

# 1 January Lesson: Fitting in More Fruits & Veggies

**Goals:**

- *Students will learn the importance of eating fruits and vegetables*
- *Students will brainstorm ways to eat more fruits and vegetables*

**Audience:** 1<sup>st</sup> grade

**Optional Craft, Activity or Snack:**

- *Fruit and Veggie Red Light Green Light*
- *Fruit or Veggie Kabobs*
- *Calculating Fruit and Veggie Consumption*

**Materials:**

- *Fitting in more fruits and veggies visual*

**Common Core Standards Taught:**

- English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 1.3
  - Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
- English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 1.4
  - Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

**Background:**

There are four entrees shown in the visual. Teachers should choose two or three meals that best reflect the tastes and backgrounds of the students.

**Lesson:**

Fruits and vegetables taste good and they are good for us. Not only do you see them in the grocery store, you can also sometimes see them growing in people's yards. Fruits and veggies are plants that grow on trees or vines or in the ground. Do any of you have a fruit tree in your yard or did you grow fruits or vegetables last summer?

Raise your hand if you can tell me why eating fruits and vegetables is important? Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins and minerals that your body needs to grow strong and stay healthy!

(Slides 1 or 2) The new food guide, MyPlate, recommends that we fill half of our plates with fruits and veggies! At a minimum we all should try to eat 3 veggies and 2 fruits every day. For some people, this can be a big challenge. I was hoping that you could provide some tips on how to eat more fruits and veggies.

I am going to show you a picture of a plate that could use some more fruits and veggies. Please raise your hand if you have an idea of how to add more fruit and veggies to make a healthier (more nutritious) meal.

(Slide 3) Mac and cheese for dinner! Raise your hand if you can think of a vegetable that we could add to this plate that would be tasty.  
(broccoli, spinach, cauliflower or peas) (Slide 4)

What about a fruit? Can you think of a tasty fruit to go with this meal? (Any fruit would do)

Sometimes, people may think they don't like a vegetable, but when they pair it with a food that they do like, they don't mind it at all. For example, broccoli and cheese can go really well together. (Slide 5)

Let's look at the next plate, cheese pizza. (Slide 6) Who can think of a vegetable that would go well with this plate?  
(add veggie toppings: onions, mushrooms, peppers, tomatoes, spinach or add a small side salad)

Is there a fruit that would go well with pizza?  
Have you ever ordered pineapple on your pizza? It is really yummy! (Slide 7)

Moving on to the next plate, tacos. (Slide 8) How can we add more veggies to this meal?

(Slide 9) You can make your dinner foods healthier if you add vegetables inside or on top of it. Another good way to fit in extra fruit and veggies is to have them as a side dish, or even a lettuce or fruit salad. Who likes carrot sticks, green beans, zucchini, and sweet potatoes?

For a sweet treat, it's always an easy option to have a healthy yogurt topped with your favorite fresh fruit like blueberries or strawberries. With this combo, you eat your dairy and fruit serving in a yummy creation.

Same with Breakfast (slide 9). You can add different fruits to pancakes and waffles, oatmeal, yogurt and cereal to make them even better for you. Try adding salsa or peppers to your eggs.

You have lots of great ideas! Eating fruits and vegetables is a great way to give your body the nutrients you need to grow a strong and healthy body. It is important to eat fruits and veggies of different colors every day. That way we make sure we get many of the vitamins and minerals (nutrients) we need for good health.

**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.