



EXPLORING Healthy Foods



TEACHER TOOLKIT



Exploring Healthy Foods

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Getting the Most out of the HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit

Welcome to the World of Words! The HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit was developed to facilitate children's natural instincts to learn about the world around them while building vocabulary and developing language, comprehension, and self-learning skills.

The Teacher Toolkit contains engaging lessons and activities that easily integrate into your classroom day.

How do the lessons work?

Each lesson is divided into a three-part conversation between you and your class. The Teacher Toolkit provides conversation prompts for you to follow through each section of the lesson.



PART 1: Talk Together

Talk Together:

The conversations during this time are designed to introduce and review concepts and vocabulary, pique children's interest in learning new information, and introduce the shared book.



PART 2: Read Together

Read Together:

The conversations during this time are focused around the shared reading book.



PART 3: Reflect Together

Reflect Together:

The conversations during this time are designed to reflect on what was read, develop background knowledge, and build understanding of the Big Ideas.

Getting the Most out of the HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit

Where can I find the Big Ideas, Learning Outcomes, and Vocabulary Words?

The At a Glance section is the foundation for the lessons in the unit. It starts by identifying the BIG IDEAS of science that children will be developing an understanding of during the unit. These cross-cutting themes of science focus on learning about life science, biology, physical science, and earth science. This learning builds the background knowledge and foundation for children's future learning.

Following the BIG IDEAS are the LEARNING OUTCOMES for the unit. These are specific concepts related to the topic that children will learn during the unit. The LEARNING OUTCOMES come from the BIG IDEAS.

The last part of the At a Glance section is the VOCABULARY section. The vocabulary words include words that are specific to the LEARNING OUTCOMES, as well as words that develop children's understanding of the BIG IDEAS. The vocabulary words have picture cards are featured with cameras.

What is the Curriculum Notes section on each lesson for?

The Curriculum Notes section holds additional information to guide and enrich lessons. These sections highlight the relevant book and picture cards for each lesson. There are also teaching strategies and tips included to further support implementation.

Exploring HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit

- Teacher Guide with lessons, hands-on activities, and family engagement activities
- A set of Picture Cards with definitions and teacher talk prompts on the back
- A learning poster featuring the Learning Outcomes for the unit
- 5 Books about HEALTHY FOODS
- Extension activities for the classroom
- A note and activity for families

What books come with the HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit?

The five books that come in the Teacher Toolkit are listed on the lesson planner page. The list identifies the type of text structure for each book as predictable (PB), narrative informational (NB), or informational (IB). Each lesson also has extension activities that teachers can incorporate throughout the unit and information and activities that can be sent to families.



Predictable

A predictable book repeats words, phrases, rhymes, or patterns that help children guess what will happen or be said next in the story.



Narrative Informational

A narrative informational book teaches real facts and information while also telling a story.



Informational

An informational book teaches children real facts and information about a topic.

Getting the Most out of the HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit

How do I use the Picture Cards?

Picture cards are used during every lesson. They are used to teach new information, as discussion prompts, and for activities. Using picture cards is an excellent Dual Language Learner strategy that builds the connections between verbal and visual skills.

The picture card words are selected from the vocabulary words for the unit. To identify which vocabulary words have picture cards, look for the camera icon beside the word.

The following information is given on the back of each picture card:

- The word and pronunciation guide in English and Spanish (Spanish words are in red)
- A child-friendly definition
- *Talking About* discussion prompts



How do I use the Learning Outcomes Poster?

The Learning Outcomes Poster should be displayed in the area where the children gather for lessons. During the unit, the poster is used for different lessons. The poster serves as an important visual cue for children to remember the science concepts that they are learning.

How long does it take to complete all of the lessons in the Teacher Toolkit?

The lessons in the unit are designed to be completed over a 2-3 week period. During this time, the children are engaged in whole group lessons led by the teacher. These lessons build background knowledge and vocabulary while teaching the unit's Learning Outcomes and Big Ideas.

During the unit and in the weeks following, we encourage teachers to engage children in the suggested independent and small group Discover More! Extension Activities. These activities promote children's development of self-learning skills as they apply and extend what they learned during the lessons.

Getting the Most out of the HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit

How much time do I need to schedule for a lesson?

Each lesson takes about 12-15 minutes.

Are there take-home activities?

The Teacher Toolkit has two Family Engagement components. There is a Family WOW Refrigerator Note that tells families what topic their child will be reading about, provides the learning outcomes for the unit, and gives suggestions for ways they can support their child's learning.

There is also a family extension activity sheet that should be sent home at the end of the unit. These activities are for families to do together as a learning extension. During the activities, your children will share and celebrate what they have learned about the topic with their families. The refrigerator note and family extension activities are available in English and Spanish.

Family Extension Activities Healthy Recipes!

Cooking some simple healthy recipes in the kitchen is an easy fun way for families to extend the healthy food unit at home. Cooking healthy food with preschoolers is a wonderfully hands-on way to teach math, science, and language skills while also building positive attitudes toward nutritious eating that can last a lifetime.

WOW Refrigerator Note

WOW! We are reading and learning about healthy foods right now. During the next few weeks, you can help your child by asking them about healthy foods and helping them discover new things about healthy foods. Talking about the healthy foods will reinforce what your child is learning in the classroom.

- Ask your child to tell you about why eating healthy foods is important.
- Try a new fruit or vegetable each week. Have your child take a picture or draw a picture to share in class. Help them learn the name and describe how it tasted or any other information about it.
- Every few days, ask your child to tell you about what food groups they are learning about in school. Have your child work with you to prepare a healthy meal.
- Go to the library and check out a book about healthy foods. Read the book with your child, stopping to talk about the pictures.
- Try to make one of the recipes from the next page at home.

Post this note on your refrigerator to remind you to talk about healthy foods with your child.

Thanks! 

Ants
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Fruit Smoothie: Blend mixed berries, bananas, yogurt, and a little honey for a delicious and healthy drink preschoolers can make themselves.

What other resources do I need?

Your Teacher Toolkit includes all of the essential instructional tools for successful lessons. Some additional resources that can enhance instruction include:

- **Books:** Make a resource library of books about HEALTHY FOODS by gathering any books that you have in your classroom library and/or checking out additional books from the library. Use these books throughout the day to read aloud or for children to browse.
- **Videos:** Find websites about HEALTHY FOODS to share with children. On PBS kids, Sid the Science Kid has an episode about healthy food. <https://pbskids.org/videos/sid-the-science-kid>
- **Music:** Put together a collection of songs and poems about HEALTHY FOODS. Singing a song or saying a poem about HEALTHY FOODS is a great way to start a lesson. Preschoolers will enjoy good foods by Jack Hartman.
- **Art:** Print images from the Internet or cut out pictures from old cooking magazines of HEALTHY FOODS. Have these pictures available for children to use at different centers.

Exploring HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit AT A GLANCE



BIG IDEAS

The overarching science concepts children will learn:

- HEALTHY FOODS are essential for supporting the life and health of living things.
- We need a balance of HEALTHY FOODS to meet our nutritional needs.
- HEALTHY FOODS have ways of protecting themselves.
- HEALTHY FOODS give our body energy.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

In these lessons, children will learn that:

- Fruits, vegetables, and grains are types of HEALTHY FOODS.
- Protein and dairy are types of HEALTHY FOODS.
- Eating food from all FOOD groups keeps us HEALTHY.

ABC

In the lessons, children will build vocabulary for:

(Vocabulary words with a camera icon have a picture card)



Words that relate to HEALTHY FOOD:

carrot 

vegetables 

grapes 

fruit 

cereal 

grain 

milk 

dairy 

protein 

beans 

Words that help us talk about HEALTHY FOOD:

nutritional

balanced diet

energy

fresh

Challenge Words:

cake 

french fries 

juice 

pizza 



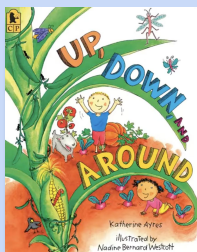
Getting the Most out of the HEALTHY FOODS Teacher Toolkit

LESSON PLANNER

Lesson 1

Week 1

Predictable



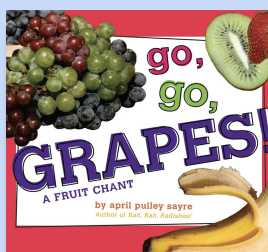
Up, Down, and Around
by Katherine Ayres

Key Vocabulary:
carrot, vegetable

Lesson 2

Week 1

Predictable



Go, Go Grapes!
by April Pulley Sayre

Key Vocabulary:
carrot, vegetable, grapes, fruit

Lesson 3

Week 2

Narrative Informational



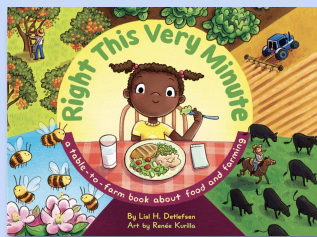
Choose Good Food!
by Gina Bellisario

Key Vocabulary:
carrot, vegetable, grapes, fruit,
cereal, grain

Lesson 4

Week 2

Informational



Right This Very Minute
by Lisl Detlefsen

Key Vocabulary:
milk, dairy, challenge cards

Lesson 5

Week 2/3

Informational



MyPlate and You
by Gillia Olson

Key Vocabulary:
protein, beans, challenge cards,
all HEALTHY FOODS vocabulary

Lesson 6

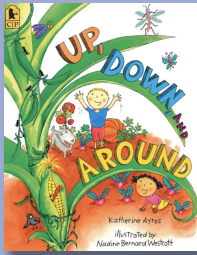
Week 3



Select three favorite HEALTHY FOODS books to reread this week with the children.

Revisit all HEALTHY FOODS vocabulary as you relate vocabulary to Big Ideas.

SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- carrot, vegetables

CURRICULUM NOTES

Consider showing DLL children in your class videos about HEALTHY FOODS prior to the start of a text set or lesson. This may be done during center time. Frontloading new vocabulary prior to a lesson supports DLL children so there is less new vocabulary to learn during the lesson.



Talk Together

Start today's lesson by saying: *Today we'll begin learning about **HEALTHY FOODS**. Good eating and nutrition are important because they keep us energized and healthy.*

Show the picture cards of the **CARROT** and the **VEGETABLES**. Point to the picture cards and say: *These are carrots, which are a type of vegetable. Vegetables are **HEALTHY** for our bodies. Our bodies need plenty of vegetables every day to stay **HEALTHY**.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *Today's book is full of pictures of **HEALTHY FOODS**. Let's see what types of vegetables we can name.*

Read Together

Read together the predictable book: **Up, Down, and Around**. Encourage children to read along with you and enjoy saying the names of HEALTHY FOODS.

Reflect Together

Ask the children: *Why is it important to have fresh food? Why is fresh food **HEALTHY**? What types of vegetables do you like the most?*

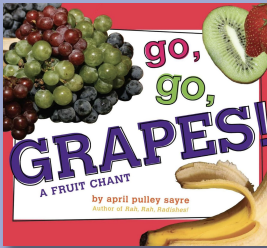
[If they mention an unhealthy food, this becomes a great opportunity for an informal lesson.]

Discuss their favorite HEALTHY FOODS. Then, re-read **Up, Down, and Around** and review how important nutrition is for children's health and well-being.

Allow children to listen to songs about HEALTHY FOODS, if available.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- carrot, vegetables, grapes, fruit

CURRICULUM NOTES

Talk Together

This part of the lesson provides children with a focus on the category.

- Choral responses ensure that all children participate in an activity (expressive language).
- Yes/no and one-word answers let you know right away whether children understand the information you have taught them.
- For this reason, only present the information you want the children to recall.

DID YOU KNOW?

Fruits & Vegetables

Fruits are any seed-bearing plant while vegetables are roots, leaves, and stems. When cooking and eating the lines between fruits and vegetables are often less clear. While a tomato is technically a fruit, since it has seeds, we often think of it as a vegetable since it is not sweet.

Talk Together

Start today's lesson by saying: *Today, we're going to learn more about **HEALTHY FOODS**, which give us energy to work and play. Let's think about some of our **HEALTHY FOODS**.*

Show the picture cards of the **GRAPES** and the **FRUIT**. Point to the picture cards and say: *Grapes are a type of fruit. There are many different types of fruits. Fruits and vegetables are **HEALTHY** for our bodies. Our bodies need plenty of fruits every day to stay **HEALTHY**.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *Our book today shows a large variety of different types of fruit. Some of these fruits may be familiar to you, and some may be brand new. Let's discover more **HEALTHY FOODS** as we read together.*

Read Together

Read the predictable book: *Go, Go, Grapes! A Fruit Chant*. Try not to stop as you read this book for the first time; this will let you enjoy the chanting rhythm, alliteration, and cadence of the book as you read.

Reflect Together

Ask the children: *What kinds of fruit did we see in the book? Let's talk about them. What are some of your favorite fruits? Did you find any new ones in our book? Why are fruits good for you?* [They are fresh and give us energy.]

Reread *Go, Go, Grapes! A Fruit Chant*. Review picture cards as time allows.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- carrot, vegetables, grapes, fruit, cereal, grain

CURRICULUM NOTES

Talk together

During class interactions, frequently use the key words highlighted in the lesson such as **vegetables, carrot, fruits, grapes, grain, and cereal**.

Young children will benefit from hearing new words in a variety of natural settings and in different ways.



Talk Together

Start today's lesson by saying: *We're learning all about HEALTHY FOODS. Let's recall some of our HEALTHY FOODS. Apples, grapes, and raspberries are types of fruit; corn and carrots are types of vegetables. Today we're going to learn about another type of HEALTHY FOOD: grains.*

Show the picture card of the **CEREAL** and the **GRAIN**. Point to the picture cards and say: *This is cereal, which is another HEALTHY FOOD. Cereal is a type of grain. Rice is another type of grain. So, in addition to fruits and vegetables, we need grains like rice and cereal to stay HEALTHY.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *Today's book is about HEALTHY FOODS and making good, nutritional food choices when we are in the grocery store. Let's look for the fruits, vegetables, and grains as we read.*

Read Together

Read together the narrative informational book: **Choose Good Food!** As you read, point to the pictures and stop and ask questions: *What type of fruit treat did they buy that was better for their bodies than cookies?* [Raisins.] *What is Lucas' favorite snack from the grain group?* [Popcorn.] *What did Lucas' father buy from the vegetable group?* [Spinach.]

Reflect Together

Compare and contrast different HEALTHY FOODS. Show the picture cards and ask:

How are a carrot and a grape alike?

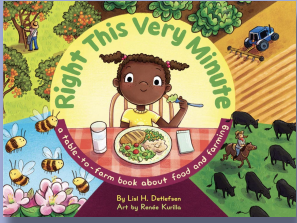
[They are both HEALTHY FOODS.]

How are a grape and cereal different?

[A grape is a fruit and cereal is a grain.]

Continue to compare and contrast other HEALTHY FOODS as time allows.

SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- milk, dairy, all picture cards used in prior lessons, and challenge cards

CURRICULUM NOTES

Think Time

Pause for at least three extra seconds between asking a question and receiving student responses. This provides ample time for children to consider their response and is especially helpful for DLL children.

Talk Together

Show the picture cards from prior lessons and say: *We've been learning about **HEALTHY FOODS** and how important it is to fill your body with foods that give you energy. Tell me what you remember about **HEALTHY FOODS**.*

Make sure all the key concepts listed on pg. 7 are covered.

Show the picture cards of **MILK** and **DAIRY**. Point to the picture card and say: *Dairy foods, such as cheese and yogurt, are made from milk. Our bodies need dairy foods to stay **HEALTHY**. It is good to have a balance of **HEALTHY FOODS** from the different food groups, including fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein. A balanced diet keeps us **HEALTHY**.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *In this book, you'll hear about all the different food groups and the importance of eating a balanced diet.*

Read Together

Read together the informational book: **Right This Very Minute**. Throughout the reading, stop and ask the children questions about the text: *What are the five main food groups?* [Protein, Vegetables, Fruits, Grains, and Dairy] *Why do we need to eat a balanced diet?* [To keep us healthy.] *How does this keep us **HEALTHY**?* [Gives our body nutrients.]

Reflect Together

Time for a challenge: Mix and display all the picture cards (including the challenge cards) and say: *Let's play a game. I'm going to hold up a picture, and you will need to tell me whether it's a **HEALTHY FOOD** or not. You'll have to think hard about what you've learned about **HEALTHY FOODS**. Ready? Let's go.*

Hold up the picture card of the **pizza**. Point to the picture card and say: *Is **pizza** a **HEALTHY FOOD**?*

Elicit responses and encourage children to give you a rationale using the key concepts listed earlier.

Continue using the challenge cards - **CAKE, FRENCH FRIES, JUICE** - as well as picture cards from past lessons.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- protein, beans, all picture cards used in prior lessons, and challenge cards

CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect together

Keep the activity moving to support children's engagement. However, if you notice that some children are not catching on to different concepts or vocabulary, interact separately with them during center times using key vocabulary. Or reread one of the books with them and have a discussion.

Why do it this way? In this part of the lesson, you are asking open-ended questions. These questions extend learning and provide opportunities for children to use vocabulary. Nonetheless, the discussions are very much guided because the responses are anchored in the book and text set concepts.

Talk Together

Start today's lesson by displaying the picture cards from prior lessons and saying: *We've been learning about HEALTHY FOODS. Tell me what you remember about HEALTHY FOODS.*

Show the picture card of the **PROTEIN** and **BEANS**. Point to the picture cards and say: *Today we have two new words - protein and beans. Beans are a type of protein. Proteins build, maintain, and replace the tissues in your body to help keep you healthy.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *Today's book describes many of the HEALTHY FOODS we have been reading and talking about. Together these HEALTHY FOODS give us a balanced diet.*

Read Together

Read together the informational book: **My Plate and You**. As you read together, show the children each page and use the pictures to help them review the names of HEALTHY FOODS, the five main food groups, and key concepts.

Reflect Together

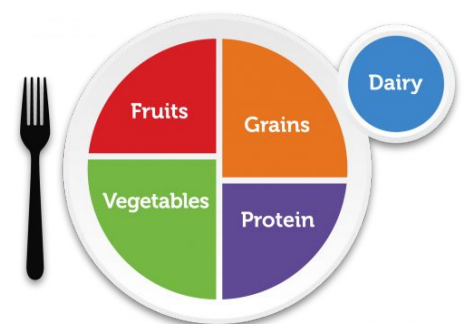
Say: *We've read a lot about HEALTHY FOODS. Let's talk more about our topic: Why is it important to eat nutritious meals? How can eating a balanced diet help you? Can you describe your favorite food? What type of food is it? What might you want to learn more about?*

Say: *On your paper, draw a picture that shows something you have learned about HEALTHY FOODS.*

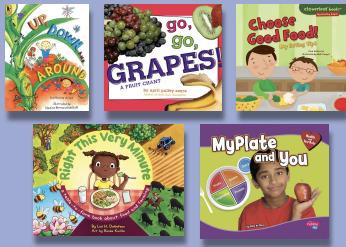
Encourage children to summarize what they know by drawing a picture or writing ('driting') about their favorite HEALTHY FOOD. Allow the children to share their drawings with others and talk about what they have learned.

Have all the books from this unit available for the children to view independently if they desire.

Review all of the HEALTHY FOOD picture cards as time allows.



SHARED READING:



CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect Together

Turn-and-Talk: A great strategy to get more children's voices involved in the lesson is to ask a question, provide think time, and then have children discuss their opinions in pairs. This provides all children with an opportunity to use the vocabulary and the teacher with the opportunity to move around and check for understanding.

Consider showing the children in your class one of SciShow's videos: *The 5 Fabulous Food Groups* which is available on Youtube. Providing children with diverse ways of interacting with content allows them more opportunities to internalize the material. You may incorporate this into the lesson or use the video as an extension activity.



Talk Together

Keep the books, the picture cards, and the students' writings/drawings about HEALTHY FOOD on display in the classroom.

Say: ***Let's revisit what we've learned about HEALTHY FOOD. What can you tell me about HEALTHY FOOD?***

[Encourage the children to revisit the vocabulary and key concepts, relating them to the Big Ideas.]

Revisit the books by saying: ***Let's select three of our favorite HEALTHY FOOD books to reread this week. Which book would you like us to read today? What do you recall about HEALTHY FOOD from this book?***

[Allow the children to select the daily books to reflect, recall, and reread].

Read Together

Read the selected book(s). Discuss the books together as you use the text to make connections to the Big Ideas listed on pg. 7.

Reflect Together

Compare and contrast different HEALTHY FOODS. Then, ask the following questions to deepen children's understanding of HEALTHY FOODS:

Essential to the life and health of living things: ***What foods help our bodies stay HEALTHY, and which foods can cause problems for our bodies if we eat them too often?***

[Teachers can create a chart depicting HEALTHY FOODS and unHEALTHY FOODS mentioned in the text.]

Balanced Diet: ***Why is it important to eat a balance of different types of HEALTHY FOODS?***

[Draw a food pyramid or My Plate showing a balance of HEALTHY FOODS as shown in the text.]

Providing the body with energy: ***What types of foods give our bodies energy? Why is this important? How do other living things (other animals or plants) get energy?***

Continue investigating HEALTHY FOODS. Explore unfamiliar HEALTHY FOODS by visiting a local farm or farmers' market and/or set up a HEALTHY FOOD center.

Ask: ***What would happen to our bodies if we didn't have access to HEALTHY FOODS?***

Fun Facts About Healthy Foods

Discover More! Extension Activities

- Circle Time
- Dramatic Play
- Classroom Cooking
- Science and Discovery Center
- Writing and Art Center
- Field Trips

Home Connection

- WOW! Refrigerator Note
- Family Extension Activity



Fun Facts About Healthy Foods

Having a balance of healthy foods from all food groups, such as fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy, and grains will help us stay fit, grow, and give us energy. The key to healthy eating is to enjoy a variety of nutritious foods from each of the five food groups throughout the day. If you eat a variety of foods from each of these groups, your body will get all the nutrients and vitamins it needs to work properly.

Fun healthy food facts:

- Broccoli has twice the vitamin C of an orange.
- Apples are made up of 25% air, which is why they can float.
- Cabbage is 91% water and cucumbers are 96% water.
- A bunch of bananas is called a hand.
- Almonds are a member of the peach family.
- Fresh eggs sink in water, and rotten eggs float.



Why should we eat healthy foods?

Food is fuel for your body. When you eat, your digestive system breaks food down and takes in nutrients. Your body needs nutrients to grow and stay healthy. Milk, yogurt, and cheese are high in calcium, which is a nutrient your body needs to build strong bones. Vegetables, nuts, and beans have nutrients that help keep your eyes, skin, and hair healthy. Your body needs healthy food to stay healthy.

Food groups:

Vegetables: These have important nutrients that we need to grow and stay healthy. Dark green vegetables, like broccoli, spinach, kale, and collard greens, have calcium, which our bodies use to grow strong bones. Carrots, sweet potatoes, bell peppers, squash, and beets have vitamin A, which helps protect and heal our bodies. Beans are also part of the vegetable group. They're a good source of protein, which you need to build strong muscles, including your heart. You should eat different vegetables so you can get different nutrients.

Fruits: These are also an important part of a balanced meal. Fresh apples, oranges, bananas, and other fruits are loaded with vitamins our bodies need for healthy eyes and skin. They also have nutrients that help us fight diseases.

Fresh fruits and vegetables have fiber, which our digestive system uses to stay healthy. Different colors of fruits and vegetables have different nutrients; therefore, it is good to eat a variety of colors.

Grains: This is also an important food group. Bread, rice, pasta, oats, cereal, and tortillas are all part of the grains group. Most grains you eat should be whole grains, which are more nutritious. Grains contain carbohydrates, which our bodies use for energy.

Protein: A balanced, healthy meal also protein, The protein food group includes meats like chicken, beef, and fish. It also includes eggs, nuts, and beans. Beans are part of the protein and the vegetables groups. Remember, our bodies use proteins to build muscles, to help us grow, and to repair themselves.

Dairy: Dairy is another part of a balanced meal. Milk, soy milk, cheese, and yogurt are all a part of the dairy group. Dairy foods have calcium, which our bodies use to grow healthy bones, teeth, and hair.

Discover More!

Exploring Healthy Foods Extension Activities

The WOW vocabulary lessons introduce children to new concepts and build vocabulary and background knowledge. Throughout the unit, use these activities with children in small groups during center times to further engage with the topic and synthesize their learning. The open-ended activities provided in this section encourage children to personalize their learning and make it their own.

Circle Time



Circle Time Activities

Here are some activities that can be done during whole class meetings to connect to healthy food to further immerse children in their learning:

"Vegetable Soup" Chant: Have the children sit in a circle and pretend to stir a giant pot in the middle. Go around the circle and let each child "toss" a favorite vegetable into the soup.

"I Like to Eat Apples and Bananas": This classic song is excellent for phonics, but you can expand it by adding verses for "Carrots and Cabbage" or "Peaches and Pears" to introduce a wider variety of produce. Children can take turn deciding what healthy foods to add.

Discover More!

Exploring Healthy Foods Extension Activities

Dramatic Play

Dramatic play is one of the most powerful learning tools for preschoolers, as it allows children to explore real-world roles and situations in a safe, imaginative way, building language, social skills, and creative thinking all at once. When children pretend, they practice cooperation, problem-solving, and empathy — skills that form the foundation for success both in school and in life. Below are some dramatic play activities for this unit.



Dramatic Play Activities

Play Farmers Market or Grocery Store: Set up food items around the classroom. Children can take turns shopping and working at the store. Encourage children to talk about the food they choose from the store and if it is healthy or not.

Play Restaurant: Children will love to pretend to be cooks, wait staff, and customers at a pretend restaurant that serves healthy food. Let children get creative and design menus to use at the restaurant.

Discover More!

Exploring Healthy Foods Extension Activities

Classroom Cooking

Cooking healthy food in a preschool classroom is a rich, hands-on learning experience that builds math, science, and language skills while teaching children to appreciate nutritious food in a fun and memorable way. Below are some simple recipes you can do easily in a preschool classroom. Be mindful of children's allergies in your classroom when choosing a recipe.



Cooking Activities

Making Fruit Salad: Have all children bring in one of their favorite fruits from home and combine them into a fruit salad. Children will love peeling, washing, and eating with their friends.

Making Smoothies: In a blender, combine, berries, bananas, yogurt, and a little honey for a delicious and healthy drink preschoolers can make themselves.

Rainbow Vegetables: Bring in red and yellow peppers, orange and purple carrots, and green cucumbers. Children can arrange the vegetables on their plate in rainbow order before eating them.

Discover More!

Exploring Healthy Foods Extension Activities

Science and Discovery Center

Science is important for preschoolers because it nurtures their natural curiosity about the world, teaching them to observe, question, and explore in ways that build critical thinking skills they will use throughout their lives. Putting activities and materials in your Science and Discovery Center that relate to the unit gives children the chance to work independently and discover more about what they have been reading about.



Science and Discovery Activities

Sorting “Healthy” and “Not Healthy” Foods: Provide students with photos of various foods, or use fake food items, and allow them to sort the foods into the two categories. Discuss with the students why the foods fit or don’t fit into the categories they chose.

Growing Vegetables: Plant cucumbers or tomatoes outside or in the classroom and watch them grow. Or have children plant a seed in a small pot to take home themselves. Talk about what plants need to grow and thrive.

Bean in a Bag Experiment: Have children place a bean seed in a ziplock bag with a wet paper towel and tape to a window to observe germination, the process by which a seed sprouts and begins to grow into a new plant. Children can visit their experiment and talk about their observations.

Discover More!

Exploring Healthy Foods Extension Activities

Writing and Art Center

Art helps preschoolers learn by engaging their hands and minds at the same time. Perhaps most importantly, art gives young children a powerful way to express their feelings and tell their stories, supporting both emotional development and early literacy. Teachers can record children's words about their art so even the youngest children can write stories.



Writing and Art Center Activities

"I Like to Eat ____" Book: Have a page for each child with the words, "I like to eat ____" and have the child (or the teacher) write in their favorite healthy food. Children can draw a picture to go along with it. The pages can be put together and made into a class book about healthy foods. Children will love to look at the book throughout the school year.

Scented Healthy Food Painting: Mix small amounts of sugar-free drink mix (like cherry or grape) or spices (like cinnamon) into liquid paint. As the children paint "healthy plates," they can enjoy the fruity or spicy aromas, connecting the sense of smell to healthy food groups. Have a discussion with children about what foods should go on a plate to create a balanced meal.

Discover More!

Exploring Healthy Foods Extension Activities

Field Trips

Field trips provide preschoolers with essential hands-on sensory experiences that bridge the gap between classroom concepts and the real world, fostering curiosity and social-emotional growth through direct exploration. There are many places you can go in your neighborhood that will enhance your class' learning about healthy food.



Healthy Foods Field Trips

Grocery Store: Take the whole class or small groups of children to the grocery store and choose a few healthy foods for snack time. Children will love to try this “grown up” activity.

Farmers Market: Bring children to a local farmer’s market and find new fruits or vegetables for children to bring back to class and sample.

Community Garden: Visit a local garden that grows fruits and vegetables for children to learn about the process.



WOW Refrigerator Note

WOW! We are reading and learning about healthy foods right now. During the next few weeks, you can help your child by asking them about healthy foods and helping them discover new things about healthy foods. Talking about the healthy foods will reinforce what your child is learning in the classroom.

- Ask your child to tell you about why eating healthy foods is important.
- Try a new fruit or vegetable each week. Have your child take a picture or draw a picture to share in class. Help them learn the name and describe how it tasted or any other information about it.
- Every few days, ask your child to tell you about what food groups they are learning about in school. Have your child work with you to prepare a healthy meal.
- Go to the library and check out a book about healthy foods. Read the book with your child, stopping to talk about the pictures.
- Try to make one of the recipes from the next page at home.

Post this note on your refrigerator to remind you to talk about healthy foods with your child.

Thanks! 



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WOW Notas para el Refrigerador

WOW! En este momento, estamos leyendo y aprendiendo sobre los alimentos saludables. Durante las próximas semanas, usted puede ayudar a su hijo preguntándole acerca de los alimentos saludables y ayudándole a descubrir cosas nuevas sobre ellos. Conversar sobre los alimentos saludables reforzará lo que su hijo está aprendiendo en el aula.

- Pídele a tu hijo que te cuente por qué es importante comer alimentos saludables.
- Prueben una fruta o verdura nueva cada semana. Pídele a tu hijo que le tome una foto o haga un dibujo para compartirlo en clase. Ayúdale a aprender su nombre y a descubrir a qué sabía, o cualquier otra información al respecto.
- Cada ciertos días, pídele a tu hijo que te cuente sobre los grupos de alimentos que está aprendiendo en la escuela. Pídele que colabore contigo para preparar una comida saludable.
- Vaya a la biblioteca y saqué un libro sobre alimentos saludables. Lea el libro con su hijo, deteniéndose para hablar sobre las ilustraciones.
- Intenta preparar en casa una de las recetas de la página siguiente.

Pega esta nota en tu refrigerador para recordarte hablar sobre alimentos saludables con tu hijo.

¡Gracias!



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Family Extension Activities

Healthy Recipes!

Cooking some simple healthy recipes in the kitchen is an easy fun way for families to extend the healthy food unit at home. Cooking healthy food with preschoolers is a wonderfully hands-on way to teach math, science, and language skills while also building positive attitudes toward nutritious eating that can last a lifetime.



Create fruit skewers: With adult supervision, have children cut and peel their favorite fruits and put them on skewers for a delicious snack.

Ants on a Log: Cut celery and have your preschooler spread peanut butter on it and top with raisins.



Fruit Smoothie: Blend mixed berries, bananas, yogurt, and a little honey for a delicious and healthy drink preschoolers can make themselves.

Actividades Complementarias Para la Familia

¡Recetas saludables!

Preparar algunas recetas sencillas y saludables en la cocina es una forma fácil y divertida para que las familias den continuidad en casa a la unidad didáctica sobre alimentación saludable. Cocinar alimentos sanos con niños en edad preescolar constituye una maravillosa experiencia práctica para enseñar matemáticas, ciencias y habilidades lingüísticas, al tiempo que se fomentan actitudes positivas hacia una alimentación nutritiva que pueden perdurar toda la vida.



Preparen brochetas de frutas: Bajo supervisión de un adulto, pida a los niños que corten y peguen sus frutas favoritas y las coloquen en brochetas para disfrutar de un delicioso refrigerio.

Hormigas en un tronco: Corta apio y pide a tu hijo en edad preescolar que le unte mantequilla de maní y lo cubra con pasas.



Batido de frutas: Mezcla frutos del bosque, plátanos, yogur y un poco de miel para obtener una bebida deliciosa y saludable que los niños en edad preescolar pueden preparar por sí mismos.



WoW Topics

Pre-Kindergarten

Wild Animals

Marine Animals

Seasons

Pets

Healthy Foods

Exercise

Susan B. Neuman is a Professor of Teaching and Learning at New York University, specializing in teacher education and early literacy development. Previously, she was a Professor at the University of Michigan and has served as the U.S. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.



In her role as Assistant Secretary, she established the Early Reading First Program and the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program, and she was responsible for all activities in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act. She has served on the IRA Board of Directors (2001 - 2003) and numerous boards of nonprofit organizations. She is past Editor of Reading Research Quarterly, the most prestigious journal in reading research. Her research and teaching interests include early childhood policy, curriculum, and early reading instruction, Pre-K - Grade 3 for children who live in poverty. Neuman has received two lifetime achievement awards for research in literacy development and is a Fellow of the American Educational Research Association. She has written over 100 articles and authored and edited 11 books.