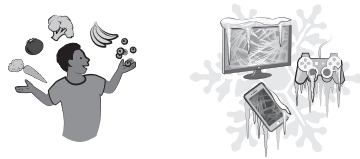


LESSON 12



Alphabet Fruit (and Vegetables)

Five servings is equal to 2 1/2 cups of fruits and vegetables. One serving can include any of the following:

- 1/2 cup of cooked or raw vegetables, such as baby carrots or cooked green beans
- 1 cup of leafy greens such as spinach and lettuce
- 1/4 cup of dried fruit, such as raisins
- 1 medium piece of fresh fruit (an apple the size of a tennis ball or one medium banana)

Background

This lesson teaches students the importance of eating colorful fruits and vegetables each day and choosing them in place of junk food at every meal and snack. Leading health authorities recommend that both adults and children eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily, and more is always better. Getting five or more each day can help reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and possibly some cancers. It's especially important to get children excited early on about eating fruits and vegetables so that they establish healthy eating patterns that will last a lifetime.

The Get 3 At School and 5+ A Day promotion, which encourages students to eat more fruits and vegetables in place of junk food, can be used as an extension of this lesson. See lesson 30 in part III, Promotions for the Classroom, for details.

Helping Your Kids Fill Up on Fruits and Veggies

Parents and guardians are crucial partners in this task. Sharing Handout 12.1, Helping Your Kids Fill Up on Fruits and Veggies, with parents and guardians will help reinforce the messages of this lesson (as well as other messages in the *Eat Well & Keep Moving* curriculum). Suggest that parents try one tip each week (or each day, if they seem particularly motivated).

Parental involvement is a crucial component of the *Eat Well & Keep Moving* program. For detailed information about potential parent–student activities, see the Parent and Community Involvement Guide (Manual 3) on the web resource.

Here are some tips for parents:

- **Make more seem like less.** Five servings or more each day sounds like a lot unless you divide them up throughout the meals and snacks of the day. Serve one at breakfast (a whole orange), two at lunch (carrot sticks and bell pepper slices), one as a snack (apple, banana, or berries), and two at dinner (a salad and a baked sweet potato). That equals more than five!
- **Bring out the cook in you.** Get your child involved with the shopping and preparation of fruits and vegetables for your family. Ask your child to arrange a fruit plate for dessert or a vegetable tray for a party. The more your child helps in the preparation, the more likely he will be to eat it.
- **Dip it, dunk it.** Fruits and vegetables taste better to kids when combined with dips and dressings made with healthy fat (e.g., olive oil, canola oil) or with plain yogurt.
- **Serve crunchy munchies.** Raw produce is a great way to help your child get five servings. Instead of serving junk food at snack time, serve the kids crunchy munchies—apples, pears, carrots, broccoli, celery, and cucumbers, among others.
- **Explore the unknown.** Many children are afraid to try new fruits and vegetables. Offer them a wide variety of fruits and vegetables at an early age. Keep offering those fruits and vegetables to help prevent later dislikes.
- **Set an example.** Children model what they see their parents and teachers do. If their parents and teachers eat plenty of colorful fruits and vegetables, children will be more likely to eat them as well.
- **Gimme more.** Serve up a few vegetables at dinner—a couple that the kids are familiar with and one or two that are new.
- **Proclaim the benefits.** Tell the kids how eating fruits and vegetables will make them look and feel better. Eating five or more servings each day helps keep the heart healthy!

- **Masquerade your mango.** Turn disgust into delicious with a disguise. Smell, color, and texture are three important qualities that can turn kids on or off to fruits and vegetables.
- **Combine fruits and vegetables with the kids' favorite foods.** For instance, drizzle a small amount of melted cheese on top of cauliflower or peanut sauce on top of steamed broccoli.

This lesson includes the four parts of a safe workout and a nutrition concept (eating fruits and vegetables). Students will be moving during the lesson, which stresses how both exercise and eating right take care of the body. It's a team effort!

Estimated Teaching Time and Related Subject Area

Estimated teaching time: 1 hour

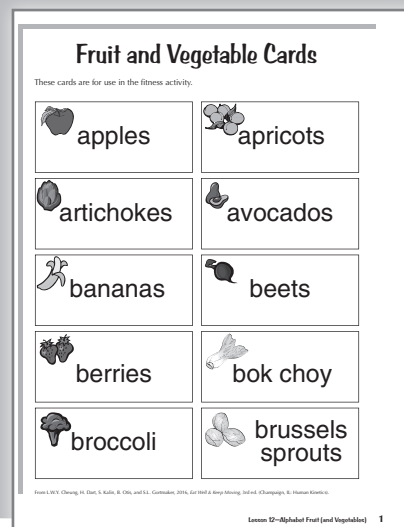
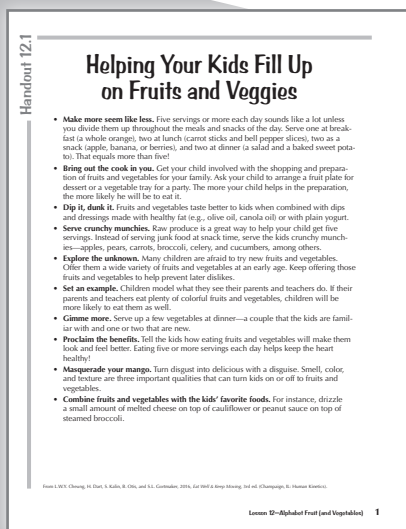
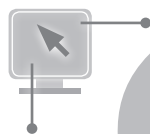
Related subject area: language arts

Objectives

- Learn about a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Understand and be able to explain the importance of eating five or more colorful fruits and vegetables each day.
- Demonstrate the safe workout and its four parts.

Materials

- Handout 12.1, Helping Your Kids Fill Up on Fruits and Veggies
- Five sets of fruit and vegetable cards (one master set is provided for making copies)
- Five containers (e.g., bags, boxes) in which to put the cards



Procedure

1. Ask the students if they have eaten any fruits or vegetables today.
2. Ask the students to create a menu for themselves that includes a different vegetable at every meal and snack. Ask them: "What fruit or vegetable could you have for breakfast? For lunch? For a snack? For dinner? Did you eat five today? More? Less? Did you choose a fruit or vegetable instead of junk food?"
3. Discuss the reasons we need to eat five or more servings each day. For example, fruits and vegetables help prevent heart disease, they help the body heal wounds and burns, they prevent and fight infections, and they promote good dental health. Unlike junk food, fruits and vegetables are also low in unhealthy fat, sodium, and calories.
4. Lead students through a warm-up.
Warm-up—The first part of the safe workout, in which slow movements get the body ready for the fitness activity.
5. Explain to the students that they are going to participate in a fitness activity focusing on fruits and vegetables.
Fitness activity—The part of the safe workout in which strength and endurance fitness exercises are performed.
6. Have the class form five groups.
7. Review the names of the fruits and vegetables on the cards.
8. Place the fruit and vegetable cards in a container in front of each group.
9. Set aside a place on the floor on the opposite side of the classroom where each group can put its fruit and vegetable cards in alphabetical order.
10. The students will be moving nonstop (either walking or jogging in place) behind the card container. On your signal, the first student in line gets a card and goes to the opposite side of the room, puts the card down in the designated space, goes back to the group, and high-fives the next student in line. The second student then picks up a card, places it on the floor in alphabetical order, goes back to the group, and high-fives the next person in line.
11. This continues until all fruit and vegetable cards are in alphabetical order on the floor.
12. This activity can be completed more than once depending on time.
13. Lead the students in a cool-down and stretch.
Cool-down—The part of the safe workout in which your body slows down and recovers from the fitness activity.
Stretch—The last part of the safe workout, in which you do exercises that improve flexibility fitness.
14. Begin the Stay Healthy Corner, a time to reinforce a nutrition concept related to the fitness activity. You can set up an area of the classroom for the Stay Healthy Corner and decorate it with pictures or student drawings that represent the Principles of Healthy Living (e.g., healthy foods, children engaged in physical activity). Or you can simply set aside time for a discussion at the end of the lesson.
 - a. Have each group check to make sure its cards are in alphabetical order. Then have the groups pick five cards and discuss how these five could fit into their daily meals and snacks, and ways they could choose fruits and vegetables in place of junk food.
 - b. Discuss some tips on how students can get five fruits and vegetables each day (see Handout 12.1, *Helping Your Kids Fill Up on Fruits and Veggies*, for ideas) and ask them to offer their own experiences. For example, they might say: "My mom gives me money to pick out any fruits and vegetables I want at the grocery store," "I like crunchy bell pepper slices with hummus," "I like

having an orange with breakfast,” or “Sometimes grown-ups don’t set the right example—they don’t eat many fruits and vegetables.”

- c. Encourage the students to give advice as to how the class can eat more fruits and vegetables each day.
- 15.** Have students take their Helping Your Kids Fill Up on Fruits and Veggies handout home and post it on the refrigerator. Suggest that they work with their parents to try one tip every week (maybe even every day).

