



# Lesson 1:

## Getting the Most Nutrition From Your Food

### Lesson Highlights

#### Objective

##### Students will:

- Review the content of *MyPyramid for Kids*, identifying food groups and important nutrition messages relating to each food group.
- Chart the foods they eat during 1 day and place each food into the appropriate food group.
- Explore the concept of choosing the healthier foods from each group and discuss examples from all the food groups.

##### Curriculum Connections:

Math, Science, Language arts

##### Student Skills Developed:

- Analysis and recordkeeping
- Understanding and interpreting visual data
- Understanding scientific inquiry

##### Materials:

- *MyPyramid for Kids* classroom poster
- *MyPyramid for Kids* black-and-white handout for each student
- *MyPyramid Worksheet* for each student
- Access to the *MyPyramid.gov* Web site during class, in the computer lab, or at home

### Getting Started:

#### Hang the *MyPyramid for Kids* poster (full-text side) where everyone can see it.

Pass out the black-and-white *MyPyramid for Kids* handout to each student. Review the food groups and messages with your students. Have students follow along and write the name of the food groups on the handout.

Here are some points to discuss with your students:

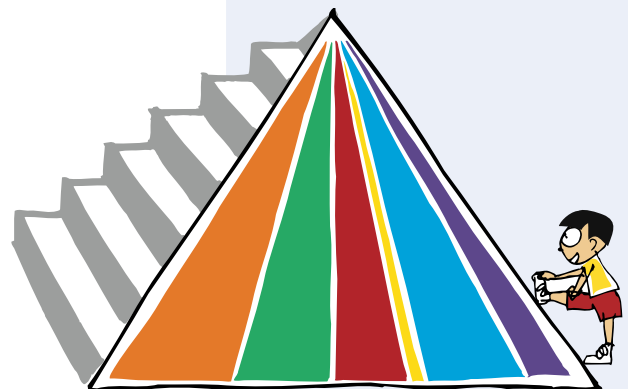
- **Make half your grains whole.** Whole grains are higher in fiber and some nutrients than other grains. Look for whole wheat or other whole grains on the ingredient label of bread bags and cereal boxes. It should be the first thing listed. Ask your students whether they can name other grains (*oats, rye, corn*). Most grains are ground into flour, then made into grain foods like cereals, bread, and tortillas. Popcorn is a whole grain too.
- **Vary your veggies.** Most people do not eat enough vegetables, especially dark green and orange vegetables. Ask students if they can name dark green and orange vegetables (*broccoli, collard greens, dark green leafy lettuce, kale, romaine lettuce, spinach, butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, and sweet potatoes*). Vegetables have vitamins and minerals that are important for a healthy body.
- **Focus on fruits.** Variety is important. Tell students they should try to eat different colors of fruit such as oranges, cantaloupes, strawberries, grapes, and blueberries. Juice drinks should be 100% juice.
- **Get your calcium-rich foods.** Milk and milk products are sources of calcium. Tell students that they are at an age when calcium is most important because their bones are growing quickly. Ask them to name other milk products (*cheese, yogurt, ice cream*). Check the labels for fat content. (*Students may be interested to learn that there is calcium in dark green leafy vegetables, but it takes a lot to equal the calcium in a glass of milk.*)
- **Go lean with protein.** Protein is needed for growth; however, many Americans eat too much protein. Extra calories of any kind get turned into fat. (*Students will learn more about protein in Lesson 2.*)
- **Physical activity.** *MyPyramid for Kids* focuses on physical activity. Ask students whether they get 60 or more minutes of physical activity per day. Do they think most kids do? Why or why not?

- **Point out** that *MyPyramid for Kids* gives the amounts to eat in ounces and cups – ounces for the grain and meat and beans groups and vegetables, fruit, and milk are given in cups.

**Note:** ounce equivalents for grains can also be measured in cups, e.g., 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal or ½ cup cooked cereal, and ounce equivalents for meats and beans can also be measured in tablespoons, e.g., peanut butter.

### Getting the most nutrition from your food:

- Ask your students if they know why the food group stripes are wider at the bottom of *MyPyramid for Kids*. Explain that every food group has foods that you should eat more often than others; these are at the bottom of *MyPyramid for Kids*. The wider stripes at the bottom remind you to eat more of these healthier foods.
- Explain that the foods at the bottom of *MyPyramid for Kids* provide vitamins and minerals without a lot of solid fat or added sugar. Examples include: a slice of whole-wheat bread, a piece of fruit, steamed vegetables, fat-free milk, or a baked chicken breast. Tell your students that they should choose these foods most often because it is important to get the nutrients the body needs without eating too much solid fat or added sugar.
- Foods with higher amounts of solid fat and added sugar are in the narrower top area of *MyPyramid for Kids*. Tell students that occasionally everyone can enjoy these foods (for example, cake, candy, sweetened drinks, chips, and fried foods). But, eating too many of the foods from the top of *MyPyramid for Kids* could lead to weight gain.



- Every food group has foods that fall into the bottom and the top of *MyPyramid for Kids*. Here are some examples. Recreate the main text of the chart below on the board and discuss why the foods have been placed in each category. (The explanations in italics are points you might make.)

## MyPyramid for Kids Food Group Stripes

Food Groups	Wider Area	Narrower Area
<b>Grains</b>	<b>Whole-wheat bread</b>	<b>Doughnut</b>
Explanation: <i>Whole-wheat bread is a whole grain food with little fat. But doughnuts are fried and have lots of fat and added sugar.</i>		
<b>Vegetables</b>	<b>Baked sweet potato</b>	<b>French fries</b>
Explanation: <i>Baked sweet potato is an orange vegetable full of vitamins and minerals and it doesn't need butter or sugar to taste good! The French fries are also potatoes, but they are fried and have a lot of fat.</i>		
<b>Fruits</b>	<b>Peach</b>	<b>Peach pie</b>
Explanation: <i>Fresh peaches are in their most natural form and have a lot of vitamins and minerals. A slice of peach pie has less than one peach and has a lot of added sugar and fat.</i>		
<b>Milk</b>	<b>Lowfat frozen yogurt</b>	<b>Ice cream</b>
Explanation: <i>Both lowfat frozen yogurt and ice cream are desserts made from milk. The lowfat frozen yogurt is usually made from fat-free milk, while the ice cream is often made with cream, which is higher in fat.</i>		
<b>Meat and Beans</b>	<b>Baked fish</b>	<b>Fried fish</b>
Explanation: <i>Fish has lots of protein. The amount of fat depends on the way it has been cooked. Fried fish is much higher in fat than baked fish.</i>		

- Ask your students if they can think of other foods in each food group that belong on the top and bottom of *MyPyramid for Kids*. Have them write in their ideas on the *MyPyramid for Kids* black-and-white handout.



# A Close Look at MyPyramid

For Kids

*MyPyramid for Kids* reminds you to be physically active every day, or most days, and to make healthy food choices. Every part of the new symbol has a message for you. Can you figure it out?

## Be Physically Active Every Day

The person climbing the stairs reminds you to do something active every day, like running, walking the dog, playing, swimming, biking, or climbing lots of stairs.

## Eat More From Some Food Groups Than Others

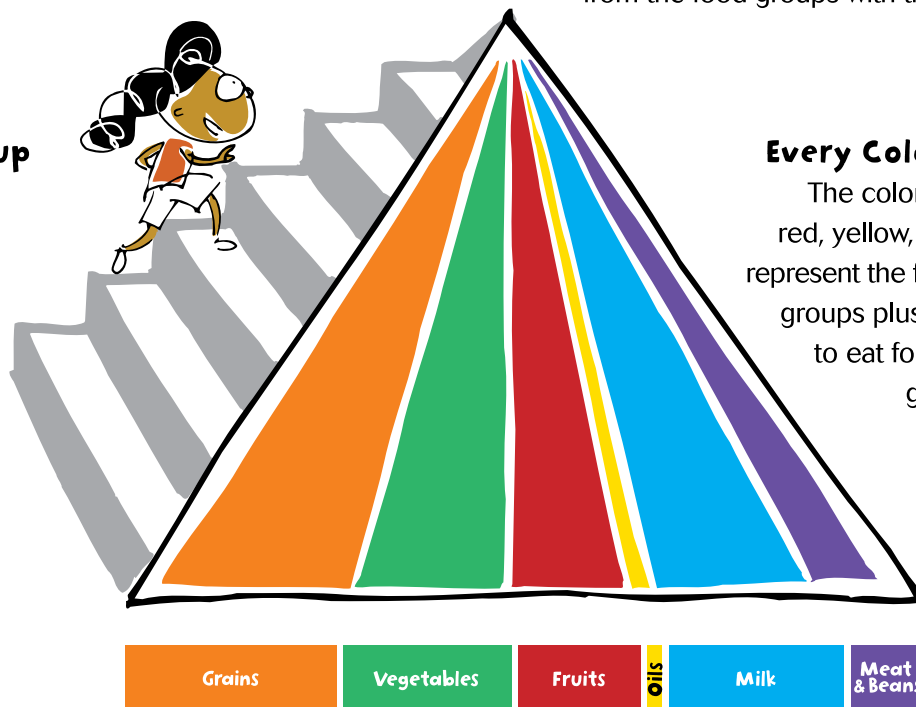
Did you notice that some of the color stripes are wider than others? The different sizes remind you to choose more foods from the food groups with the widest stripes.

## Choose Healthier Foods From Each Group

Why are the colored stripes wider at the bottom of the pyramid? Every food group has foods that you should eat more often than others; these foods are at the bottom of the pyramid.

## Every Color Every Day

The colors orange, green, red, yellow, blue, and purple represent the five different food groups plus oils. Remember to eat foods from all food groups every day.



## Make Choices That Are Right for You

*MyPyramid.gov* is a Web site that will give everyone in the family personal ideas on how to eat better and exercise more.

## Take One Step at a Time

You do not need to change overnight what you eat and how you exercise. Just start with one new, good thing, and add a new one every day.

## Activity: *MyPyramid Worksheet*

Pass out the *MyPyramid for Kids Worksheet* to students. Ask students to fill out the worksheet by listing all the foods (and the amounts) they ate yesterday for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. After students have completed this task, have students categorize the foods they ate yesterday into food groups. (You may need to help students with combination foods. For example, a slice of pizza would fit into several food groups such as grains, vegetables, milk, and meat and beans.) Next, have them list their physical activity and time spent on each activity. Then have the students rate how they did yesterday and set goals for tomorrow.

## Group Activity: Play the *MyPyramid Blast-Off Game*

As a follow-up to the lesson, have students play the *MyPyramid Blast-Off Game* on the enclosed CD ROM or at [teamn nutrition.usda.gov](http://teamn nutrition.usda.gov) or [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov) educators' page. In this game, students see if they can make the *MyPyramid* rocket fly. To do this they need to fill the rocket with the right "fuel"— a day's worth of smart food choices and physical activity. They will use the knowledge learned from this lesson to help them make the best choices. After students have played the game, ask what they have learned.



## Lunchroom Link:

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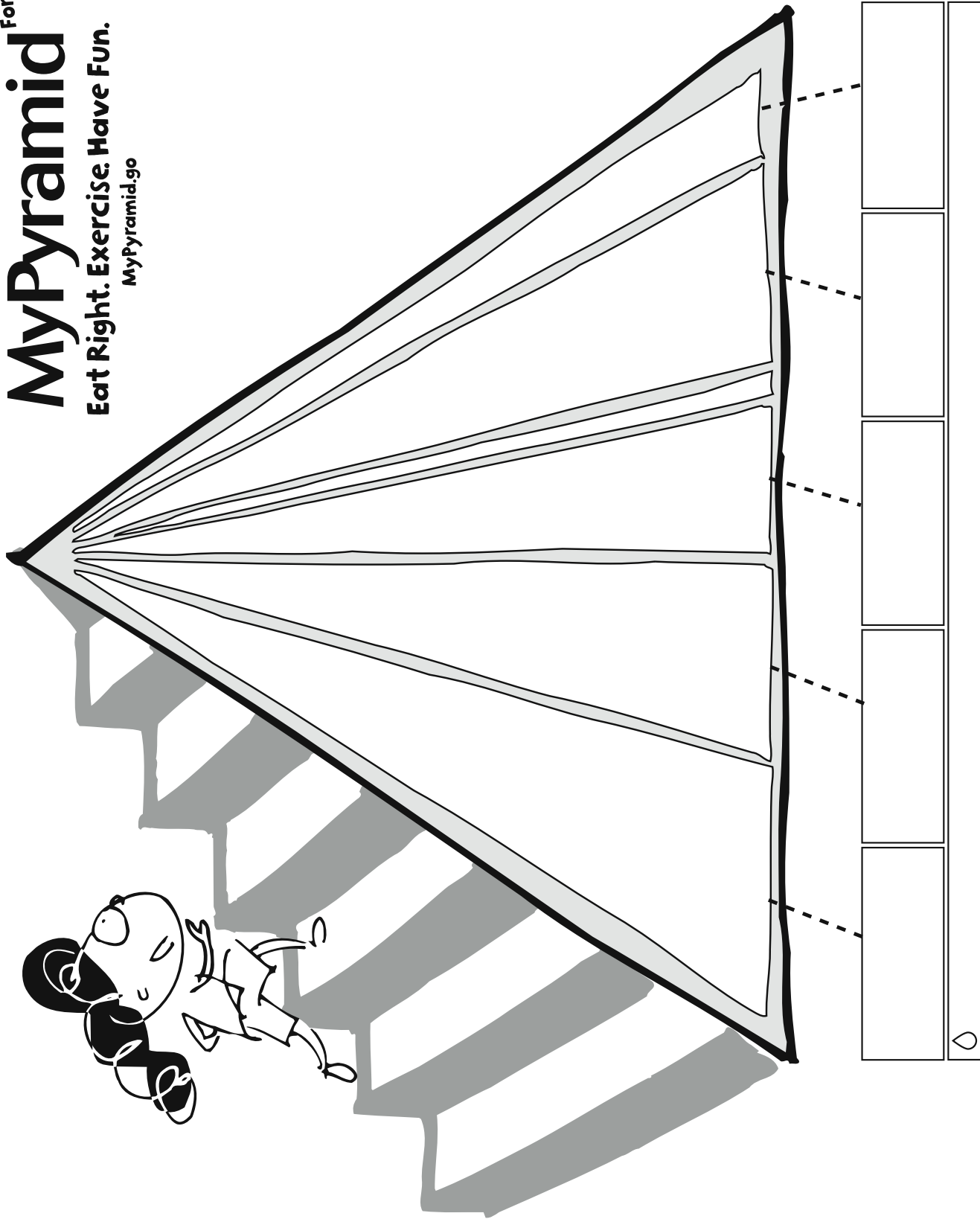
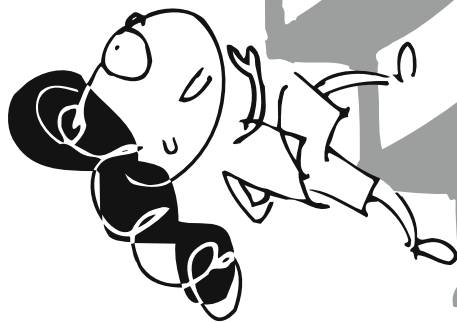
Have students analyze 1 week of lunchroom menus, identifying which foods come from each of the food groups and if the foods fit on the top or bottom of *MyPyramid for Kids*.

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# MyPyramid For Kids

Eat Right. Exercise. Have Fun.

MyPyramid.gov



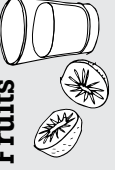





# MyPyramid Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# MyPyramid FOR KIDS

Check how you did yesterday and set a goal to aim for tomorrow

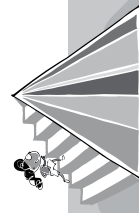
Write In Your Choices From Yesterday	Food and Activity	Tip	Goal (Based On a 1800 Calorie Pattern)	List Each Food Choice In Its Food Group*	Estimate Your Total
Breakfast: _____ _____ _____	<b>Grains</b> 	Make at least half your grains whole grains.	<b>6 ounce equivalents</b> (1 ounce equivalent is about 1 slice bread, 1 cup dry cereal, or 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal)		____ ounce equivalents
Lunch: _____ _____ _____	<b>Vegetables</b> 	Color your plate with all kinds of great tasting veggies.	<b>2 1/2 cups</b> (Choose from dark green, orange, starchy, dry beans and peas, or other veggies).		____ cups
Snack: _____ _____ _____	<b>Fruits</b> 	Make most choices fruit, not juice.	<b>1 1/2 cups</b>		____ cups
Dinner: _____ _____ _____	<b>Milk</b> 	Choose fat-free or lowfat most often.	<b>3 cups</b> (1 cup yogurt or 1 1/2 ounces cheese = 1 cup milk)		____ cups
Physical activity: _____ _____ _____	<b>Meat and Beans</b> 	Choose lean meat and chicken or turkey. Vary your choices—more fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds.	<b>5 ounce equivalents</b> (1 ounce equivalent is 1 ounce meat, chicken or turkey, or fish, 1 egg, 1 T. peanut butter, 1/2 ounce nuts, or 1/4 cup dry beans)		____ ounce equivalents
Physical activity: _____ _____ _____	<b>Physical Activity</b> 	Build more physical activity into your daily routine at home and school.	At least <b>60 minutes</b> of moderate to vigorous activity a day or most days.		____ minutes

\* Some foods don't fit into any group. These "extras" may be mainly fat or sugar—limit your intake of these.

How did you do yesterday?  Great  So-So  Not So Great

My food goal for tomorrow is: \_\_\_\_\_

My activity goal for tomorrow is: \_\_\_\_\_





# Lesson 2:

## Food Math

### Lesson Highlights

#### Objective

##### Students will:

- Add and subtract fractions as they calculate how much of various food groups they need to meet the *MyPyramid for Kids* recommendations.
- Create a daily menu based on the *MyPyramid for Kids* recommendations.
- Discuss the importance of eating fruits and vegetables.

##### Curriculum Connections:

Math, Language arts, Music

##### Student Skills Developed:

- Math skills – adding and subtracting fractions
- Creative writing
- Song development

##### Materials Needed:

- *Food Math* worksheet for each student
- Paper and pencils to use in creating their day's menu
- (Optional) Glass measuring cup, cut raw fruits or vegetables to fill measuring cup to 1-cup line
- (Optional) Paper plate for the fruits or vegetables.

### Getting Started:

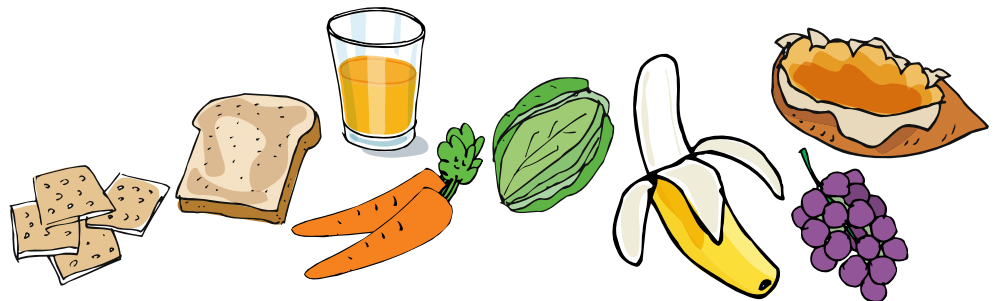
**Have students look at the *MyPyramid for Kids* poster.** Point out that *MyPyramid for Kids* tells how much of each food group to eat; *MyPyramid for Kids* gives the amounts for each day in ounces and cups. Grains and meats are weighed in ounces. For example, a piece of bread is 1 ounce, so is a cup of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal or one small tortilla. A small chicken breast half is 3 ounces. Vegetable, fruit, and milk amounts are given in cups. For example, one small apple, about 12 baby carrots, and an 8-ounce glass of milk count as 1 cup equivalent.

You may want to help students understand what 1 cup of vegetables or fruit looks like. Put food in a measuring cup, then pour out onto a paper plate. Or, mention that a baseball is about the size of 1 cup and a small computer mouse is  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup.

Ask students to estimate how many fruits and vegetables they eat in a typical day. Point out that most students their age should eat more foods from these food groups. They are high in nutrients.

### Activity: Food Math

- **Have students work in pairs. Hand out the *Food Math* worksheet.** Tell students they are going to choose foods they think would make a healthy menu for a day for Jason. Their menu should include breakfast, lunch, dinner, and a snack.
- **The menu they create must include the right amount of food from all the food groups.** For one day, that would be: 6 ounces of grains,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cups of vegetables,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups of fruit, 3 cups of milk, and 5 ounces of meat or beans. (This amount of food is based on 1,800 calories, the estimated energy requirement for a moderately active 9- to 10-year-old.) Before students begin work, review each of the food groups and the amounts needed.



- **Have them write their menu on a sheet of paper** including the amount of food for each entry and the totals for each group along the bottom of the sheet.
- **Discuss students' choices and have them check their math.** Also have students check to see whether half their choices from the grain group are whole grains. Did they choose any dark green or orange vegetables?

*(Note to teacher: Food Math will help prepare students to play the MyPyramid Blast-Off game on the enclosed CD ROM.)*

### **Group Activity: Be Hip-Hop Healthy**

Divide students into groups. Have each group write a rap (at least eight lines long) about the importance of eating from all the food groups. Have the group come up with movements that go along with their rap. Groups should perform their raps for the entire class. Then post a written copy of the rap on your bulletin board. (To help the students get started, you can use the Power Panther™ songs on the enclosed CD ROM that have a "hip-hop" beat.)



### **Lunchroom Link:**

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Invite a staff member from your school foodservice program to talk about how they create balanced menus and determine the amount of each food to serve. (Have the students work with the lunchroom staff to plan a menu and then announce over the PA system when the menu is served, recognizing the students' efforts.)

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## Food Math

Jason is 9 years old. He's physically active sometimes. Each day, he needs to eat:

**Grains**  
6 ounces

**Vegetables**  
2½ cups

**Fruit**  
1½ cups

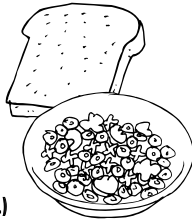
**Milk**  
3 cups

**Meat and Beans**  
5 ounces

Help Jason decide what to eat today. Plan breakfast, lunch, dinner, and a snack. Be sure he gets all the food he needs from each group. (Food items may be selected more than once.)

### Grains 6 ounces

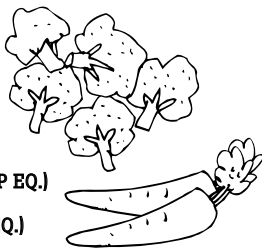
- \_\_\_ 1 slice whole-wheat toast\* (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 5 whole-wheat crackers\* (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 slice white bread (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 slice whole-wheat bread\* (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup whole-grain ready-to-eat breakfast cereal\* (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ ½ cup cooked brown rice\* (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup cooked pasta (2 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 hamburger bun (2 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 3 cups lowfat popcorn\* (1 OZ EQ.)



Items marked with a \* are whole-grain

### Vegetables 2½ cups

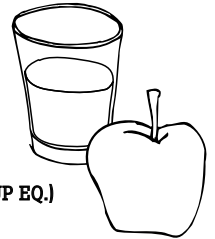
- \_\_\_ 6 baby carrots\* (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 large ear of corn (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 medium baked potato (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup cooked greens\* (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 large baked sweet potato\* (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 3 spears broccoli\* (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ ½ cup tomato juice (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup chopped lettuce (½ CUP EQ.)



Items marked with a \* are dark green or orange vegetables

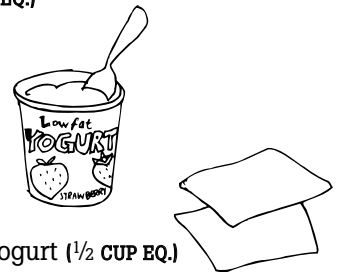
### Fruits 1½ cups

- \_\_\_ 1 small apple or ½ large apple (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 large orange (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 snack-sized container of peaches (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 large plum (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 small box raisins (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup 100% orange juice (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 medium wedge cantaloupe (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 small wedge watermelon (1 CUP EQ.)



### Milk 3 cups

- \_\_\_ ½ cup lowfat or fat-free cottage cheese (¼ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup fat-free milk (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 snack-sized lowfat or fat-free yogurt (½ CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 half-pint container 1% or 2% milk (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 2 ounces of lowfat or fat-free American cheese (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1½ ounces of lowfat or fat-free cheddar cheese (1 CUP EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1½ cups light ice cream (1 CUP EQ.)

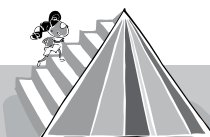


### Meat and Beans 5 ounces

- \_\_\_ 1 ounce of nuts (2 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 cup split pea soup (2 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 small chicken breast half (3 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 small lean hamburger (3 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 hard-boiled egg (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 tablespoon peanut butter (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ ¼ cup of pinto beans (1 OZ EQ.)
- \_\_\_ 1 slice of turkey (1 OZ EQ.)



Key: (1 OZ EQ.) means (equals 1 ounce equivalent)



## Group Activity: Play Pyramid Go Fish

Students play Pyramid Go Fish with food cards. This activity will give students additional practice in sorting foods into groups.

### Getting Started:

- **Duplicate food illustrations from CD ROM and cut into cards.**
- **Put students into groups of four and distribute 30 cards to each group.**
- **Now play Pyramid Go Fish.** The dealer deals out four cards to each student, and places the rest in the middle. The first student (let's call him Michael) asks the student sitting to his left, "Kayla, do you have a fruit?" If Kayla has a fruit she says, "Yes, I do," and hands her card to Michael, who then places his pair of cards on the table. Michael is then able to ask the next student a question.
- **If Kayla doesn't have a fruit, she replies, "No I don't have a fruit. Go fish,"** and Michael can take a card from the pile in the middle. It is then Kayla's turn to ask the student on her left for a card. The students continue to ask questions and find cards until all the pairs are found. The student with the most pairs wins.



### Lunchroom Link:

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Plan a visit to the cafeteria. Ask the staff to show students where to find foods from each food group on the serving line. (Perhaps the foodservice staff could put the appropriate color dot sticker by the food on the serving line, i.e., green = vegetable, red = fruit, etc.)

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### Home Connection:

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Send the *Dear Parents Grocery Store Treasure Hunt* letter home with your students. This is a nutrition activity they can do with their families.

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# Lesson 3:

## Vary Your Veggies and Focus on Fruits

### Lesson Highlights

#### Objective

##### Students will:

- Learn more about the nutritional qualities of fruits and vegetables.
- Brainstorm about ways they can increase their intake of fruits and vegetables.
- Set a goal of eating more fruits and vegetables and develop specific steps to reach their goal.

##### Curriculum Connections:

Language arts

##### Student Skills Developed:

- Thinking and analysis
- Writing
- Setting goals

##### Materials Needed:

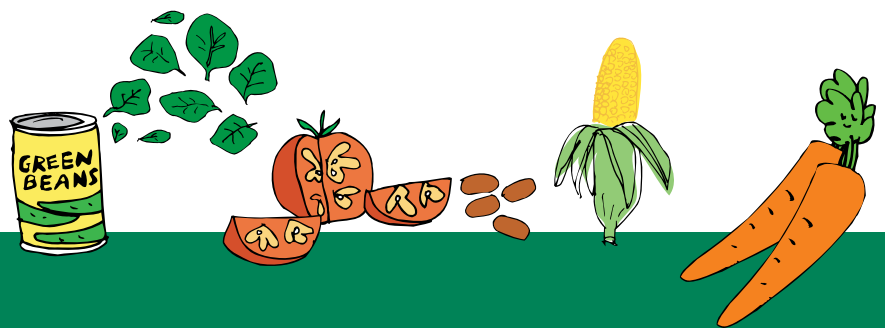
- *Steps to a Healthier You* worksheet for each student

#### Activity: Vary Your Veggies and Focus on Fruits

- Ask students if they eat fruits and vegetables every day.
- Ask them to name the fruits and vegetables they usually eat.
- Talk to students about the importance of fruits and vegetables. Eating fruits and vegetables can help them be healthy.
  - Fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of many nutrients, including vitamins A and C, potassium, and dietary fiber.
  - Most fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and do not contain cholesterol.
  - Vitamin A keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps to protect against infections.
  - Vitamin C helps heal cuts and wounds and keeps teeth and gums healthy.
  - Fiber keeps food moving through the digestive tract.
- Dark green and orange vegetables are important to eat. See if students can name some.
- French fries, which make up one-fourth of all vegetables eaten by elementary school students, are an exception. They are high in fat and calories. A medium order of fries has 460 calories, more than one-fourth the total daily calorie intake appropriate for most 8- and 9-year olds. A medium baked potato, however, has only about 100 calories.

#### Now pass out the worksheet, *Steps to a Healthier You*.

- Have students review the goal of trying a new fruit and vegetable.
- Ask students what vegetables and fruits they already enjoy. Remember that dried, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables count, too.
- Have students complete the worksheet.
- Next, have students brainstorm some other ways they can eat more fruits and vegetables. Add these to their worksheet.
- Finally, complete the “Where and How” box.



Ask students to look at the worksheet to see which of the steps they could take to meet their goal of increasing their intake of fruits and vegetables. Have students circle on the worksheet the steps they plan to take. Point out that small changes really add up. Once they try a new food and like it, they can add it to the foods they eat regularly. That's how they can meet their goal.

*Note to teacher: Students may add additional ideas on the back of their worksheet.*

**As students learn about goal-setting, here are some points to remember:**

- Success breeds success. Encourage children to set goals they can accomplish. A child who usually chooses only corn and apple juice might set a goal of trying one new fruit this week.
- Take one step at a time. Children do not need to change overnight what they eat. They can start with one new, good thing, and add a new one every day.

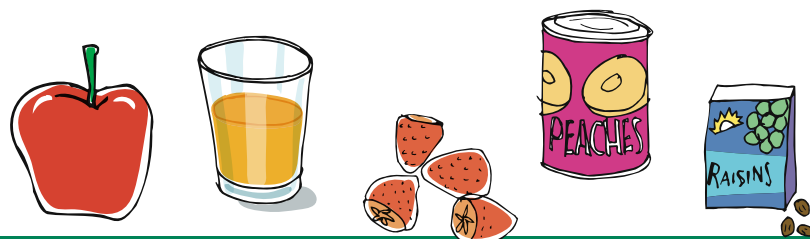
**Group Activity: Vegetable Ad Campaign**

Have students create an ad campaign for a vegetable. Working in groups, research a dark green or orange vegetable. (They can find information at [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov).) Why is it a nutritious choice? Have students use their creativity to create a poster and perhaps a TV ad – a jingle, a skit – that they can perform for the class.



**Lunchroom Link:**

Have students review the lunch menu to find out when dark green and orange vegetables are being served. Have them develop signs for the serving line to inform other students. Also, coordinate with the foodservice staff to offer a vegetable/fruit tasting party.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Steps to a Healthier You

## My Fruit and Vegetable Goals

### Fruits

Circle the names of the fruits you have eaten:

mango    papaya    kiwifruit    cantaloupe  
star fruit    pineapple    strawberry    blueberry

Other fruits I have eaten:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write the name of a fruit you would like to try:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How will you eat this fruit? *(Perhaps on cereal, as a snack, for dessert, with dinner, or on pancakes.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Vegetables

Circle the names of the vegetables you have eaten:

spinach    collard greens    sweet potato  
broccoli    jicama    zucchini squash

Other vegetables I have eaten:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write the name of a vegetable you would like to try:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How will you eat this vegetable? *(Perhaps for a snack, as a salad, with dip, or for lunch.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Where and How

I will try these foods by: asking my parents to purchase them, helping my parents prepare these foods, choosing them from a restaurant menu, eating them from the school lunch menu, or eating them at a friend's house.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

