

Start Smart Eating & Reading

★ A fun-filled breakfast, nutrition, and reading program for 1st and 2nd grades ★

Module Three: Fruits and Veggies— A Colorful Way to Start the Day!

Lesson Overview

Through reading and discussion of *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato* by Lauren Child (©2000, Candlewick Press), children use their imagination and explore a variety of colorful and tasty vegetables. They then can participate in one or more activities, including a no-cook food activity, a “Breakfast Mix-n-Match” game, and activities that reinforce how vegetables and fruits can be part of breakfast. Finally, the children can apply these concepts as they track the fruit and vegetables they eat each day at breakfast.

Objectives

Children will:

- Learn that they should eat fruits and vegetables each day
- Identify foods that belong in the Fruit Group and Vegetable Group
- Participate in activities that reinforce the importance of including fruits and/or vegetables at breakfast
- Keep track of fruits and vegetables eaten each day at breakfast

What you will need

To Teach and Supplement the Lesson:

1. Teacher/Leader Resource Page
2. *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato*, by Lauren Child (©2000, Candlewick Press)
3. Breakfast Every Day! classroom poster
4. Breakfast Mix-n-Match Game Cards 🕒
5. **Reproducible Handouts:**
 - B-R-E-A-K F-A-S-T! Rap / Let’s Eat Breakfast 🕒
 - For Your Breakfast 🕒
 - Breakfast Song 🕒
 - Vegetables for Breakfast? 🕒
 - My Own Fruit Bowl 🕒
 - My Breakfast Every Day individual calendar 🕒
 - “Breakfast Bites” (parent newsletter) 🕒
6. **Recorded music:** Breakfast Rap, Let’s Eat Breakfast, For Your Breakfast, Breakfast Song 🕒

For the Food Activity (Veggie Art): 🕒

A variety of vegetables cut into interesting shapes, in quantities sufficient for all children (approximately 1 cup per child):

- Raw vegetables such as: carrots or orange yams cut into coins, sticks, curls, or grated; broccoli bites; cauliflower bites; jicama cubes, slices, or cutouts; celery slices, fans, or straws; cherry tomatoes whole or cut; zucchini rounds or sticks; radish coins; pea pods or fresh or frozen peas; turnip slices; dark green leafy vegetables (spinach, romaine lettuce, Swiss chard)
- Canned vegetables such as green beans; wax beans; water chestnut slices

Optional: Thousand Island or Ranch dressing (1 to 2 Tbsp per child)

 = As time allows

ATTENTION LEADERS

The best way to teach students the importance of eating breakfast is to model healthy habits. Make a point to mention your own breakfast habits throughout the year. This can be as simple as saying, “I’ve had my breakfast and I’m ready for the day!”

Equipment/Supplies:

- Serving bowls or containers for each type of vegetable
- Serving spoons/utensils for each type of vegetable
- Plate for each child
- Fork for each child

Most importantly:

- Clean hands and a clean work surface!

Teaching the Lesson

Before you begin, review the *Teacher/Leader Resource Page*.

Introduce the lesson by asking the children to raise their hands if they ate breakfast this morning. Ask how many of them included a serving of fruit, vegetable or juice with their breakfast.

Explain that it is important to eat fruits and vegetables every day. Point out that children need many different fruits and vegetables to grow and be healthy. They could be raw, canned, or frozen. Breakfast is a great time to eat fruits and veggies. Include a fruit, vegetable, or juice along with healthy foods from other food groups to make a balanced breakfast. The more food groups you include at breakfast, the better!

DO

1. Read the book, *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato*, to the children. After you are finished, lead a brief discussion of the story. Questions you might ask are included at right.
2. Sing one of the songs or raps about breakfast. Use the recorded songs (copy from the website to a CD) and word sheets to help the children learn the song. Two songs have teaching tracks recorded. 🎧
3. Choose one or more of the following breakfast activities: 🎧

Vegetables for Breakfast?

Before you pass out this activity sheet, ask the children if they ever eat vegetables for breakfast (for example, fresh onions, tomatoes, mushrooms, red pepper, or celery added to scrambled eggs or omelets; salsa on huevos rancheros; tomato juice; tomato or cucumber slices; hashbrown potatoes; carrot muffins; grilled cheese and tomato sandwiches; English muffin pizzas or focaccia bread with vegetable toppings; leftover tomato or vegetable soup; potato pancakes).

Briefly discuss how breakfast can include many kinds of vegetables. Students then read a silly poem and discover how vegetables can be a part of breakfast when they “find the vegetables” in the pictures. They can also draw their own favorite breakfast vegetable.

My Own Fruit Bowl

Before you pass out this activity sheet, ask the children if they ever have fruit or juice for breakfast. Briefly discuss the importance of choosing juices that are 100% juice. Sometimes different fruits are mixed together. Invite children to design their own fruit mixture and then draw the fruits they will use. They could take this sheet home as a “recipe” for a fruit salad they would like to make.

REFLECT

I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato

Ask the children:

- What were some of the foods that Lola did not like?
- What did Charlie do to get Lola to try some vegetables?
- Did Lola like the vegetables after she tasted them?
- What name did Lola give to tomatoes? Can you imagine a fun name for a vegetable?
- Where do vegetables grow? Have you ever been to a farm or garden that grows vegetables?
- Where else can you find vegetables besides a farm or garden?

Breakfast Mix-n-Match Cards

Use the breakfast cards to help children identify fruits and vegetables and incorporate them into breakfast choices.

- Play “Memory” with matched pairs of just the Fruit and Vegetable cards. See Module 1 for complete directions.
- Have the children make new cards using the blank “Fruit” and “Vegetable” masters. Children can draw or paste pictures of their favorite fruits and vegetables. Be sure they are labeled with the name of the food.
- Play “Go Get Breakfast” (a version of “Go Fish”) using the Fruit and Vegetable cards. Children can match each fruit or vegetable into sets of two. See Module 2 for complete directions.
- Play “Complete the Breakfast.” Separate the cards into food groups. Select one card each from the Grains, Milk, and Meat/Bean groups to represent a breakfast. Ask the children what group they would add for a more complete, healthy breakfast (Fruit or Vegetable). Ask for names of specific fruits or vegetables they could add to make the breakfast complete. Help children understand the concept of choices and variety within the Fruit group and Vegetable group.

Choose different cards from the Grains, Milk, and Meat/Bean groups and repeat the game.

Food Activity: Veggie Art

This activity will allow children to use their imaginations to create an artistic picture using small bites of vegetables. After sharing, they may sample their creations.

1. All children and instructors should thoroughly wash hands with hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds (for the duration of the A-B-C song).
2. Set up a clean table “assembly-line” style with the ingredients and serving utensils listed above in the “What You Will Need” section.
3. Instruct the children to select a variety of pieces of vegetables to make their own picture. It could be a house, flower, animal face, landscape, or anything they imagine.
 - Each child should start with a plate.
 - Use the serving utensils to add pieces of vegetables they will use to make their imagined picture.
 - Arrange the pieces on their plate.
 - Share their creations with others. Taste and enjoy!

APPLY

Try the following:

- Encourage children to include a fruit or vegetable at breakfast every day and keep track of their progress using the individual “My Breakfast Every Day” calendar. Keeping records can be a great boost to behavior change.
- Fill in the student names and display the classroom poster “Breakfast Every Day!”. Explain that you will place a sticker, stamp or mark by their name for every day they report eating breakfast.
- Ask children to share the “Breakfast Bites” newsletter with their parents and try the **Rabbit Pancakes** recipe at home.

REFLECT

Veggie Art

Ask the children:

- Why is it important to keep your work area clean when you are making food?
- What ingredients did you use in your picture?
- Did you taste the vegetables you used? Were any of them new tastes for you?
- Will you make this again at home?
- What different ingredients would you like to use another time?

Going Further

1. Send home copies of “**Breakfast Bites**,” an activity-based newsletter for parents and children to share.
2. Reinforce breakfast concepts every day with a “60 seconds” activity. Some ideas:
 - Sing one of the songs about breakfast.
 - Ask, “What’s your favorite fruit to eat at breakfast?”
 - Ask, “What’s your favorite vegetable to eat at breakfast?”
 - Fill in the blank: If I could eat any fruit or vegetable for breakfast, I would eat _____.
 - Ask, “Does anyone help prepare breakfast at home?”
3. Make stickers on precut peel-and-stick computer labels that share the messages from this lesson, i.e., “Fruit for Breakfast,” “Fruits & Veggies—A Colorful Start.” Give them to the children to wear.

4. More Reading About Eating:

Oliver’s Vegetables, by Vivian French (©1995, Orchard Books)

Oliver doesn’t like vegetables until he visits his Grandpa’s farm and discovers a variety of fresh garden vegetables.

Oliver’s Fruit Salad, by Vivian French (©1998, Orchard Books)

Although he loves to help Grandpa pick fresh fruit, Oliver will not eat any until one day Mom prepares something very special in a big glass bowl.

Oliver’s Milkshake, by Vivian French (©2001, Orchard Books)

In this story, Oliver visits a dairy farm with his aunt and cousin. They make a delicious milkshake from fresh milk, blueberries, a banana, and ice (a fruit smoothie, really).

Handa’s Surprise, by Eileen Browne (©1994, Mantra Publishing Ltd.)

Handa puts a variety of fruits in a basket and sets off to her friend’s house, carrying the basket on her head as is traditional in Africa. Unknown to Handa, some interesting things happen along the way, and Handa’s surprise is the contents of the basket when she arrives to share fruit with her friend.

How Groundhog’s Garden Grew, by Lynne Cherry (©2003, The Blue Sky Press)

Wonderful illustrations show how the garden grew, above and below the soil. Groundhog and his animal friends enjoy tending and eating the results.

Rabbit Food, by Susanna Gretz (©1999, Candlewick Press)

John is a young rabbit who doesn’t like vegetables (“rabbit food”). Uncle Bunny comes to the rescue, except he tries to hide the fact that he doesn’t like carrots!

The Ugly Vegetables, by Grace Lin (©1999, Charlesbridge Publishing)

A tale about a little girl who thinks her mother’s Chinese vegetable garden is ugly, especially compared to the neighbor’s flower gardens. She changes her mind after her mother makes a delicious soup from the vegetables. Recipe included.

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Teacher/Leader Resource Pages

Vary Your Veggies and Focus on Fruits

Fruits and vegetables contain many beneficial nutrients and are particularly high in vitamin A, vitamin C, folate, potassium and fiber (see glossary for definitions and sources). Fruits and vegetables also contain a whole array of natural chemicals termed “phytochemicals,” which promote good health in ways that scientists are just beginning to understand. People who eat mostly plant-based diets tend to have a lower incidence of obesity, cancer and heart disease.

The 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that school-age children eat about 1½ cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables each day. Diets rich in fruits and vegetables can help children maintain healthy weight, as most are naturally low in fat and calories and are filling. Unfortunately, USDA surveys show that less than half of children ages 6 to 11 eat the recommended portions of fruits and vegetables each day.

More Fruits and Vegetables at Breakfast!

Kids who eat breakfast are more likely to eat more fruits and vegetables each day. School breakfast provides a variety of choices, including a fruit, vegetable or 100% juice serving each morning.

Teaching Tips

- There are two calendars to track the children’s breakfast. The classroom “Breakfast Every Day!” poster can be posted for everyone to see. Fill in students’ names and explain that you will place a colored mark or sticker by their name for every day they report eating breakfast. Alternately, each child can keep an individual “My Breakfast Every Day” calendar.

The calendars serve two purposes in this program. The most important goal is to motivate and remind children to eat breakfast every day. A secondary goal is to evaluate the impact that this curriculum has on the breakfast patterns of students. To gain data without right or wrong answers, three colors of markers or stickers could indicate whether the child (1) ate at home, (2) ate at school, or (3) is waiting until lunch to eat. Use the

Universal Breakfast in Oregon

Universal Breakfast is served in more than 100 Oregon schools. “Universal” means that all breakfast meals are served at no charge—*free*—to all students in the school. This program is also called “Provisions,” and was enacted by Congress in an effort to reduce paperwork at the local level.

Besides reducing administrative burden, Universal Breakfast removes the free and reduced-price “stigma” surrounding school meals. Another very important benefit is the potential for improving academic outcomes of students.

For more information regarding Universal Breakfast, contact the Oregon Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs, at 503-378-3600 ext. 2614.

The Food Stamp Program can help families buy nutritious foods. To find out more, call Oregon SafeNet at 1-800-SAFENET (723-3638) or (503) 988-5858 in the Portland metro area.

LESSON ENHANCEMENT IDEAS

- Ask students to write a story and/or draw a picture about a fruit or vegetable garden.
- Have students create their own breakfast game using the “Breakfast Mix-N-Match” cards.
- Ask students to create another verse for one of the songs.
- Read *Oliver’s Milk Shake* to the group and make fruit smoothies in class. Try the following recipe:

A Berry Good Smoothie!

Ingredients:

1 can (20 ounces) crushed pineapple in juice, undrained

2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries

1½ cups ice cubes

1 carton (6–8 ounces) lemon or other fruit-flavored low-fat yogurt

In blender container, combine all ingredients; process until smooth. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Makes 4–6 servings.

same colors for the entire tracking period. You can add a key to indicate the meaning of each color.

- Be a good role model! Talk about what you ate for breakfast, your favorite breakfast foods, what you eat when you're in a hurry, etc.
- Reinforce breakfast and nutrition concepts in your classroom all year long. Incorporate some or all of the suggested "60 seconds a day" activities into your regular classroom routine.
- **Keep it Clean & Safe**
If you plan to prepare food in your classroom, be sure to handle food safely. Reinforce and demonstrate the importance of hand washing, clean food preparation areas and proper storage of foods. The "**Fight Bac**" site is a good resource for food safety education materials and resources. The site is located at <http://www.fightbac.org/>

Helpful Websites

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

The Produce for Better Health Foundation hosts this site. The site includes resources and links for both kids and educators.

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/>

This site includes a calculator to determine how many cups you need daily and show what counts as a cup.

<http://www.dole5aday.com>

This excellent site is highly interactive, packed with nutrition lesson ideas and even features an encyclopedia of fruit and vegetable information.

Glossary

Fruits and vegetables are rich in many nutrients, especially the key nutrients described below:

Vitamin A: Essential for healthy eyes, smooth skin, shiny hair, and healthy bones, teeth and gums. Dark green and deep orange vegetables are especially good sources of beta-carotene, a vitamin A precursor and antioxidant that helps to prevent cell and tissue damage.

Vitamin C: Helps hold cells together, promotes healing of wounds and bone fractures, increases resistance to infection, and increases the amount of iron absorbed from certain foods. Vegetables rich in vitamin C include broccoli, peppers, Brussels sprouts, potatoes, spinach and tomatoes.

Folate: Present in dark green leafy vegetables, is needed for healthy blood cells and is important for cell division, such as in pregnancy and growth.

Potassium: Responsible for maintaining the heart beat, regulating fluid balance, and regulating nerve transmission and muscle contractions. Since potassium is lost in sweat, exercise and hot weather will increase the requirement. Bananas and oranges are especially rich sources of potassium.

Fiber: Fruits and vegetables are a rich source of fiber, especially when the skin or peelings are eaten. Most notable for its role in bowel function, certain fibers also help to modify blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

References

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2. USDA Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals, 1994-96.