

## Pack a Better Lunch

### **Goals:**

- Students will know the components of a healthy lunch

### **Audience:**

- 1st-2<sup>nd</sup> grades

### **Optional Craft, Activity or Snack:**

- Brown Bag Checklist

### **Materials:**

- MyPlate
- Food Cards

### **Lesson:**

Leader: Whether you pack your lunch or eat hot lunch, there are so many foods to choose from! Some food choices can be really great for our bodies; giving us lots of energy; other choices are not so healthy, and can leave us feeling tired. Today we are going to talk about the components of a healthy lunch and I want your help in packing a balanced lunch!

Leader: A healthy lunch should contain all of the 5 food groups (show my plate): whole grains, fruits, vegetables, milk (or calcium rich product), and protein. Let's take a closer look at MyPlate to see how we can construct a balanced lunch.

Starting with grains, we have a lot of choices! Breads, pastas, brown rice, crackers, pita, or tortillas! The key here is to pick a whole grain product because whole grains are full of nutrients, fiber, and will help us stay full.

Leader: (Show the grain food cards) What whole grain should we pick?

Leader: Now that we have our whole grain, let's move on to the meat or protein group. What are our choices here? Protein is the building block for our body; you need protein to build strong muscles and maintain a healthy body. (Show the food cards to the class and let them choose which protein they want to pack for their lunch).

Next, is the vegetable group. There are many veggies to choose from! Veggies are an excellent source of vitamins, nutrients, and fiber.

Although potatoes are a vegetable, are potato chips a good choice? No, potato chips are high in fat and calories, and will leave you feeling sluggish.

Which vegetable would you like in your lunch (show food cards)?

Leader: Moving on to fruits, fruits are also a great source of vitamins and antioxidants which keep your body healthy- and they taste great! (Show the food cards and let the student select a fruit).

What about fruit roll-ups or fruit slushies? These foods usually contain a lot of added sugar, which can cause you to feel sluggish.

Leader: Milk is the next food group. Cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, and milk are all great options. Milk is super easy to include in our lunch because they sell it at school! Milk is rich in calcium and vitamin D; these nutrients help build strong bones and teeth.

Leader: It looks like we have a pretty tasty lunch! (Read the menu out loud)

Leader: Are we missing anything? What about a treat?! Is it okay to include a treat in our lunch? Sure! Balance is the key to a healthy diet. When packing a treat, think small portions, such as a small cookie, a 2-bite brownie, or a piece of chocolate. If you prefer salty snacks, you can pack a handful of chips or pretzels. Chocolate milk would be considered a treat.

Leader: Lunch is a great time to fuel up on healthy foods that give you long-lasting energy. If you find that you are sluggish around 1:00 or 2:00 in the afternoon, take a look at what you ate for lunch. Try packing a few of the foods we talked about today and see how you feel.

**Resources:**

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/nutrition/lunch.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/lunch.html)

[http://kidshealth.org/kid/nutrition/food/school\\_lunches.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/nutrition/food/school_lunches.html)