

Start Smart Eating & Reading

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

Module Four: Grains Get You Going!

Lesson Overview

This lesson focuses on the role that grains play in providing energy to the brain and body. Through reading and discussion of *Good Morning, Little Fox*, children learn the importance of trying new foods (in this case, oatmeal) and also the important link between food and family.

After the story, children can participate in one or more activities, including a no-cook food activity, an activity sheet that helps them identify grain-based foods, a “many-grain bread” maze and a “seed to bread” sequencing activity based on *The Little Red Hen*. Finally, the children can apply these concepts as they track their daily breakfast habits.

Objectives

Children will:

- Discover that grains supply energy to the body for both thinking and moving
- Identify foods that belong in the Grain Group
- Participate in activities that help them discover and identify grains and grain-based foods
- Keep track of daily breakfast consumption

What you will need

 = As time allows

To Teach and Supplement the Lesson:

1. Teacher/Leader Resource Page
2. *Good Morning, Little Fox* by Marilyn Janovitz (©2001, North-South Books)
3. Breakfast Every Day! classroom poster
4. *The Little Red Hen* (author and publishers vary) ⌚
5. Breakfast Mix-n-Match cards ⌚
6. **Reproducible Handouts:**
 - B-R-E-A-K-F-A-S-T! Rap / Let's Eat Breakfast ⌚
 - For Your Breakfast ⌚
 - Breakfast Song ⌚
 - Many-Grain Bread (maze) ⌚
 - Grains Feed Brains ⌚
 - Grains From Seed to Bread ⌚
 - My Breakfast Every Day individual calendar ⌚
 - “Breakfast Bites” (parent newsletter) ⌚
7. **Recorded Music:**
 - Breakfast Rap, Let's Eat Breakfast, For Your Breakfast, Breakfast Song ⌚

For the Food Activity (Grain-ola): ⌚

- A variety of whole grain cold breakfast cereals, made of different grains (aim for the cereals with less than 5 grams of sugar per serving)
- Quick-cooking oatmeal
- Low-fat granola cereal

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!”

Some or all of the following:

- Peanuts
- Almonds
- Raisins
- Dried apricots
- Dried cranberry raisins

Equipment/Supplies:

- Bowls (for ingredients)
- Serving spoons/utensils for ingredient bowls
- Zippered plastic bags (one for each student)

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. Allow them to briefly share their experiences, including the type of foods eaten and the reasons that maybe some children didn't have anything to eat.

Ask the children if they know what a grain is. Together, list examples of foods made from grain (e.g., breads, cereals, rice, oats, pasta, pancakes, waffles, tortillas, cornbread).

Explain that grains are an important breakfast food because they supply energy for both thinking and moving.

DO

1. Read the book, *Good Morning, Little Fox* 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: 🎧

Grains Feed Brains

Students identify the grain foods in breakfast menus. The concept that grains give the body energy to think and move is reinforced in this activity sheet.

Many-Grain Bread (maze)

Students identify five types of grains in this slice of bread. Children are encouraged to look for grain foods when they visit the grocery store.

Grains From Seed to Bread

This activity helps children develop their sequencing skills. Using the story of *The Little Red Hen*, they learn how a grain of wheat becomes bread.

Breakfast Mix-n-Match Cards

Use the breakfast cards to help children identify foods made from grains and incorporate them into breakfast choices.

REFLECT

Good Morning, Little Fox

Ask the children:

- Mother Fox prepared porridge for the family. Do you know what porridge is? (answer: hot cereal, most often oatmeal)
- What happens when Father Fox decides he “doesn’t think he likes porridge”? How does Little Fox respond?
- Have you ever decided whether you liked a food before you tasted it?
- Have you ever been surprised by the taste of a new food?
- Whose idea was it to try the porridge?
- Have you ever set a good example for others by trying new foods?
- What kind of food is oatmeal? (answer: a grain). Did you know that grains are a good way to give your body energy? What are some ways you use energy?

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

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

Food Activity: Grain-ola

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 with the ingredients listed above in the “What You Will Need” section.
3. Instruct students to create their own Grain-ola:
 - Give each student a zippered plastic bag.
 - Encourage students to add a spoon of the different cereals, grains, nuts and fruits to their bag.
 - Once the ingredients are selected, instruct children to close and shake the bag gently.
 - The grain-ola can be eaten as a breakfast/snack mix or eaten in a cereal bowl with milk.

APPLY

Try the following:

- Encourage children to “practice” eating 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 make whole-grain “Good Morning Muffins” together at home.

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.
 - Discuss the school breakfast menu. Ask students to identify menu items that are made from grains.

REFLECT

Grain-ola

Ask the children:

- Do you know why it’s not a good idea to share bites of food with your classmates?
- What ingredients did you use in your grain-ola?
- How many different types of grains did you include? Name them.
- Will you make this recipe again at home?
- What different ingredients would you like to try next time?

- Ask, “Does anyone know what part of the plant grains are?” (Answer: Grains are seeds. This makes sense because seeds store the energy needed to help young plants get started.)
 - Ask, “Since we are learning how grains give our body energy, what are some of your favorite ways to **use** your energy?”
3. Make stickers on precut peel-and-stick computer labels that share the messages from this lesson, i.e., “Grains Get You Going,” “Grains Give You Energy.” Give them to the children to wear.

4. More Reading About Eating:

Bread, Bread, Bread, by Ann Morris and Ken Heyman, (©1993, Morrow, William & Co.)

Simple text and wonderful photographs show people eating, baking and selling bread in countries around the world.

Bread Is for Eating, by David and Phillis Gershator, (©1995, Henry Holt & Co., Inc.)

All phases of bread production are presented with colorful characters and illustrations in a multicultural format. The phrase “El pan es para comer” (translation: Bread is so good to eat) is repeated throughout with the complete song included at the end.

The Little Red Hen (Makes a Pizza!), by Philemon Sturges (©1999, Dutton Children’s Books)

The industrious Little Red Hen is back with a modern spin—this whimsical and updated version is entertaining and also a good excuse to make a pizza from scratch.

Pancakes, Pancakes, by Eric Carle (©1998, Aladdin Paperbacks)

This delightful book describes in detail where the ingredients for pancakes come from. Jack wants a pancake so bad, he agrees to mill the wheat, milk the cow, gather the egg and much more!

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Teacher/Leader Resource Page

Carbohydrates: Energy for Body & Mind

Carbohydrate is the preferred energy source for our bodies. It fuels the work of most of the body's cells and is the primary energy source for the brain and nerves.

While we need energy for playing, sports and exercise, we also use energy just to keep alive. With each breath, heartbeat or blink of the eyes, we are “spending” energy. In fact, our body's first and most important need is for energy.

Complex carbohydrates, found in grains, beans, fruits and vegetables supply our body with an optimal fuel source. These foods also supply fiber, an indigestible carbohydrate important for health. Sugars, also known as simple carbohydrates, supply a quick but short-lived source of energy.

The more active the child, the more carbohydrate is needed in the diet to fuel the work of the brain, nervous system and muscles. Fatigue, “burn out,” and lack of stamina can all be signs that body carbohydrate stores are low. Including a source of complex carbohydrate at breakfast fuels brain cells for optimal learning throughout the morning hours.

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 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.
- BreakFAST & Jump To It! is a great web-based game for kids that emphasizes the importance of eating a balanced breakfast. You can access it at <http://www.dairycouncilofca.org/activities/breakfast.htm>
- 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

LESSON ENHANCEMENT IDEAS

- When presenting this module to your students, be sure to emphasize the importance of including whole grains every day. (See “Whole Grains Q & A” for background information).
- Show students a diagram of a whole grain kernel. Point out how many of the nutrients are located in the bran and germ parts of the wheat. These are lost in processing when grains are refined. You can access a graphic of a wheat kernel at <http://www.wheatfoods.org/Resource-Professionals/Index.htm>. Click on “Images.”
- Work with your school foodservice director to highlight a variety of grain choices. Encourage the use of less commonly used grains such as couscous, barley, whole wheat pasta and brown rice.
- Have students make their own “Good Morning” breakfast place mats that illustrate the importance of a healthy breakfast.
- Ask students to create another verse for one of the songs.

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/>

Whole Grains Q & A

Children ages 6 to 11 need 6 ounces of grain foods each day. For optimal health, make half of those grains (3 ounces) whole grains! The following information provides background for teaching about the importance of whole grains. For more information on what counts as an ounce equivalent of grains, see www.MyPyramid.gov.

What’s a whole grain?

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel (rich in fiber and other nutrients) while refined or “enriched” grains have the outer covering and germ removed, leaving only the starchy endosperm. By law, refined grains have to be enriched with B vitamins and iron since most of these nutrients are lost in processing.

To see a graphic of a wheat kernel up close, visit:

<http://www.wheatfoods.org/Resource-Professionals/Index.htm>. Click on “Posters” or “Images.”

What’s the advantage of eating whole grains?

Whole grains are superior to refined grains because they include additional fiber, vitamins, minerals and hundreds of beneficial phytochemicals. Regular consumption of whole grains is important for digestive health, reduces the rate of coronary heart disease and decreases the risk of several types of cancer. Surveys show that most Americans are lucky to consume even one serving of whole grains daily.

What are some examples of whole grains?

- Bread made from 100% whole wheat flour (it should be the first ingredient on the label)
- Bulgur (cracked wheat)
- Brown rice
- Oatmeal
- Stone-ground corn meal or grits (not the degerminated varieties)
- Cereals made from wheat bran

Is it important for children to eat whole grain foods?

Children also benefit from the nutrient boost that whole grains provide. Most American children eat very few servings of whole grains and prefer products made from refined flours. When children are offered whole grains beginning at a young age, they get used to the coarser texture of whole-grain breads and cereals.

Examples of whole-grain “kid-friendly” cereals currently on the market include Wheat Chex, Wheaties, Cheerios, Frosted Mini Wheats and Cinnamon Life. All of these cereals contain 51% or more whole grain ingredients by weight.

References

Slavin, J.L., Jacobs, D., Marquart, L., and Wiemer, K. The role of whole grains in disease prevention. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 101(7):780–5, July 2001.

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.