe, one up from the purple stripe.
7. Now add some yellow to your blue paint, mix it together to make green, and paint your green stripe.
8. While the paint is still wet, stick some cotton balls or a piece of cotton wool at the bottom of each side to make clouds. Or wait until the paint has dried and glue the cotton wool on then.

Extensions:**Pom Pom Power!**

Extend the life of the Rainbow Painting activity with pom poms! Each time students eat a fruit or vegetable at snack time, they can put one pom pom of that color on their rainbow. All you need is glue and a good supply of pom poms.

Pom Pom Play Station

Extend the fun even further by setting up an activity area just for pom pom work. These craft activities hone fine-motor skills, teach sorting and color matching, and reinforce some of the lessons learned about fruits and vegetables.

Sorting: This can be an activity in and of itself. Let younger children sort a big bag of pom poms into smaller bags or buckets by color.

Build a Rainbow: Children can create their own rainbow out of pom poms, making stripes of pom poms and even making clouds at each end. There's no glue involved, and the pom poms get used again and again. This activity is more about the process than the product, so make sure children understand that this is art that's recycled over and over again.

Fruit & Veggie Art: Print out clip art of fruits and vegetables and let children decorate the pages with pom poms. Think of ideas like purple grapes, yellow corn on the cob, green broccoli and white cauliflower. Don't use glue and you'll be able to share the artwork and pom poms among the class.

Rainbow Song and Video

[PBS Kids: Fizzy's Lunch Lab | Food Songs & Videos](#)

These funny videos and songs with clever lyrics will keep students engaged while learning key content. Look for the song about the Food Rainbow!

Family Connection:

Try this tasty rainbow foods-themed recipe at home!

[Crunchy Rainbow Wrap](#)

Suggested [Resources for Parents and Caregivers:](#)

- [MyPlate Tips for Preschoolers](#)
- [Healthy Eating for Preschoolers](#)
- [MyPlate Snack Tips for Parents](#)
- [Kid-friendly Veggies and Fruits](#)
- [Be a Healthy Role Model for Children](#)

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

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, science, and health and safety.

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 to express themselves creatively through (a) music and (b) two- and three-dimensional art.

2.K.01 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, and good nutrition.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

2.4 (Prekindergarten): Distinguishes food on a continuum from most healthy to less healthy.

2.5 (Prekindergarten): Eats a variety of nutritious foods.



LESSON PLAN G

SUPERFOOD STORIES

Time Frame: One to three 30-minute sessions

Materials:

- Books (see book list)
- Fruits and veggies for story-themed snack or edible art (see Activity A)

Overview:

Add some color to story time with these books that focus on healthy foods. Snacks can follow the theme of the books to make it more special.

Part A. Blueberry Bucket & Book Activity

Students will:

- Build comprehension by actively participating while listening to a book (Eat blueberries each time they hear “Kuplink.”)
- Activate prior knowledge from previous lessons to identify the food groups of the vegetables or fruits in each book.

Materials for Activity A:

- Small paper or plastic cups
- Single hole punch
- Pipe cleaners (one per student)
- Fresh blueberries, washed
- Serving spoons or measuring cup
- Book: *Blueberries for Sal*

Time Frame: 30 minutes

Preparation:

- Use a single hole punch to make two holes on opposite sides of each cup.
- You may either make the pipe-cleaner handle for each pail yourself in advance, or wait and allow students to do this part themselves.
- Rinse and drain blueberries and place in a large, shallow bowl.

Instructions:

1. Tell students they’re going to make their own pail for blueberries — just like Sal’s in *Blueberries for Sal*. Explain that pail is another word for a bucket.
2. Show students how to make a handle for their pail with a pipe cleaner. Model the activity while you speak.

3. Take a pipe cleaner and poke one end through one of the holes. Then poke the other end through the other hole. Move the pipe cleaner so that it's centered in the middle.
4. Leave enough slack in the middle and shape it into a curved handle. Then twist each end up and around the handle, in a tight or loose pattern.
5. Allow students to serve themselves from the bowl of blueberries, using a $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measuring cup or a large serving spoon.
6. Read the book aloud to the class. You might suggest that children pace themselves and eat a few berries whenever Sal does in the book. Or whenever they hear the words, *Kuplink, kuplank, kuplunk!*

Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey

https://www.amazon.com/Blueberries-Sal-Robert-McCloskey/dp/014050169X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1528060319&sr=8-1&keywords=blueberries+for+sal

Kuplink, kuplank, kuplunk! Sal and her mother spend the day picking blueberries to can for the winter. It's hard for Sal to resist eating the berries along the way! (Grade Level: Pre-K)

Alternative Books & Activities:

Veggie Cars!

Read the *Fast Food* book to the class and pair it up with a food sculpture activity. What creative ideas can kids come up with for cucumber slices (wheels?), whole carrots (race cars?), celery (sleds?).

Fast Food by Saxton Freymann and Joost Eiffers

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/books/fast-food-by-joost-elffers/>

Vegetables are transformed into vehicles of every size and speed! Kids will love seeing pictures of these clever food sculptures. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Veggie Racecar Poster

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/diginposter_racecar.pdf

Download this fun poster and display it near your activity table for inspiration!

Dragon Breath!

Pair this hilarious read-aloud book with whole-wheat cheese quesadillas and (mild) salsa!

Dragons Love Tacos by Adam Rubin

https://www.amazon.com/Dragons-Love-Tacos-Adam-Rubin/dp/0803736800/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1527606200&sr=1-1&keywords=dinosaurs+love+tacos

If you want to lure a bunch of dragons to your party, you should definitely serve tacos. But beware the hot salsa! (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Part B. Other Recommended Reading

Here are some other recommended titles for Superfood Stories in your classroom:

Fruits and Vegetables

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert

https://www.amazon.com/Eating-Alphabet-Lois-Ehlert/dp/015201036X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1527606550&sr=1-1&keywords=eating+the+alphabet+by+lois+ehlert

Lists healthy foods for each letter of the alphabet and includes some less common foods that preschoolers might like to try. (Grade Level: Pre-K)

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert

https://www.amazon.com/Growing-Vegetable-Soup-Voyager-Books/dp/0152325808/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1527606616&sr=1-1&keywords=growing+vegetable+soup+by+lois+ehlert

Green bean, pea, corn, zucchini squash and carrot seeds are planted in soil. Then it's time for weeding, harvesting, washing, chopping and cooking! A recipe for vegetable soup tops it all off. (Grade Level: Pre-K)

The Vegetables We Eat by Gail Gibbons

https://www.amazon.com/Vegetables-We-Eat-Gail-Gibbons/dp/0823421538/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1528149638&sr=8-1&keywords=the+vegetables+we+eat+by+gail+gibbons

This book includes everything you need to know about the rainbow of vegetables, with lots of colorful illustrations as well. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

The Fruit We Eat by Gail Gibbons

https://www.amazon.com/Fruits-We-Eat-Gail-Gibbons/dp/0823435717/ref=pd_bxgy_14_img_2?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=0823435717&pd_rd_r=FPMKDE6FZ6YKX8ZBCW47&pd_rd_w=QVPre&pd_rd_wg=9LOyn&psc=1&refRID=FPMKDE6FZ6YKX8ZBCW47

An inviting, information-packed cornucopia of favorite fruits. Learn about the parts of fruits, where and how they grow, harvesting, processing, where to buy them, and how to enjoy them as part of a healthy diet. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Funny Books

Chicks and Salsa by Aaron Reynolds

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1599900998?ie=UTF8&tag=thewaspos09-20&camp=1789&linkCode=xm2&creativeASIN=1599900998>

What happens at Nuthatcher Farm when the chickens get tired of the same old chicken feed? They whip up a scrumptious snack of chips and salsa, made with vegetables from the farmer's garden. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Creepy Carrots! by Aaron Reynolds and Peter Brown

https://www.amazon.com/Creepy-Carrots-Aaron-Reynolds/dp/1442402970/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1528066651&sr=8-1&keywords=creepy+carrots

Jasper Rabbit is a rabbit who loves carrots so much, maybe too much, and he eats them everywhere. But are the carrots following him? This book is particularly enjoyable to read while snacking on a few carrot sticks. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Picky Eaters

I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato (Charlie and Lola Series) by Lauren Child

https://www.amazon.com/Will-Never-Ever-Tomato-Charlie/dp/0763621803/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1527606314&sr=1-1&keywords=i+will+never+not+ever+eat+a+tomato

Lola is a fussy eater. A very fussy eater. She won't eat her carrots (until her brother Charlie reveals that they're orange twiglets from Jupiter). There are many things Lola won't eat, including — and especially — tomatoes. Or will she? (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli by Barbara Jean Hicks

https://www.amazon.com/Monsters-Dont-Broccoli-Barbara-Hicks/dp/038575521X/ref=sr_1_7?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1527606314&sr=1-7&keywords=i+will+never+not+ever+eat+a+tomato

These monsters insist they don't like broccoli. They'd rather snack on tractors or a rocket ship or two, or tender trailer tidbits, or a wheely, steely stew. But boy do those trees they're munching on look an awful lot like broccoli. Maybe vegetables aren't so bad after all! (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Bread and Jam for Frances by Russell Hoban

https://www.amazon.com/Bread-Jam-Frances-Read-Level/dp/0060838000/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1528150305&sr=1-1&keywords=jam+for+frances

Frances is a fussy eater. In fact, the only thing she likes is bread and jam. Unless Mother can come up with a plan, Frances just might go on eating bread and jam forever! (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Family Connection:

Same But Different

Try new variations of something you've already tried. How about FROZEN peas or blueberries? A frozen wedge of watermelon on a popsicle stick? Do you like frozen ones better or not? Don't like tomatoes? How about CHERRY tomatoes? Try some variations on same-old foods at home and report back to your classmates and teacher! Is there a winning idea everyone would like to try in the classroom?

Suggested Resources for Parents and Caregivers:

- [MyPlate Tips for Preschoolers](#)
- [Healthy Eating for Preschoolers](#)
- [MyPlate Snack Tips for Parents](#)
- [Kid-friendly Veggies and Fruits](#)
- [Be a Healthy Role Model for Children](#)

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

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 once daily in half-day programs; (g) engaging conversations that help them understand the content of the book.

2.J.06 Children are provided many and varied open-ended opportunities to express themselves creatively through (d) two- and three-dimensional art.

2.K.01 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, and good nutrition.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

2.4 (Prekindergarten): Distinguishes food on a continuum from most healthy to less healthy.

2.5 (Prekindergarten): Eats a variety of nutritious foods.



LESSON PLAN A

THE AMAZING HUMAN BODY

Time Frame: One 30-minute session

Children will:

- Gain basic knowledge about the human body and how it works
- Learn about the benefits of exercise
- Be inspired to try different kinds of physical activity
- Learn about the parts of the body that benefit from physical activity: our heart, lungs, muscles and bones.
- Be inspired to become more physically active or try new games and activities.
- Hear stories that foster empathy and understanding about physical differences.

Materials:

Books (see book list below)

Overview:

Choose books from this list for read-alouds that tie into your health and wellness curriculum. Children will learn about the human body (our heart, lungs, muscles and bones) and be inspired to be physically active in a variety of ways. Choose from themes like body image and differences to address specific issues as well.

Part A. “Busy Bodies” Book & Discussion

Read *The Busy Body Book* to the class and ask questions to spark discussion. The book provides a wonderful introduction to fitness for kids and makes physical activity a fun topic of conversation!

The Busy Body Book: A Kid’s Guide to Fitness by Lizzie Rockwell

https://www.amazon.com/Busy-Body-Book-Guide-Fitness/dp/0553113747/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1528241221&sr=8-1&keywords=the+busy+bodies+book

“Your amazing body can jump, sprint, twist, and twirl. Your body is built to move.”

Lizzy Rockwell explains how your bones and muscles, heart and lungs, nerves and brain all work together to keep you on the go. Kids walk and skate and tumble through these pages with such exuberance that even sprouting couch potatoes will want to get up and bounce around—and that’s the ultimate goal. Experts agree that we need to help kids make physical activity a life-long habit. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Discussion Questions:

Open up the book to the grid that shows children in 40 different activities that promote “busy bodies.” Ask students to identify different activities. Then ask which ones looks fun to them. Ask for a raise of hands for activities they’ve never done before but would like to try.

Then ask some questions, like:

- How many different tag games can you think of?
- Raise your hand if you like jump-rope games. Raise your hand if you'd like to learn one. (Give more examples.)
- What kind of physical activities would you like to do this week?
- Is there a game anyone would like to play with the class at recess?

Part B. Busy Bodies Energy Burst

While students are still inspired, get them up and moving! Read this quote from the book:

"Your amazing body can jump, sprint, twist, and twirl. Your body is built to move." Let's take five minutes to move our bodies. What kind of moves would you like to do?

Give them a choice of movements to do for one minute without stopping. They may a) run in place, b) march in place, c) hop in place or d) a combination of all three. After one minute, ask if the class wants to do another minute.

Then ask a key question: Did they feel more tired before their "energy burst" or after? The amazing thing is: Exercise gives us energy!

Part C. More Amazing Human Body Books

Your Body is Awesome: Body Respect for Children by Sigrun Danielsdottir

https://www.amazon.com/Your-Body-Awesome-Respect-Children/dp/1848192282/ref=pd_bxgy_14_img_2?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=1848192282&pd_rd_r=0956HJBJGX5K7PR91ER0&pd_rd_w=hYAGC&pd_rd_wg=Onked&psc=1&refRID=0956HJBJGX5K7PR91ER0

Bodies do all sorts of amazing things, like move around, grow bigger and heal themselves. Bodies also come in all sorts of shapes and sizes and we need to take care of them so that they stay healthy and strong. If we listen to our bodies, they tell us exactly what they need.

By learning about all the wonderful things bodies can do, and how each body is different and unique, children will be inspired to take good care of their bodies throughout their lives. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Theme: All Shapes and Sizes

Lead a story hour with some books that subtly focus on self-esteem and body image.

Brontorina and *Flora and the Flamingo*:

https://www.amazon.com/Brontorina-James-Howe/dp/0763653233/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1528463296&sr=1-1&keywords=brontorina

When a brontosaurus shows up at ballet class, some of the students insist, "You are too big!" But the open-minded ballet teacher decides the problem is that her studio is too small — and moves the class outdoors. It's a lighthearted lesson about not letting your size or shape prevent you from following your dream. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Flora and the Flamingo by Molly Idle

https://www.amazon.com/Flora-Flamingo-Molly-Idle/dp/1452110069/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

This is a wonderful, wordless picture book that shows an encounter between a pear-shaped little girl and a stately flamingo. Suspicious of each other at first, the two get to know each other through imitation and dance. Here's a book video trailer that teachers can check out in advance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9d3llsrs7tc> (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Shapesville by Andy Mills

https://www.amazon.com/Shapesville-Andy-Mills/dp/0936077441/ref=as_li_ss_tl?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1496773292&sr=1-1&keywords=shapesville&linkCode=sl1&tag=lottjack-20&linkId=5601f9b37286e45fdcf4283e5e029bcf

This picture book is about five friends who live in a small town. They are all different shapes, sizes, and colors, and each has a unique talent. They encourage children to celebrate their own differences and learn that, "It's not the size of your shape, or the shape of your size, but the size of your heart, and that deserves first prize." Discussion questions and brief information for educators and parents are in the back of the book. Promoting respect for body diversity among children will also encourage kindness and help prevent bullying. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Be Who You Are by Ted Parr

https://www.amazon.com/Who-You-Are-Todd-Parr/dp/0316265233/ref=as_li_ss_tl?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1496773263&sr=1-1&keywords=be+who+you+are&linkCode=sl1&tag=lottjack-20&linkId=6a52cf9b1ec25dc099b782cdd9314dd1

Be who you are!

Be proud of where you're from.

Be a different color. Speak your language.

Wear everything you need to be you.

Todd Parr reminds kids that their unique traits are what make them so special. With his signature silly and accessible style, Parr encourages readers to embrace all their unique qualities. (Grade Level: Pre-K)

Family Connection:

Suggested MyPlate Resources for Parents and Caregivers:

- [Physical Activity for Preschoolers](#)
- [Healthy Tips for Active Play](#)
- [10 Tips: Be an Active Family](#)

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

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 once daily in half-day programs; (g) engage in conversations that help them understand the content of the book.

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, science, and health and safety.



LESSON PLAN B

ANIMAL ANTICS

Time Frame: One 30-minute session

Children will:

- Build strength and coordination while doing a range of movements
- Follow directions to copy movements

Materials:

Books (see book list below)

Overview:

Children have fun acting like our animal friends with creative movements that work their muscles and encourage creative expression. Books about animals and animal movements inspire students to get in on the action.

Part A. Animal Walks Activity

Start this session with a book like “From Head to Toe” by Eric Carle to get kids inspired to imitate some animal moves. Or jump right in to the following activity and follow up with a story or two.

- **Walk like a crab:** Can you walk backwards and sideways, on all fours? Sit on the floor with your hands by your sides, pointing toward your feet. Now lean backwards and push up on your hands and feet so your body is raised up like a table. Keep your hips high, your bottom off the ground, and your belly button pointed up toward the ceiling. Now try walking sideways, like a crab!
- **Hop like a frog:** Squat down to the ground. Put your hands on the ground between your knees. Using the “springs” in your feet, leap forward and land with your hands and feet on the ground. Do it again and again!
- **Move like a bear:** Stand up, bend over and put both hands down on the ground. Now, walk like a bear — moving your right arm and right leg at the same time, then the left leg and arm at the same time, then repeat.
- **Jump like a kangaroo:** Put your feet close together and squat down. Now jump as high as you can using only your feet (no hands allowed). Repeat two to three times.
- **Walk like a penguin:** Keep arms straight by your side, raise your toes and try walking on your heels. It’s easier said than done! Can you waddle like a penguin?
- **Crawl like a tiger:** Get down on your hands and knees. Now bend your arms and crawl on your arms and knees. Stay as low to the ground as you can, like a tiger sneaking through the jungle.
- **Hop like a flamingo:** Stand on one foot and see if you can hop once without falling over. Now try with the other leg. Go back and forth to build your balance.

- **See ya later, alligator:** Lay down on your stomach. Push yourself up with your hands and toes so you look like you're in a push-up position. Now move like an alligator, holding yourself up with your hands while moving ahead as quickly as possible.

Extension:

Let children come up with their own movements and creative interpretations. Call out commands like:

- Swim like a fish
- Gallop like a horse
- Dance like a chicken
- Waddle like a duck
- Stomp like an elephant
- Jiggly like a jellyfish
- Flutter like a butterfly
- Slither like a snake

Pair these activities with one of the books in the following "Animal Stories in Action."

Part B. Stories in Action

Read these books that encourage preschoolers to be physically active.

From Head to Toe Board Book by Eric Carle

https://www.amazon.com/Head-Toe-Board-Book/dp/0694013013/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8

A colorful and energetic board book that will have young readers clapping their hands, stomping their feet, and wiggling their toes. Giraffes can bend their necks, monkeys can wave their hands, and donkeys can kick their legs. And so can you! Throughout this interactive board book, the animals of *From Head to Toe* invite young readers to copy their antics as they play. (Grade Level: Pre-K)

ABC Yoga: Join us and the animals out in nature and learn some yoga! by Christiane Engel https://www.amazon.com/ABC-Me-animals-nature-learn/dp/1633221466/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8

Pairing simplified yoga poses with alphabetized animals and objects, *ABC Yoga* features colorful illustrations of children and animals practicing yoga along with playful rhymes to explain each movement. A fun family read, this interactive title is perfect for teaching toddlers their ABCs, as well as introducing them to familiar animals and basic, simplified yoga poses that promote health and well-being. (Grade Level: Pre-K)

Family Connection:

Suggested MyPlate Resources for Parents and Caregivers:

- [Physical Activity for Preschoolers](#)
- [Healthy Tips for Active Play](#)
- [10 Tips: Be an Active Family](#)

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

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 once daily in half-day programs; (g) engage in conversations that help them understand the content of the book.

2.J.06 Children are provided many and varied open-ended opportunities to express themselves creatively through (b) drama.

2.C.04 Children have varied opportunities and are provided equipment to engage in large motor experiences that:

- stimulate a variety of skills.
- enhance sensory-motor integration.
- develop controlled movement (balance, strength, coordination).
- enable children with varying abilities to have large-motor experiences similar to those of their peers.
- range from familiar to new and challenging.
- help them learn physical games with rules and structure.

LESSON PLAN C

GAME ON!

Time Frame: 30–45 minutes

Children will:

- Learn classic games that are easy to play at home or at school.
- Practice social skills and collaborative skills while playing with other children.
- Discover new ways to stay physically active in their free time.

Materials:

- Chairs
- Music player and music

Overview:

Teach very simple games that can be played at school or at home. Encourage children to teach their parents and siblings and friends. Traditional games like Simon Says, Musical Chairs, Red Light Green Light, Hop-Scotch, Hide-and-Seek and Follow the Leader are fun and easy to play with a large group or just a handful of people.

Refer to these guides from SPARK PE to teach younger children how to do basic movements:

Locomotor Skills Cards / SPARK PE

https://sparkpe.org/wp-content/uploads/EC_Locomotor_Skill_Cards.pdf

Step-by-step instructions for teaching children how to Run, Jump, Gallop, Hop, Side-Slide, Skip and Leap

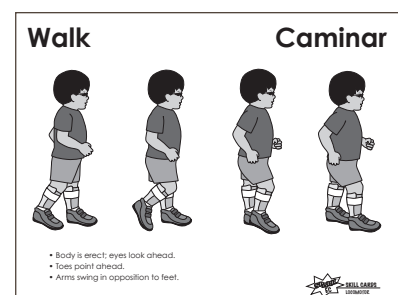
Part A. Simon Says

This is a great game for teachers to lead, as they can choose actions that are developmentally appropriate and good for building coordination, strength, agility and gross motor skills.

Instructions:

Explain the rules to your class:

1. The teacher calls out instructions, preceded by the words "Simon Says."
2. If the teacher does *not* say "Simon Says," then the children should stay put.
3. Anyone who follows the instructions anyway is out of the game. (Remind children this game is mostly about listening!)
4. Give instructions like the following, and mix things up with some funny ideas offered by the kids as well.
5. Once they get the hang of the game, increase the activity level with some fun sports themed movements.



Locomotor Skills Card

Warm Ups

Simon says... walk on tip-toes
Hop like a rabbit
Walk backwards or forwards
Turn around
Squat down and jump like a frog
Run
Stop!
Jump up and down on both feet
Stomp like a dinosaur
Balance on one leg for 4 seconds

Sports Theme

Simon Says... swim!
Do the dog paddle
Do the crawl
Do the back crawl
Do the breast stroke
Swim like a turtle
Swim like a shark

Simon Says... play ball!
Shoot a basketball
Swing a baseball bat
Throw a football
Kick a soccer ball

Simon Says... dance!
Do a ballet twirl
Tap dance
Dance like a rock star
Dance like a chicken

Part B. Musical Chairs

This is just like the old-fashioned game, but played with fun “party music” to get kids pumped up to move and play.

Preparation:

- Find some upbeat music that’s fun and energetic. As teacher, you’ll play DJ and referee, so make sure the music is organized ahead of time and that you have a music player that’s easy to stop and start.
- Set up chairs in two rows, back to back. Count the number of players, and use that number of chairs minus one.

Instructions:

Explain the rules to your class:

When they hear music, they march. When the music stops, they run and find the nearest seat. The player left standing is out, and one more chair is removed from the game. The music and marching continues until only one person (the winner) remains.

Make some rules so that it doesn't get too chaotic. You can tell children to "walk, not run" or else to march. Marching is a good way to regulate the speed and body control while they move around the circle of chairs. For instance:

- When the music is playing, march in a circle around the chairs.
- When the music stops, you stop too — and then quickly sit down in the nearest chair.
- For this part, you need to be quick on your feet! If you don't get a seat, you'll be out of the game until the next round.

Part C. Red Light, Green Light

Put a spin on this traditional game by adding a "yellow light" step. Children enjoy some laughs and physical activity while practicing their listening skills and self-control.

Instructions:

Explain the rules of the game to your students: The traffic cop will yell out different commands, so you must listen carefully. When you hear "green light," you run. When you hear "yellow light," you move in slow motion [model what this means]. When you hear "red light," you must stop in your tracks and stay frozen until you hear "green light" again. If you move, you'll have to go back to the starting line. Any questions?

[The teacher plays the role of traffic cop for the first round.]

1. Students line up on the starting line, while the traffic cop stands about 5 feet away.
2. When they are ready, the traffic cop turns around and faces the other way.
3. When the traffic cop yells out "green light," the students try to run to the finish line.
4. When the traffic cop says "red light" and spins around, the students have to freeze on the spot! Anyone caught moving must return to the starting line.
5. The students must stay still until the next "green light" is called out by the cop.
6. The game continues until someone is able to tag the traffic cop. Then that person gets the job.

Variations: For younger students, it's easier if the traffic cop faces them throughout the game. For older students, you can mix things up by calling out different movements along with the commands. For instance, "green light — hop like a kangaroo!"

Family Connection:

Each time you learn a new game at school, go home and play it with your family! Musical chairs can be played with four chairs, back to back in a small room. Simon Says can be played anytime, anywhere!

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

2.C.04 Children have varied opportunities and are provided equipment to engage in large motor experiences that:

- stimulate a variety of skills.
- enhance sensory-motor integration.
- develop controlled movement (balance, strength, coordination).
- enable children with varying abilities to have large-motor experiences similar to those of their peers.
- range from familiar to new and challenging.
- help them learn physical games with rules and structure.



LESSON PLAN D

PLAY AWAY

Time Frame: 15–30 minutes

Children will:

- Engage in free play to enjoy the benefits of running and playing for its own sake.
- Use their imaginations while moving their bodies in creative ways.
- Develop social skills and collaborative play skills.
- Use gross motor and planning skills to invent a new game and play it with others.

Overview:

Part one of this lesson is simple: Free play! Undirected play is the best way for preschoolers to learn and discover at their own pace, and allows them to use their imaginations. It's child-directed, spontaneous and critical for growth and development of all kinds: physical, mental, social and emotional.

Part two of this lesson allows for freedom within structure. Children are challenged to come up with their own ideas for a simple game to play with at least one other person or the entire class.

Part A. Free Play

Supervise children outdoors while giving them very simple instructions for ways to move their bodies while boosting creative thinking.

Instructions:

The point of this activity is that there are no real instructions or rules (other than to be safe). Let children run and play for 15 minutes. Then give them prompts to flex their creative muscles at the same time. Call out ideas like:

"Draw in the sand (or mud or dirt) with a stick."

"Run like the wind."

"Fly like a bird and see how far you can go!"

Part B. Invent Your Own Game

Let your students engage in creative problem-solving and see what they come up with! Designing and executing a game is hard work, even if there are only three steps involved. Make it easy by giving some parameters:

- It must involve physical activity (like running, hopping, throwing or other)
- It must be able to be played in 15 minutes or less

Indoor ideas include making balls out of crumpled recycled paper and tossing them in a basket. Lead a creative brainstorming session if kids get stuck.

Then take turns playing everyone's games over the next week.

Reflect on the different games during circle time. Are there any rules they would like to change? Which games would they like to play again?

Family Connection:

Give students a homework assignment: Go home and teach your family members or neighbors your new game!

Standards Alignment:

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LESSON PLAN E

COOL DOWN

Time Frame: 15–30 minutes

Materials:

- Paper cups
- Drinking water (tap water cooled in fridge)
- Small water pitchers
- Sliced cucumbers and another high-water-content fruits or vegetables listed below

Part A. “Cool Down” Snack and Discussion

Instructions:

If you have child-sized pitchers, let students pour their own water into cups. Or, if you have a sink in your classroom, let children fill their own cups from the faucet. Simple things like this help children get in the habit of drinking water when they're thirsty. Plus, it helps build independence and practical life skills.

Sit in a circle on the floor and ask for two volunteers to pass plates of sliced cucumbers and one other fruit or vegetable of choice (see the list in the discussion notes below).

Discussion Points:

After we run and play, it's important to cool down and have a drink of water.

Did you know that more than half your body is made of water? We use up a lot whenever we run and play, so then we need put water back in bodies.

Along with drinking water and milk, there's another way we can add water to our bodies: By eating fruits and vegetables that are high in water! Which ones are those?

1. Cucumbers are made of almost all water! (96%) Iceberg lettuce has just as much. So they are tied for first place.
2. Celery comes in second place. (95%)
3. Watermelon is very high in water, too! (92%) Strawberries have just as much. Green peppers, too! So watermelon, strawberries and green peppers are tied for third place.
4. Cantaloupe comes in fourth. (90%)
5. Oranges and pineapple come next, tied for fourth place. (87%)

Part B. “Wind Down” Breathing and Yoga Exercises

End your cool down with some simple yoga poses or yoga breathing exercises. There are many popular books for children. Choose one of the following recommended titles or ask your local or school librarian for suggestions.

Breathe Like a Bear: 30 Mindful Moments for Kids to Feel Calm and Focused Anytime, Anywhere by Kira Willey (Author), Anni Betts (Illustrator)

https://www.amazon.com/Breathe-Like-Bear-Mindful-Anywhere/dp/1623368839/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

This collection of mindfulness exercises is designed to teach kids techniques for managing their bodies, breath and emotions. Best of all, these 30 simple, short breathing practices and movements can be performed anytime, anywhere. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

I Am Yoga by Susan Verde (Author), Peter H. Reynolds (Illustrator)

https://www.amazon.com/I-Am-Yoga-Susan-Verde-ebook/dp/B00YUZA0SI/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1528903454&sr=1-3&keywords=childrens+books+by+age+3-5+yoga

An eagle soaring among the clouds or a star twinkling in the night sky . . . a camel in the desert or a boat sailing across the sea—yoga has the power of transformation. Not only does it strengthen bodies and calm minds, but with a little imagination, it can show us that anything is possible. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness by Susan Verde (Author), Peter H. Reynolds (Illustrator)

https://www.amazon.com/I-Am-Peace-Book-Mindfulness/dp/141972701X/ref=pd_sbs_14_3?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=141972701X&pd_rd_r=0819238c-6fld-11e8-9aef-6179505da048&pd_rd_w=VKPNu&pd_rd_wg=B6z7q&pf_rd_i=desktop-dp-sims&pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf_rd_p=5825442648805390339&pf_rd_r=SWG0XXTB349AIE9F8VXT&pf_rd_s=desktop-dp-sims&pf_rd_t=40701&psc=1&refRID=SWG0XXTB349AIE9F8VXTA

When the world feels chaotic, find peace within through an accessible mindfulness practice from the bestselling picture-book dream team that brought us *I Am Yoga*. Express emotions through direct speech. Find empathy through imagination. Breathe and be present. (Grade Level: Pre-K–2)

Family Connection:

MyPlate Resources for Parents and Caregivers:

- [Physical Activity for Preschoolers](#)
- [Healthy Tips for Active Play](#)
- [10 Tips: Be an Active Family](#)

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

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 once daily in half-day programs; (g) engage in conversations that help them understand the content of the book.

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, science, and health and safety.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

2.4 (Prekindergarten): Distinguishes food on a continuum from most healthy to less healthy.

2.5 (Prekindergarten): Eats a variety of nutritious foods.