

The Super 6 Nutrients

Lesson Description

In this lesson, students learn about the major nutrients in foods: protein, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, fat and water. Students complete an activity to see which nutrients are in Native food examples represented by bags filled with nutrient cards.

- Time required: 60 minutes
- Location of lesson: Classroom

Learning Objectives

- Identify and describe the key 6 nutrients (protein, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, fat and water) found in each food group in MyPlate.

Attitude and Behavior Goals

- Eat a balanced diet by making healthy choices from each food group and major nutrient.

Materials and Preparation

- Small brown paper bags; at least 1 for every group of 3 students
- 1 pair of scissors for cutting nutrient cards
- 1 marker for writing on bags
- Prepare for the activity “*Hunt for the Good Stuff*” by making Native food bags
 - Each bag represents a different food and inside each bag you will place nutrient cards that list the major nutrients in that food
 - Write the name of 1 of the Native foods from the list below on the outside of each small brown bag
 - Attach a picture of the corresponding food if you wish
 - Print and cut-out nutrient cards and place the correct nutrient cards inside each bag
 - Examples:
 - Elk meat - protein, fat, vitamins (B), minerals (iron), water
 - Blue corn - carbohydrates, vitamins (A), minerals (calcium), water
 - Squash - carbohydrates, vitamins (A, C), water
 - Oven Bread - carbohydrates, vitamins (B)
 - Deer jerky - protein, fat, minerals (iron), vitamins (B)
 - Mutton - protein, fat, minerals (iron), vitamins (B)
 - Acorn stew - carbohydrates, protein, vitamins (B), water
 - Cactus - minerals (calcium), vitamins (A, B, C), water
 - Pinto Beans - protein, vitamins (B), minerals (iron)
 - Pinon nuts - protein, fat, vitamins (E)
 - Chile peppers - vitamins (A,C) minerals (iron), water

-  **Nutrient Chart**
-  **Nutrient Cards** (to be placed in bags)
-  **Pictures of Native Foods** (optional)
- Prepared vegetable snack of the week – 1 for each student
- Water to drink during the Class Warm-up – water dispenser in the classroom and 1 cup or a water bottle for each student

Class Warm-up: Champion Cheer and Veggie Taste Test (5-10 minutes)

- Give each student a cup of water or ensure that they have a filled water bottle in front of them.
- Give each student the prepared veggie snack of the day.
- Lead the students in enthusiastically reciting the  **Champion Cheer**.
- At the end of the cheer, drink water and eat the veggie snack together.
- Have students complete their  **Taste Test Observations** about the vegetable snack of the week.

Review of Last Lesson (2-3 minutes)

- Review the evaluation questions from last week’s lesson. Evaluation questions from all lessons are listed at the end of the workbook .

Class Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Ask some warm-up questions about today’s topic: *Does anyone remember the names of some of the food groups? What is a nutrient?*

We know that we need to eat a balance of foods from all the groups to be healthy, but why? Food contains nutrients-the chemical substances that we couldn’t live without. Nutrients help us grow, give us energy and keep our bodies functioning correctly.

*There are 6 key nutrients: Carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals and water. Each different food contains a different mix of nutrients. There is no 1 food that contains all of the nutrients our bodies need. This is why it is important to eat a variety of healthy foods. Refer students to the  **Nutrient Chart** in their workbooks. The sentence “cats wait for mice very patiently” might help you remember the 6 nutrients.*

Carbohydrates are a major source of energy for our bodies. Proteins are essential for growth, building strong muscles and repairing body cells. Fats are essential for energy, healthy brains, and carrying some vitamins. Vitamins regulate body functions like our immune system to protect us from getting sick. Minerals also regulate body functions and some, like calcium, help build strong bones and teeth. Water carries nutrients in our blood and regulates body temperature.

Activity (20 minutes)

-  **“Hunt for the Good Stuff” (20 minutes) – Adapted From “Invisible Gold” lesson from Life Lab’s The Growing Classroom (to order this book, visit www.lifelab.org):** Students guess what nutrients are in healthy Native foods then compare their guesses with the  **Nutrient Cards** hidden inside each food bag.
 1. Distribute 1 food bag to each group of 3 students-don’t look inside yet!
 2. Start by having students guess which of the 6 major nutrients might be inside their food bag using the  **Nutrient Chart** in their workbooks for a reference. Emphasize that foods may have more than 1 nutrient.
 3. Students open their bags to discover what nutrients are in the food. Have groups compare their foods. Are there any nutrients that all of the foods have? Are there any that only 1 food has?
 4. Groups can rotate food bags and perform steps 1-3 multiple times.

Evaluation Questions (5 minutes)

1. *What are the 6 categories of nutrients?* (Answers: carbohydrates, fat, protein, vitamins, minerals, water)
2. *What do proteins do for the body?* (Answers: help repair body cells, build muscles)
3. *What are the major nutrients in fruits and vegetables?* (Answers: vitamins and minerals)
4. *True or false? Each food can only have 1 nutrient?* (Answer: false)
5. *Why is it important to eat a variety of foods from all of the food groups?* (Answer: to ensure that we get all of the nutrients our bodies need to grow and stay healthy)
6. *How much water should you drink every day?* (Answer: at least 6 cups of water a day)
7. *How many fruits and vegetables should you eat every day?* (Answer: at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day)
8. *Does gardening connect you to your culture and help you learn new words in your language?* (Answer: yes)

Preparation for Future Lessons – Reminder for the Instructor

- Review the materials and preparation needed for the next lesson.
- Remember that an Elder guest instructor is needed for these Fall lessons: Lesson 2 (The Plant Life Cycle), Lesson 4 (Seed Saving), Lesson 6 (Drying Foods the Traditional Way) and Lesson 10 (Companion Planting and Traditional Cooking).

Notes
