

Lesson 2: Eat the Rainbow

Grade Level: 2nd Grade

Time: 60 minutes

Subjects: ELA

Overview: This lesson is Lesson 2 of 5 in the *Growing Up Strong* unit within the *Growing Readers* micro-curriculum, based on a series of books written by Kansas author Dan Yunk. Building on the first read in Lesson 1, students explore how eating a variety of colorful foods contributes to health. Through a video, vowel instruction, and a hands-on rainbow activity, students practice distinguishing long and short vowel sounds in one-syllable words and identifying real-life connections between words and their uses. Students then write an opinion piece about their favorite color of food, introducing a topic, stating an opinion, supplying multiple reasons connected with linking words, and providing a concluding statement.

Skillset: Activating and connecting prior knowledge across lessons, gathering information from a video source, distinguishing long and short vowels in one-syllable words, identifying real-life connections between words and their uses, hands-on craft and fine motor skills, distinguishing fact from opinion, opinion writing with a topic, opinion, reasons connected with linking words, and a concluding statement, and consulting reference materials to check and correct spelling.

Kansas Academic Standards

Kansas ELA Standards

RF.2.3.a Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words.

RI.2.12.a Identify real-life connections between words and their use.

W.2.1 Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement or section.

W.2.11.e Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

National Agriculture Literacy Outcomes

Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber, and Energy

T2.K-2.d Identify examples of food and fiber products that come from plants and animals.

Agriculture and the Environment

T3.K-2.b Recognize that agriculture provides our most basic necessities: food, fiber, energy, and shelter.

Objectives

English Language Arts Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Gather information from a video about how eating a variety of fruits and vegetables supports health.

- Distinguish long and short vowel sounds when reading regularly spelled one-syllable food words.
- Identify real-life connections between color words and the foods they describe.
- Write an opinion piece that introduces the topic, states an opinion, supplies reasons connected with linking words, and provides a concluding statement.
- Consult a beginning dictionary to check and correct spelling.

Materials Needed

Whole Class:

- Smartboard or display screen
- YouTube, Smart Reads for Kids: Let's Eat the Rainbow! Inspire kids to eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables to stay healthy.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZvThmPPkJM>
- Chart paper titled: "What Does Each Color Do for Our Bodies?"
- Chart paper for vowel word list
- Markers

Eat the Rainbow Craft:

- Construction paper in rainbow colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) — for the rainbow arcs
- Large construction paper, 12" x 18", light blue or white (one per student) — serves as the background for the rainbow and the space where the completed writing sheet will be glued below it
- Word cards: beet, yam, kale, fig, corn (one set per table)
- Food magazines, grocery store flyers, or pre-printed food pictures for cutting
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

Writing:

- Eat the Rainbow opinion writing sheet — companion document (one per student)
- Beginning dictionaries or classroom word-reference books (one per table)
- Pencils and crayons

Lesson Procedures

1. Connecting to What We Know
 - a. Explain to students: "In our last lesson, we read *Growing Up Strong* and learned that Kailey's mom taught her class about eating a rainbow of foods: grains, milk, vegetables, meat, and fruits. Today we are going to learn more about why eating different colors of food is so good for our bodies, and then we are going to build our own food rainbow!"
 - b. Ask students:
 - "What colors do you remember from our rainbow of foods talk?"
 - "Why do you think eating different colors of food might be good for our bodies?"
 - c. Explain to students: "Let's watch a video to find out what each color of fruits and vegetables does for our bodies." Smart Reads for Kids: Let's Eat the Rainbow! Inspire kids to eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables to stay healthy.
<https://youtu.be/IZvThmPPkJM>.
 - d. After the video, ask students:
 - "The video told us that each color of food helps our body in a different way. What is one color you remember, and what did it help with?"

- “Why do you think eating just one color of food every day would not be enough to keep our whole body healthy?”
- e. Record student responses on chart paper: “What Does Each Color Do for Our Bodies?” Guide students toward a simple summary for each color, such as:
 - Red foods help protect our bodies.
 - Orange foods help our skin and eyes.
 - Yellow foods help build strong bones.
 - Green foods help our tummy digest food.
 - Blue and purple foods help our brain.

(This chart will be referenced again during the writing component at the end of the lesson.)
- 2. Distinguishing Long and Short Vowels. Explain to students: “Before we build our rainbow, let’s practice a reading skill: telling the difference between long and short vowel sounds in one-syllable food words.”
 - a. Explain to students: “A short vowel says its short sound, like the a in cat. A long vowel says its own name, like the a in cage. Long vowels often have a silent e at the end, or two vowels working together, like ee.”
 - b. Model decoding and distinguishing each word on chart paper, contrasting long and short pairs directly:
 - “Beet: b-ee-t. The two e’s work together and say a long ē sound. Beet has a long vowel. A beet is a red vegetable that grows underground.”
 - “Yam: y-a-m. The a says its short sound here, not its name. Yam has a short vowel. A yam is an orange vegetable.”
 - “Kale: k-a-le. The silent e at the end makes the a say its own name, long A. Kale has a long vowel. Kale is a leafy green vegetable.”
 - “Fig: f-i-g. The i says its short sound here. Fig has a short vowel. A fig is a small purple fruit.”
 - c. Ask students:
 - “Which of our four words have a long vowel sound? Which have a short vowel sound?”
 - “Listen to yam and kale. Both have the letter a, but do they sound the same? Why not?”
 - d. Introduce a bonus word that does not fit either pattern: “Corn: c-or-n. Corn does not have a clean long or short vowel sound, because when a vowel is followed by r, the r changes the sound. That is a different pattern for another day, but let’s still figure out how to read it together: corn. Corn is a yellow crop, and one of the biggest crops Kansas farmers grow.”
 - e. Ask individual students to decode fig and kale aloud without teacher support, naming whether each has a long or short vowel, to check for independent understanding.
 - f. Explain to students: “These five words are going to help us build our rainbow today.”
- 3. Eat the Rainbow Craft with Real-Life Connections. Distribute background paper, rainbow-colored construction paper arcs, the five word cards, magazines, scissors, and glue sticks.
 - a. Explain to students: “Today you are going to build your own food rainbow. First, glue your colored arcs onto your background paper to make a rainbow shape. Then glue each word card onto the arc that matches its color. After that, you can look through the magazines and add more foods you find.”

- b. Real-life connections. Explain to students: "Good readers connect new words to things they know and experience. When we learn a word, we do not just know what it means. We connect it to something real: an object we can picture, something we have done, or a time we have used that word ourselves."
 - c. Model connecting a word to a real object, an experience, and a situation. Direct students: "Let's take the word fig. I can picture a real fig, a small purple fruit with tiny seeds inside. I remember an experience when I once ate a fig for a snack. And I know a situation where I would use this word: I could look for a fig to buy at the farmers' market."
 - d. Ask students, guiding them through each part of the connection:
 - "What is a real food you know that is orange? Picture it in your mind." (connect to a real object)
 - "Can you remember a time you ate or picked out something orange? Tell us about it." (connect to an experience)
 - "When would you use the word orange while talking about food, at the store, at dinner, in the garden?" (identify a real-world situation)
 - e. Explain to students: "All of these foods started as crops that a farmer planted, grew, and harvested. Corn, kale, beets, yams, and figs all started on a farm before they ever reached your plate."
 - f. Model gluing one arc and one matching word card before releasing students to work. Students build their rainbow by gluing each word card onto its matching color arc, then cutting out additional food pictures from magazines, connecting each one to a real-life memory or place where they've seen it, and gluing them onto the matching color of their rainbow. While students work, prompt decoding and real-life connections:
 - "What does this word card say? Does it have a long or short vowel?"
 - "What is a real memory or place where you have used or eaten this food?"
 - "Do you think a farmer grew this food, or did it come from an animal?" (Allow approximately 15 minutes for the craft. Have early finishers begin thinking about their writing: "Which color of the rainbow is your favorite to eat? Why?" Set finished rainbows aside on the same large construction paper background; students will glue their completed writing sheet onto the bottom portion of this same paper, creating one finished piece.)
4. Fact and Opinion. Gather students where they can see chart paper clearly.
- a. Explain to students: "Now we are going to write about our rainbow. But before we write, let's remember the difference between facts and opinions."
 - b. Write two sentences side by side on chart paper, one labeled Fact and one labeled Opinion:
 - Fact: "Corn is yellow."
 - Opinion: "Corn is my favorite vegetable."
 - c. Point to each sentence and explain: "This sentence states a fact. 'Corn is yellow' is a true statement no matter who you are or what you like. This next sentence states an opinion because it is what I think. 'Corn is my favorite vegetable.' Someone else might think a different vegetable is their favorite, and that would be their opinion. Neither person would be wrong."
 - d. Ask students, pointing back and forth between the two sentences: "Which sentence states a fact? How do you know? Which sentence states an opinion? How do you know?"

5. Opinion Writing: Topic, Opinion, Reasons, Linking Words, and a Concluding Statement. Explain to students: “Today we are going to write a whole opinion piece about our rainbow. In second grade, we get to do something new: instead of just one reason, we are going to give more than one reason, and we are going to connect them using special words called linking words. We will also tell our topic and share our opinion, and we will end with a sentence that wraps everything up, called a concluding statement.”
- Explain linking words: “Good opinion writers use linking words to connect their opinions to their reasons. Three linking words we can use are ‘because’, ‘and’, and ‘also’. ‘Because’ helps us explain why we think something. ‘And’ and ‘also’ help us add another reason.”
 - Model each part on chart paper, thinking aloud:
 - “My topic: Today I am writing about my favorite color of food from our rainbow. This sentence tells my reader what I am writing about.”
 - “My opinion: My favorite color to eat is red. This is what I think; other people may think something different and not agree.”
 - “My first reason, using ‘because’: I like red foods because they are sweet and juicy, like a strawberry.”
 - “My second reason, using ‘also’: Red foods are also good for my heart.”
 - “My third reason, using ‘and’: And I love how crunchy a red pepper can be.”
 - “My concluding statement: Eating colorful foods like red ones helps my body stay healthy and strong. This sentence wraps up my whole piece, not just my last reason.”
 - Point to and name each part: topic sentence, opinion sentence, three reason sentences with their linking words circled, and the concluding statement.
 - Ask students: “Which linking word did I use to explain why I like red foods? Which linking words did I use to add more reasons?”
 - Sound it out, then check a beginning dictionary: “For any word today that is tricky, try to sound it out yourself first, using the letters and sounds you know. Then check a beginning dictionary to see if you spelled it correctly, and fix your spelling if you need to.”
 - Model checking a tricky word against a beginning dictionary: “I want to spell strawberry. Let me sound it out first: s-t-r-a-w-b-e-r-r-y. That is my best try. Now let me check our beginning dictionary... I see it is spelled s-t-r-a-w-b-e-r-r-y. Did I get 2 ‘r’s’? I got it right! If I had not, I would fix my spelling to match.”
 - Ask students: “What is your favorite color of food? What reasons could you give? Which linking words will you use? How could you end your piece?”
6. Independent Writing — Eat the Rainbow Opinion Sheet. Distribute the Eat the Rainbow opinion writing sheet.
- Explain to students: “Look at your rainbow craft and think about our chart from the video. Write your own opinion piece about your favorite color of food. Tell your topic, share your opinion, give more than one reason using linking words like because, and, or also, and end with a sentence that wraps everything up. If you are not sure how to spell a word, sound it out first, then check a beginning dictionary to fix your spelling.”
 - Students complete the writing sheet independently. Circulate and support:
 - Prompt for topic and opinion: “Which color is your favorite to eat? Write that color in your sentence.”

- Prompt for reasons and linking words: “Why do you like that color? Can you use the word because to explain? Can you use also or and to add another reason?”
 - Prompt for concluding statement: “How could you end your opinion? What is one more thing you want your reader to know?”
 - Support for spelling: “Say the word slowly and write the sounds you hear. Then check our beginning dictionary to see if you spelled it correctly.”
(Differentiation: Students who need additional support may use a sentence frame that covers the full structure, such as “Today I am writing about my favorite color of food. My favorite color is _____. I like it because _____. It is also _____. Eating _____ foods helps me grow up strong,” to help structure their opinion while still writing independently. Students ready for a challenge can add a third reason using the linking word “and.”)
- c. Final assembly: Once writing is complete, students cut out their finished opinion sheet and glue it onto the bottom portion of the same large construction paper that holds their rainbow, creating one finished piece with the rainbow on top and their written opinion below it.
7. Closing Discussion and Kansas Connection. Gather students together with their completed rainbows and writing sheets.
- a. Ask students:
- “What did we learn from our video about eating a rainbow of colors?”
 - “What is one word you distinguished as long or short today? What color group did it belong to?”
 - “What is your favorite color of food to eat? Why?”
- b. Kansas Connection. Explain to students: “Most foods on your rainbow today started on a farm. Kansas farmers grow crops like tomatoes, corn, squash, and leafy greens that end up on our plates in every color of the rainbow. Other foods, like milk and eggs, come from animals. Farmers help provide many of the foods we eat. When you eat a colorful plate of food, you are eating the hard work of farmers — and helping your whole body stay strong and healthy, just like Kailey’s mom taught her class.”
- c. Ask students:
- “Have you ever grown a fruit or vegetable at home or seen one growing? What was it?”
 - “Do you know anyone who grows food, like in a garden or on a farm? What do they grow?”

Assessment: Assess student understanding through teacher observation during the video discussion, vowel-distinguishing instruction, craft activity, shared writing, and independent writing. The teacher should note whether students can distinguish long and short vowel sounds in regularly spelled one-syllable food words, identify real-life connections between color words and the foods they describe, distinguish a fact from an opinion, write an opinion piece that introduces the topic, states an opinion, supplies reasons connected with linking words, and provides a concluding statement, and consult a beginning dictionary to check and correct spelling. The completed rainbow craft and opinion writing sheet serve as the primary artifacts for this lesson.

Supplemental Activities: Display the completed food rainbows alongside the “What Does Each Color Do for Our Bodies?” chart and the “How Do We Grow Up Strong?” chart from Lesson 1.

Guide students to see the connection between eating a variety of colorful foods and the ways Kailey's mom said we grow up strong. For an extension activity, invite students to decode a few additional one-syllable food words, such as grape, plum, or lime, name whether each has a long or short vowel, and sort them onto the classroom rainbow. Invite students to keep a simple color tally for one day, marking which rainbow colors they ate at lunch, and share their tally with the class the next day.

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Student Name: _____

Eat the Rainbow

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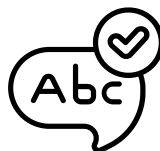
Check Your Writing!



Topic



Reason



Spelling



Closure



Period at
the end.