



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.

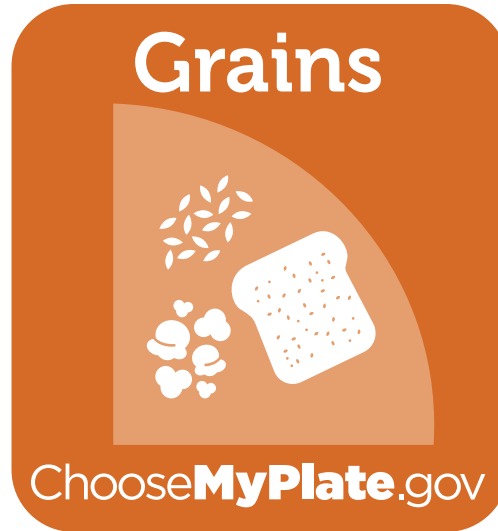
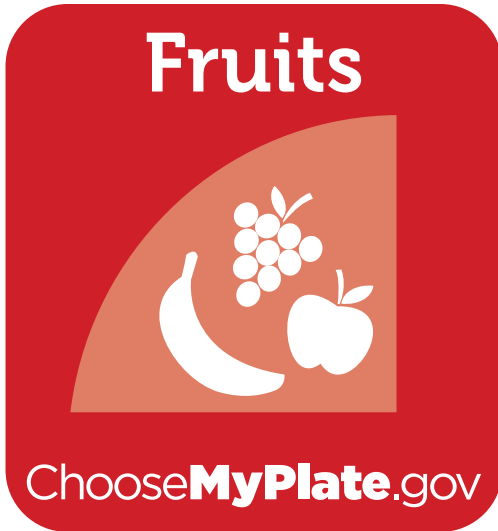
2.F.03 Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to categorize by one or two attributes such as shape, size and color.

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

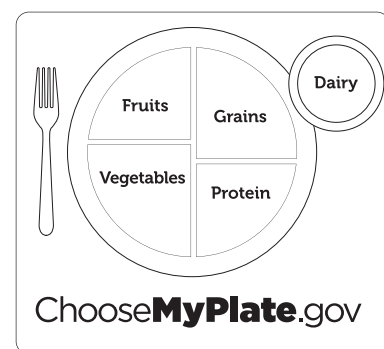
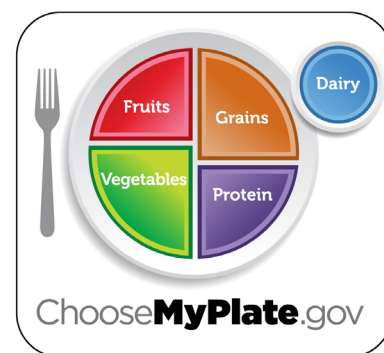
Overview:

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

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:

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 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.