

2 December Lesson: Eat a Rainbow

Goals:

- *Students will learn the health benefits of consuming a diet rich in fruits and vegetables*
- *Students will learn that fruits and vegetables should fill half their plates*

Audience: 2nd grade

Optional Craft, Activity or Snack:

- *Fruit and Veggie Spud*
- *Fruit and Veggie Riddle*

Materials:

- *5 Minute Fitness Ideas*
- *Eat a Rainbow Visual*
- *Eat a Rainbow Handout*

Common Core Standards Taught:

- *English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 2.1*
 - *Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).*
 - *Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.*
 - *Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.*
- *English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 2.2*
 - *Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or other media.*
- *English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 2.3*
 - *Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.*

Background:

Children have a hard time remembering the benefits of the various food groups. To help them remember, Nurture uses specific food group actions every time a food group is mentioned. We encourage the students to use these symbols as well.

- Vegetables – *Smile because they make our bodies happy*
- Fruits – *OK symbol with hand because fruits keep us feeling okay*
- Grains – *pump arms like your running in place because grains give us energy*
- Protein – *flex your muscles (biceps) because muscles are made of protein*
- Dairy – *point to your teeth because dairy helps build strong teeth and bones*

Lesson:

Start with 2 or 3 minutes of exercises from 5 Minute Fitness Ideas.

Let's review a bit from last month. Can you name 4 foods in the protein group (**flex biceps**)? (*meat, fish, poultry, nuts, seeds, beans, eggs*)

What does the grain group do for us (**pump arms**)? (*Gives us energy!*)

Can you name two different foods in the dairy group? (*milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, ice cream, cream, etc*)

How much of our plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables? (*half*)

Great job! Let's talk a little more about the colorful part of our plate-- the fruits (**OK sign**) and vegetables (**smile**)! Fruits and vegetables provide our bodies with many minerals, vitamins, and phytochemicals. Can you say 'fight-o-chemicals'? This is the perfect name, because phytochemicals fight off diseases. Phytochemicals are special nutrients found in fruits and vegetables that prevent you from getting sick. Phytochemicals give fruits and vegetables their color. It is important to eat many different colored fruits and vegetables so your body gets a variety of different phytochemicals.

Fruits and vegetables can be broken down into the following 5 colors:

(**Slide 1**) **Red**- promotes a healthy heart, memory, and brain function
Can you think of a red fruit or vegetable? (*cherries, red peppers, strawberries*)

(**Slide 2**) **Blue/Purple**- are rich in antioxidants and promote healthy aging
Can you think of a blue or purple fruit or vegetable? (*blueberries, grapes, eggplant, plums*)

(**Slide 3**) **Green**- promotes healthy eye sight (vision) and strong bones and teeth
Can you think of a green fruit or vegetable? (*broccoli, celery, green apples, lettuce*)

(Slide 4) Orange/Yellow- promotes healthy eye sight (vision), may reduce the risk of some cancers, and promotes a healthy immune system

Can you think of a yellow or orange fruit or vegetable? (*carrots, oranges, peaches*)

(Slide 5) White – keeps your heart healthy, and protect your cells

Can you think of a white fruit or vegetable? (*bananas, cauliflower, potatoes*)

Some fruits and vegetables like bananas and apples can be confusing because their skin is one color and the flesh or inside is a different color. The phytochemicals we care about are the ones that we eat. So a banana would be white because we only eat the inside. If we eat a red apple, including the skin, we benefit from both red and white phytochemicals!

Scientists are doing a lot of research to find out if certain phytochemicals can cure diseases. They are learning new things every day. Some scientists have tried to capture these phytochemicals and put them in vitamins or pills. However, they have found that phytochemicals help us the most when they are consumed as a food or beverage. This is why it is best to get most of your nutrients from whole foods (lots of fruits and veggies) rather than from vitamins or supplements.

Who can remember how many fruits and vegetables we should eat each day? We should fill half of our plates with fruits and vegetables, or at a minimum, eat 3 veggies and 2 fruits every day. **(Slide 6)**

What if I only ate orange fruits and vegetables?

I would miss out on the phytochemicals found in green, red, purple/blue, and white fruits and vegetables.

When you look at your plate, aim to make it as colorful as possible. Try to include at least 2 different colored fruits or vegetables at meal time. For example, for lunch, enjoy orange carrot sticks (smile) and a red apple (ok sign). At dinner, eat green broccoli (smile) and blueberries (ok sign) and you'll have eaten all the colors in just 2 meals.

There are so many choices when it comes to fruits and vegetables. (Do Activity 1 or Activity 2 then finish with the recap of what eating a rainbow means.)

(Activity 1) I am going to divide you into groups and assign your team a color. When I say, "Go!" your team is going to write down as many fruits and vegetables that are that color. After 3 minutes, we will see which team has the longest list.

(Divide into teams, assign colors) Ready? Go!

(Wait 3 minutes-- then review the groups' lists as a class)

(Activity 2) (Slide 7) Now that we've thought about the colors we love to eat, I will give you your very own rainbow to fill with your favorite fruits and vegetables!
(Hand out rainbow, colored pencils, and fruit/vegetable stickers if available)
Fill in each stripe of your rainbow with your favorite fruits and vegetables of that color. Either use stickers or draw a fruit or vegetable that you like! Try to fill up each row of the rainbow... you will have about 7 minutes to make your rainbow delicious!

You can take your rainbow home and put in on the refrigerator or use it as a placemat to remind you of all the colorful fruits and vegetables you love to eat!

So what does eating a rainbow mean?

Eating a rainbow is eating many different colored fruits and vegetables.

Why is eating a rainbow important?

Eating a rainbow enables your body to get a variety of vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals, which keep your body strong and healthy.

Tips:

Students love to talk about how to tell the difference between fruits and vegetables.

Most fruits have seeds on the inside. There are exceptions such as strawberries and some exotic berries.

Scientists classify fruits and vegetables based on whether or not they have seeds. In the health world, however, we classify fruits and vegetables based on their nutrition profile. There are numerous nutrients in fruits and vegetables, but one of the deciding factors of whether a food is classified as a fruit or vegetable is the sugar content. Most fruits taste sweet such as watermelon, grapes, apples etc.

However, there are foods that are technically fruits because they have seeds, but taste more like vegetables such as zucchini, cucumber, tomatoes etc. Nutritionists classify these fruits as vegetables. It can all get very confusing! However, in general, a good rule of thumb is that if it tastes sweet, it is probably a fruit.

Regardless of whether it is a fruit or vegetable, it is important to include plants in the diet. They are filled with nutrients that help keep you healthy and strong.

On the next page is a table of different fruits and vegetables to aid in brainstorming.

Blue/Purple	Green	White	Orange/Yellow	Red
Blackberries	Avocado	Bananas	Bananas	Apples
Blueberries	Apples	Pears	Apples	Cherries
Cabbage	Grapes	Nectarines	Apricots	Cranberries
Currants	Honeydew Melon	White Peaches	Cantaloupe	Raspberries
Eggplant	Kiwi	Cauliflower	Grapefruit	Watermelon
Grapes	Limes	Garlic	Oranges	Strawberries
Plums	Pears	Ginger	Mangoes	Pomegranate
Raisins	Artichoke	Artichoke	Nectarines	Peppers
Purple Potatoes	Arugula	Jicama	Peaches	Tomatoes
Figs	Asparagus	Mushrooms	Pineapple	Radishes
Beets	Broccoli	Onions	Tangerine	Rhubarb
Purple asparagus	Brussels Sprouts	Parsnips	Melon	Red Onion
	Cabbage	Coconut	Beets	Red Potatoes
	Celery	Shallots	Squash	Red Pears
	Cucumber	Turnips	Corn	
	Lettuce	Corn	Peppers	
	Peas		Carrots	
	Peppers		Pumpkin	
	Spinach		Sweet Potato	
	Zucchini		Pears	