



Eating a Rainbow

Lesson Description

In this lesson, students will learn the importance of eating as many different colors of fruits and vegetables as possible each day as part of a balanced diet. They will practice brainstorming ways to build a balanced meal containing food choices from each of the 5 food groups including colorful fruits and vegetables. They will also listen to an Elder describe how the traditional Native diet has changed over the years.

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

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of a balanced diet.
- Define and discuss the benefits of “eating a rainbow” of colors from fruits and vegetables.
- Practice building balanced meals including fruits and vegetables of all different colors.
- Listen to an Elder describe how the traditional Native diet has changed over the years.

Attitude and Behavior Goal

- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.

Materials and Preparation

- Invite a Tribal Elder to discuss how the traditional Native diet has changed over the years with students.
- Pens or pencils- 1 for each student
- Crayons
- Ingredients for optional recipes: 6-color salsa or rainbow salad. Ingredients and preparation listed in activity section of the lesson plan.
- Optional warm-up game “Reviewing the 5 Food Groups” materials and preparation
 - 15 sheets of plain paper
 - Markers
 - Tape
 - Preparation: Write the name of each of the 5 food group on 5 separate sheets of paper (“Grains”, “Fruit”, “Vegetables”, “Protein”, “Dairy”). Write the names of these 5 nutrients on 5 separate sheets of paper (“Carbohydrates”, “Vitamin C”, “Vitamin A”, “Protein”, “Calcium”). Write the names or draw pictures of these 5 nutrient functions on

5 separate sheets of paper (“Energy”, “Immune system cuts burns scrapes”, “Eyes”, “Muscles” and “Bones”).

-  **Draw a Balanced Meal**
- Prepared vegetable snack of the week – 1 for each student.
 - *This may be replaced by the optional Taste the Rainbow activity.
- 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.
- Lead the students in enthusiastically reciting the  **Champion Cheer**.
- At the end of the cheer, drink water together (*If you do not plan on doing the Taste the Rainbow activity, eat the veggie snack and have students complete their  **Taste Test Observations**).

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 .

Warm-up activity (5 minutes)

Begin the class by reviewing these questions:

- *We have some rules for our garden, do you remember some of them?*
- *What are the three things we expect you to be respectful of? (Answer: self, others, garden)*
- *What are the five food groups?*
- Warm-up game: Reviewing the 5 food groups (5 minutes)
 1. Tape 1 food group label up onto the board or the wall with space underneath.
 2. Allow the students to choose which nutrient should be grouped with the food group (example: carbohydrates is the nutrient that corresponds with the grains group). Tape the correct nutrient label under the food group.
 3. Allow students to choose the correct function label that corresponds with the food group and nutrient (example: energy is the function that corresponds with carbohydrates and the grain group). Tape the correct function label under the food group and nutrient label.
 4. Repeat with all food groups.
 - a. Answers:
 - i. Grains- Carbohydrates- Energy
 - ii. Fruits- Vitamin C- Immune system cuts burns scrapes
 - iii. Vegetables- Vitamin A- Eyes

- iv. Protein- Protein- Muscles
- v. Dairy- Calcium- Bones

Class Discussion (10 minutes)

1. A balanced diet

Have you ever heard people talk about a balanced diet? What do you think eating a balanced diet means? (Answer: eating foods from all the 5 food groups every day AND eating a variety of foods from within each food group).

To eat a balanced diet, we need to eat something from each food group every day. We need fruit, vegetables, protein, grains, and dairy or calcium every day. This is because the foods in each food group have special nutrients and things that our bodies need to be healthy and grow strong. If we go an entire day without eating vegetables, for example, our body is missing out on the important vitamins, minerals, fiber that vegetables give us. Are we eating a balanced diet if we skip vegetables or fruits? Why not?

What if there was a person who loved chicken nuggets so much that they ate chicken nuggets for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day. Which food group is he getting all his food from? Which food groups is he missing out on?

2. Eating a rainbow

Has anyone eaten any fruits or vegetables today? What colors were they?

Nature makes lots of differently colored fruits and vegetables. We need to eat as many different colors of fruits and vegetables as we can every day because each color has different vitamins to help us stay healthy. We need to “eat a rainbow”.

Have you heard of Vitamin C or Vitamin A? Vitamin C helps to heal us when we are sick and fight infections. Vitamin A helps with our eyesight and keeps our skin healthy. The colors of fruits and vegetables can give us clues as to which vitamins are in them. For example, vitamin A is found in dark green, dark orange and dark yellow fruits and vegetables. Heart healthy nutrients are found in blue or purple fruits and vegetables.

Activities (30 minutes)

-  **“Building a Balanced Meal” (10 minutes):** Students work in groups to plan a balanced meal containing choices in the correct proportions from each of the 5 food groups.
 1. Refer students to the workbook page,  **Draw a Balanced Meal**
 - a. Review how much of the plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables at each meal. (Answer: half of the plate)
 2. Together as a class, brainstorm a list of traditional main dish protein items. Write the list on the board. Some possible suggestions: hamburger, tortillas with beans, chicken enchiladas, beef tacos.

3. Assign each student a main dish or allow them to choose their own. Students will talk about what they could add to the meals to make it a balanced meal and draw the meal on the workbook paper plate.
 - a. Encourage students to make a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables take up half of the plate.
 4. Share and discuss the meals as a class.
- **Elder (20 minutes):** Students listen to an Elder talk about traditional Native diets and how foods have changed over the years.
 1. Encourage the Elder to talk about the connection between traditional foods and good health.

Optional Activity: Taste the Rainbow (5 minutes): Students taste a Rainbow Salad or 6-color salsa.

1. Rainbow Salad
 - a. Bring a salad made with fruits and/or vegetables of as many different colors as possible. This can be made ahead of time or assembled as a demonstration in front of the class.
 - i. Talk about all the different tastes, colors and textures.
2. 6-color Salsa
 - a. Bring salsa made with vegetables of different colors (red tomatoes, green bell pepper, green cilantro, white onion, purple onion, black beans, yellow corn) or substitute with what is available. Add a squirt of lime juice and a dash of salt.
 - i. This can be made ahead of time or assembled as a demonstration in front of the class. Place all ingredients in a food processor for a quick and easy method of making the salsa.
 - ii. Talk about all the different tastes, colors and textures.

Evaluation Questions (5 minutes)

1. *What are the 5 basic food groups?* (Answer: grains, fruit, vegetables, protein, dairy)
2. *What does eating a balanced diet mean?* (Answer: eat food from all 5 food groups every day)
3. *Why do we need to eat a variety of foods?* (Answer: to make sure we get all the nutrients, vitamins, minerals we need)
4. *What does "eating a rainbow" mean?* (Answer: eat fruits and vegetables of all different colors)
5. *Why do we need to eat different color of fruits and vegetables?* (Answer: to make sure we get all the nutrients, vitamins and minerals that we need)
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 Spring lessons: lesson 1 (Eating a Rainbow), lesson 4 (Conserving Water: A Renewable Resource), and lesson 9 (Plant Parts: Flowers and Pollination).

Notes
