



# Food Groups

2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Lesson Plan

**Goal:** Introduce the elementary school nutrition curriculum and familiarize students with the food groups as described in MyPlate.

## Objectives:

1. Students will name the five healthy food groups in MyPlate.
2. Students will be able to identify one food from each MyPlate group.

## Materials Needed

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|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 ways to stay healthy mini posters       | <input type="checkbox"/> Student and Parent Handouts       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MyPlate poster or plate                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational incentive             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Group Posters                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Materials for optional activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Group Labels/ Mini Posters           |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures of different physical activities |  |

| Lesson   |   |
|--|---|
| Talking Points   | Materials/Activities/Notes  |
| <h3>Introduction</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hello boys and girls! My name is _____ and I am your school nutritionist. I will be coming to your class about every three weeks. I want you to be a part of each lesson but it is really important that you raise your hand to be called on if you have something to say.</li> <li>• Your teacher has agreed to stay in the room to help keep everyone on track and learn with you this year.</li> <li>• Raise your hand if you have ever had nutrition classes before. I want you all to help me teach by actively answering questions and helping with explanations.</li> <li>• Has anyone heard the word “nutrition” before? What does nutrition mean? That’s right! Nutrition is healthy food that helps our bodies feel good and work right. My job as the nutritionist is to teach you how to choose these foods so your bodies can stay healthy.</li> </ul> |   |
|  | <p>Spend about 2-3 minutes on intro.</p> <p>Be sure to verify this with the teacher first.</p>  |
| <h3>Mind Grabber</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you think it means to be healthy? Who can tell me one way to keep our bodies healthy?</li> <li>• We are going to spend the rest of the year talking about three of these ways to keep your body healthy. We will call them healthy habits:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Healthy Habit #1:</b> First, we should eat many different kinds of healthy foods.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We’ll spend a lot of this class and our other classes talking about these healthy foods.</li> <li>▪ We eat these foods for many reasons: to be healthy, because we</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ul>  |   |
|  | <p>Use the mini poster and have students pantomime healthy actions on six ways to stay healthy to talk to students about keeping their bodies healthy: eat a variety of healthy foods (have kids act out eating food), get 60 minutes of physical activity (have kids move arms like jogging), keep germs away from our food (pretend to wash hands), get enough sleep (tuck hands by cheek), drink plenty of water (drink from an invisible glass) and brush your teeth (use</p> |

enjoy food, they keep us from feeling hungry, they help us grow and they give us energy.

2. **Healthy Habit #2:** Second, we should move our bodies and be active every day.
  - Being active means moving the big parts of their bodies—arms, legs, whole selves (not just fingers as in video games).
3. **Healthy Habit #3:** Third, we should also keep germs away from our hands and foods to keep them safe.

pretend toothbrush).

Keep discussion brief. Include discussion about healthy food, exercise and germs (see left) as students mention them.

## Discussion

### The Food Groups

- Let's start by talking about our first **Healthy Habit**: Eating a variety of foods. Food is very important for our bodies. Take a look at this picture of MyPlate. Has anyone seen it before? Foods are grouped together based on how they help your body stay healthy. MyPlate has all the food groups on it and helps us learn what healthy foods we need to eat.
- This year, we're going to learn more about all the Food Groups and the healthy foods we should eat.
- Each of the food groups provides many different nutrients but there is one nutrient in each food group is the most important nutrient that food group provides. Nutrients are good things that each food gives to our bodies.
- Raise your hand if you can name one of the five food groups.
  - The **Grains Group** gives our bodies **energy**. These foods all come from plants and are mostly brown or white.
  - The **Vegetable Group** gives our bodies **vitamins and minerals**, such as Vitamin A to help your eyes and Vitamin C to keep you from getting sick. Vegetables are very colorful. Try to eat different color vegetables every day because each different color does something different that your body needs.
  - The **Fruit Group** also gives our bodies **vitamins and minerals** to stay healthy and strong. Eating a rainbow of foods from these two groups will give our bodies the vitamins and minerals we need to stay healthy.
  - The **Dairy Group** gives us **calcium**, which helps make our bones and teeth strong. All the milk group foods come from cows.
  - The **Protein Group** gives us **protein** that we need to grow and keep our bodies (and muscles) strong. Some of these foods come from animals and some come from plants.
- Take a look at the MyPlate poster and think about what your plate looks like when you eat lunch or supper. Do they look similar? Let's talk a bit more about MyPlate.
- How much of MyPlate plate is covered with fruits and vegetables? How much is protein? How much is grains and dairy?
- Are all of the foods in these food groups really good for our bodies? Not always! When we put food on our plates at meals we want to choose foods that are healthy – most of the time. We call these foods "Go" foods because we can go ahead and eat them every day.
  - There are some foods in each food group that we enjoy eating but have more fat, sugar, or salt in them than is healthy for us. We can have them, but should only have them once in a while, maybe 2 times a week. We

Use the MyPlate tool to show students how food should look on your plate.

Introduce each food group and the foods it includes.

Use MyPlate poster and posters of different food groups with pictures of real foods. Point out characteristics of each group, such as colors or that all items come from milk, plants or animal.

call these “sometimes” foods.

- We will learn to make smart choices within each food group as we discuss more about the food groups during the school year.

### Activity

- *Use one of the additional activities below to apply the concepts of MyPlate and practice with putting foods into the proper groups.*

### Physical Activity

- Not only is eating a variety of foods very important to our bodies, but physical activity and exercise is important as well. Our second **Healthy Habit** is moving our bodies and being active every day.
- What is exercise? Exercise is any movement of your arms and legs that make your heart beat faster. It gives you energy and keeps you healthy. When your heart beats faster with exercise that means it is getting stronger. We'll talk more about your heart later.
- Raise your hand if you like to exercise and move your body. What type of activity do you like to do that gets your body moving?
- When people are exercising, they are keeping their bodies physically fit and healthy. What are some other reasons that it is good to be active and move our bodies?
  - It makes us strong, helps us to feel good and to stay a healthy weight, makes us less likely to get sick, and helps us focus in school by getting our wiggles out.
- Are playing video games and watching TV activities that get our bodies moving? No, those are called “inactive” activities. Exercise does not include small movements of the muscles in your hands and fingers. Remember, exercise must move the big muscles of our body and make our hearts beat faster, so we need to limit the amount of time we spend in front of the television.
- Do people need to exercise only when they are little and growing? No, people need to exercise throughout their lives. Your brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, parents, and grandparents can all get healthy by learning to be physically active, exercising, and moving their bodies every day.
- Before exercising hard, it is a good idea to warm up by exercising more slowly and gently at first. Here's a poem that will help you to warm up:

*Jump to the right and to the left please,  
Touch your elbows and now your knees.  
Touch both feet and now your nose,  
Hands on your hips and now on your toes.  
Hand on shoulders and on your shoes,  
Turn right, then left, and please don't snooze.  
Hands on your heads also in the air,  
Hands on your hips now on your hair.  
Touch your face and now your feet,  
Clap your hands and take your seat.*

### Heart Health

- Did you give your friends valentines or stickers with little red and pink hearts on Valentine's Day? Do you ever cross your heart when making a promise that you really, really mean? Does your heart start to beat really fast when you

Go around the room and let students tell their favorite physical activity.

Optional: do a demo on how these activities do not make your heart beat faster. Ask for a volunteer or have the whole class participate. Put hand over heart to feel heart beat while sitting down (resting heart rate). Then act out watching TV or playing video games. Feel heartbeat again to see if it got faster. Since it did not, these activities do not exercise the heart.

Some video games that are interactive (such as Wii or Dance, Dance Revolution- DDR) are exceptions

are scared or excited? We see and hear about hearts everywhere. So what's the heart up to, then? How does it keep busy? What does it look like? Let's find out.

- How does moving our body keep our hearts healthy?
- Hold your right arm out straight then bend it to your shoulder (a bicep curl). Do you feel the muscle move each time you bend your arm? What do you think would happen to the muscle if you did a lot of this bending every day? That's right – your muscle will get strong.
- Like your arm muscles, the heart is a muscle & exercise makes it stronger too. Your heart is a muscle the size of your fist. Your heart is a muscle that is working all the time, even when you are sleeping!
- Your heart is the strongest muscle in your body and needs to be active and exercised every day to stay healthy and strong just like our body does. When we are exercising our bodies we are exercising our hearts at the same time. The best exercises for your heart are those that make the heart beat faster, like the activities that you mentioned at the beginning of class.
- Does anyone know where your heart is? Put your hand on the middle of your chest, about halfway down. What do you feel? The first things you will feel are some bones. These are your ribs. Your heart is inside your ribs. It is protected by these bones.
- Sit quietly and hold your hand on your chest for a minute. Do you feel your heart beating? Your heart beats all the time. A grown-up's heart beats about 70 times every minute. Your heart will usually beat a little faster.
  - Is it going very fast right now? Let's see if we can move our bodies to get our heart beat to go faster.
  - Now put your hand over your heart. What has happened to your heartbeat? It has gotten faster. This means that you are exercising your heart and making it stronger.
- Today we have done a warm-up activity and another activity that made our hearts beat faster. Do you think that is enough exercise for today?
  - No! How many minutes should we try to be active every day? How many days per week should we try to be active?
  - Children and adolescents require at least 60 minutes (ONE HOUR) of physical activity on most, preferable all, days of the week.
  - Let's talk about some other activities that you can do to help get your 60 minutes a day.

Have the students hold their fists up to see.

Have students run in place, pretend to jump rope, or any activity that will get their hearts beating.

Hold up different pictures of physical activities. Ask students: What is the person doing in this picture? Have you ever done this activity? Does this activity exercise the heart?

### Food Safety

- Eating healthy and exercising is really important for our bodies, but it is also really important to make sure the foods that we are eating are safe for us to eat. Our third **Healthy Habit** is keeping our food safe.
- What is found on our hands that might make us sick if we eat them? Germs – that's right! What is the best way to keep germs away from our hands? That's right - wash our hands!
- We should wash our hands well and keep our food clean because germs can be found on our food too. This is called "Food Safety" and we will have a whole lesson on keeping our foods safe.

### Wrap-Up

- Today we have learned about three Healthy Habits: Eating healthy foods,

Show the students the five food group cards and remind them we need to eat

exercising, and keeping our hands and food clean. While these 3 Healthy Habits are really important in keeping our bodies healthy, we are going to spend most of our time this year talking about eating healthy foods.

- I have a card with the name of each of the food groups on it. I am going to put them on the floor and pretend they are stepping stones to help me cross a creek.
- What happens if I take two or three groups out? Can I still get across OK? I may be able to get across, but it is much more difficult. The same is true with the foods we eat. If we do not eat from one of the food groups, it is harder for our body to do all its jobs.
- Do we have to have a perfect plate, just like MyPlate every time we eat? It is important that we try to have balanced meals and MyPlate is a great goal, but we won't have a perfect plate every time. A good rule to keep in mind is the 3-4-4 rule. Try to have at least 3 food groups at breakfast and 4 at lunch and dinner. If you are able to do 3-4-4, you will be doing pretty well getting the nutrients your body needs.
- I have a chant I like to use to help me remember why it is important to eat a variety of foods from all of the food groups every day. Let's say it together.

#### Repeat after me:

**"When I eat"** (Class repeats – "When I eat")

**"Foods from"** (Class repeats – "Foods from")

**"the Grains group"** (Class repeats – "the Grains group")

**"I give my body"** (Class repeats – "I give my body")

**"ENERGY"** (move arms like running) (Class repeats – "ENERGY")

**"to grow, learn, and move."** (Class repeats – "to grow, learn, and move")

**"When I eat"** (Class repeats – "When I eat")

**"foods from"** (Class repeats – "Foods from")

**the Dairy group"** (Class repeats – "the Dairy group")

**"I give my body"** (Class repeats – "I give my body")

**"CALCIUM"** (Class repeats – "CALCIUM")

**"to build strong bones and teeth!"** (point to your femur bone and your teeth) (Class repeats – "to build strong bones and teeth")

**"When I eat"** (Class repeats – "When I eat")

**"foods from"** (Class repeats – "Foods from")

**"the Vegetable group"** (Class repeats – "the Vegetable group")

**"I give my body"** (Class repeats – "I give my body")

**"VITAMINS & MINERALS!"** (make a V and an M with your arm.) (Class repeats – "VITAMINS & MINERALS")

**"When I eat"** (Class repeats – "When I eat")

**"foods from"** (Class repeats – "Foods from")

**"the Fruit group"** (Class repeats – "the Fruit group")

**"I give my body"** (Class repeats – "I give my body")

**"MORE VITAMINS & MINERALS!"** (make a V and an M with your arms) (Class repeats – "MORE VITAMINS & MINERALS")

foods from all five of the healthy food groups every day. Place the cards on the floor and walk across them (use the image of walking on stepping stones across a creek).

Show them that you cannot (or it is very difficult) get from Grains to Protein.

Hold up food group posters during the chant.

**“When I eat”** (Class repeats – “When I eat”)  
**“foods from”** (Class repeats – “Foods from”)  
**“the Protein group”** (Class repeats – “the Protein group”)  
**“I give my body”** (Class repeats – “I give my body”)  
**“PROTEIN”** (Class repeats – “PROTEIN”)  
**“to build and keep my body strong!”** (Make strong arm muscles) (Class repeats – “to build and keep my body strong”)

### Challenge

- Now that we have learned about the five healthy food groups, exercising, and how they help our bodies, I have a challenge for you. I want you all to go home and look at the foods in your refrigerator, freezer, cabinets, and pantry; anywhere that you keep food. Look for a healthy food from each food group there that you could eat for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. I also challenge you to try to be more active every day, whether it is biking, walking the dog, or playing more soccer. The next time I come to teach your class, I’m going to ask you about these challenges.

### Taste Test Ideas

- No food for this lesson.

### Additional Activities

#### Make MyPlate

Using food models (store room) or magnetic healthy plate (green box in library), make an imperfect example of a MyPlate meal. Have students help you add items to the meal to help it better match MyPlate. For example, spaghetti with butter and French bread – add sauce, meatball, salad, milk. Sandwich with meat – add tomato, lettuce, cheese, and an apple. Burrito with rice and beans, add tomato, cheese, lettuce, side of fruit.

#### Healthy Helpings MyPlate Activity Mat (store room) or MyPlate Pocket Chart (in office).

Give students food pictures to correctly place on activity mat. Be sure to include the exercise cards to keep class alert.

#### School Lunch Choices

Read the lunch menu for the day, have the students identify the food groups and talk about the healthy choices. You can do more than one day if time allows. The menus are found at: <http://www.dpsnc.net/images/pdf/lunch-data-menus/lunch-menus/elementary-school-lunch-menu> Have the students count how many foods from each of the five food groups they find. On the board make a chart by sorting foods from the menu into the five food groups. Students can also graph the results.

#### Food Group Simon Says

Simon Says is a classic memory game for kids. Use food group necklaces for the children to wear. (String around neck, sign hanging down with name of food group. Use Food Group Label pictures) Play Simon Says as usual, but make each command specific to a food group. For example, you could command "Fruits put your hands on your head," or "Grains jump up and down."

### Which Food Doesn't Belong

Read and show pictures of groups of four foods aloud to kids. Make sure three of the foods are from the same food group and one is from a different category. For example, you could read "Apples, bananas, yogurt and oranges." Have kids raise their hands when they know which food doesn't belong. Choose one kid to explain which food doesn't belong and why.

### Food Group Bookmarks

Bookmarks are a practical craft that are easy to make and will remind kids of the five food groups every time they open a book to read. Cut 2-inch by 6-inch rectangles from cardstock or construction paper. Have kids divide the bookmarks into five squares and draw a picture illustrating a different food group in each square. Add clear contact paper to the bookmark for added durability. (Better for 1<sup>st</sup> grade or higher.)

### Parade of Foods *(Longer activity)*

Have kids create a parade of foods to tape to walls or windows. Assign each child a different food from one of the five food groups. Let them draw the food on construction paper and cut it out, then tape each food in a "parade" line along the walls or windows of the room. Move along the parade, pointing to each food and have kids call out which of the five food groups it's from.

Some activities are from: [Kids Activities for the Five Food Groups | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/info\\_7947350\\_kids-activities-five-food-groups.html#ixzz1yY0Y1oN7](http://www.ehow.com/info_7947350_kids-activities-five-food-groups.html#ixzz1yY0Y1oN7)

### Student Handouts

- Where Does Food Go On MyPlate
- MyPlate sticker
- MyPlate Healthy Habits Journal
- MyPlate Word Search

### Parent Handouts

- DG Tip Sheet "Choose MyPlate; 10 tips to a great plate." (English & Spanish)
- Parent letter K-3 2012 (English & Spanish)
- Today in Nutrition Class – MyPlate (English & Spanish)

### Lesson Roadmap

- Introduce yourself and nutrition classes
  - What does "healthy" mean and how do we keep our bodies healthy?
- Introduce MyPlate
  - Review the foods in each food group.
- Choose activity
- Summarize with stepping stone analogy
- Offer challenge
- Handouts



Public Health

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