

FOCUS➤

NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Grades 4, 5

This series of minilessons can be incorporated within physical education. Each lesson focuses on one of the essential nutrients.

Standard 3

The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

Grade-Level Outcomes

- Identifies foods that are beneficial for before and after physical activity (S3.E6.3)
- Discusses the importance of hydration and hydration choices relative to physical activities (S3.E6.4)
- Analyzes the impact of food choices relative to physical activity, youth sports and personal health (S3.E6.5)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- Identify the importance of food for energy and energy for good performance in physical activity
- Discuss the relationship between nutrition and good performance in sports and physical activities
- Discuss the need for water in relation to physical activity

Materials and Equipment

MyPlate chart

Introduction

Would you like to be able to run faster, be stronger, or be a better athlete? One of the key ingredients to being a good athlete is good health; one of the keys to good health is good nutrition. People who participate in sports, gymnastics, and dance need a special focus on protein, carbohydrate, fat, and water. Each of these is important for work in sports and physical fitness.

Link each minilesson to the importance of nutrition and physical activity. Select one of the essential nutrients for the focus of each minilesson.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS

Carbohydrate is the main fuel source for muscles. It supplies energy to muscles during exercise. Do you eat toast for breakfast? How many eat cereal? What is your favorite fruit? Name one vegetable that you like. All these foods supply us with carbohydrate to give our muscles energy during physical activity.

- Have students name the food categories that provide carbohydrate: breads, cereals, fruits, vegetables.

Protein provides the building blocks of body tissues. It forms the important parts of muscles, bones, and blood. It helps in tissue repair. How many of you had some protein in your diet yesterday?

- Discuss the foods that provide protein—meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk products, and dried beans. Have students name the foods they ate that provided protein.

Fat supplies energy and insulates and cushions organs. Yes, we all need some fat! Why?

(To cushion organs, to keep us warm, and to supply energy.)

Water is the coolant for the body. It helps maintain adequate blood volume, lubricates joints, and maximizes muscle strength.

- Discuss the following questions:
 - Why do you get thirsty when you exercise vigorously?
 - How much water do you need each day?
 - Do you need more water when you exercise and play a sport? Why?
 - Should you drink water before, during, and after activity?
 - Is drinking a soda the same as drinking water?

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: MYPLATE DISCUSSION

- Remind students of their earlier discussion of MyPlate. Allow time for discussion of the following questions:
 - Which category of foods should we partake of the most in a given day?
 - What category should we eat the least of?
 - Are all the categories needed to ensure good health and to be physically active?
- With students in grade 5, brainstorm a typical day. Ask students what foods they normally eat. List them on the board (flipchart). Compare the listing of foods with MyPlate and with the essential nutrients needed for good health and energy for physical activity and sports.
Keep the responses general to avoid embarrassing a student who has poor eating habits.

Assessment

Grade 4

Provide the students with activity, food, and water intake daily journals from three imaginary students. Have them evaluate each imaginary student for areas of deficiency.

Grade 5

Provide the students with activity, food, and water intake daily journals from three imaginary students. Have them evaluate each imaginary student and provide suggestions for improvement. Allow time for students to discuss their evaluations and suggestions for improvement.

Closure

- Why is good nutrition important for athletes?
- Why do you need to drink lots of water when you play in a soccer game, play chase with friends, or ride a bike?
- Does it matter what foods you eat?
- How can nutrition help you be a better athlete?

Reflection

- Can the students discuss the relationship between nutrition and good performance in physical activities?
- Can they identify the food groups important for good health and performance in physical activity?