



## 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.

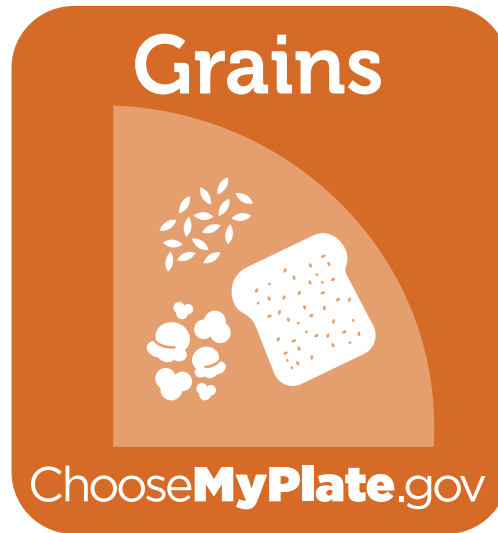
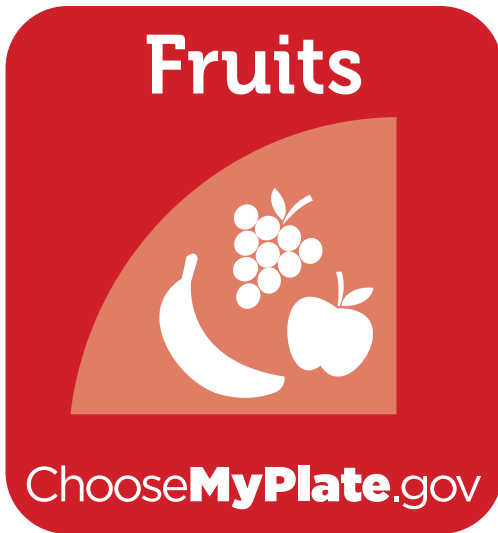
2.F.03 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to categorize by one or two attributes such as shape, size and color.

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



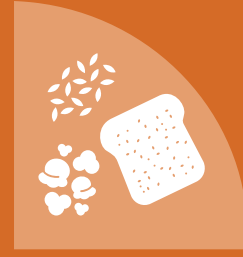
ChooseMyPlate.gov

Vegetables



ChooseMyPlate.gov

Grains



ChooseMyPlate.gov

Protein



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Dairy



ChooseMyPlate.gov

Activity



ChooseMyPlate.gov

Fruits



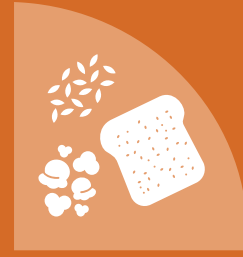
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