

The Farmer Grows a Rainbow

Introduction

Welcome to “The Farmer Grows a Rainbow” lesson plan. This portion of the curriculum guide offers you great teaching ideas that will engage your students as they learn about agriculture and their health. With a description of the MyPyramid concept, students will learn about nutrition and discuss a plan needed to help them achieve a healthy lifestyle.

This lesson series will cater to the learning appetites of your elementary students!

How to Use the Lesson Plan

Step One

For all grade levels, teach the “Main Course” lesson first. The content in this lesson serves as a general lesson on health and agriculture.

Step Two

The following lessons correspond to the appropriate grade audience. Find the lesson that matches your grade level and share the exciting activities with your students.

Grade	Lesson Title
Kindergarten	Super K Buffet
First	First Place Foods
Second	Second Servings
Third	Three Reasons

Whether you are teaching kindergarten, first, second or third grade, the “Farmer Grows a Rainbow” lesson plan is designed for each student to enjoy. You will find additional resources to accompany this series at www.mypyramid.com.

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Main Course

Grade Level: K-3

Approximate Length of Activity: Two class periods

Objective

Teacher

1. To help students develop awareness that farmers provide the variety and abundance of foods we need to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles.

Students

1. Develop and apply enabling strategies and skills to read and write.
2. Learn that foods are divided into food groups.
3. Learn the colors that represent the various food groups on MyPyramid.
4. Learn the importance of physical activity as part of good health.
5. Develop an awareness of personal dietary needs.
6. Apply knowledge and behavior self-management skills to areas of nutrition and physical activity for healthy growth, development and maintenance.
7. Exhibit a physically active lifestyle.

Michigan Content Standards: (Health) Kindergarten: Strand 1-Standard 1-1.1, 1.2; Strand 1-Standard 3-1.4; Strand 1-Standard 3-1.5; First Grade: Strand 1-Standard 1-1.1, 1.2, 1.4; Strand 1-Standard 3- 1.6, 1.7; Second Grade: Strand 1-Standard 1-1.1,1.2,1.3; Strand 1-Standard 3 -1.5,1.6; Third Grade: Strand 1-Standard 1-1.1, 1.2; Strand 1-Standard 5-1.6

Vocabulary

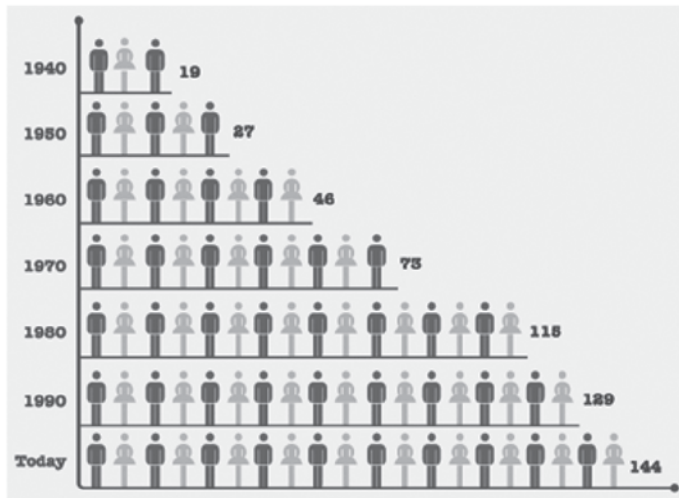
- **Agriculture**
- **Beans**
- **Commodity**
- **Farm**
- **Food**
- **Fruits**
- **Grains**
- **Healthy**
- **Meat**
- **Milk**
- **Nutrition**
- **Oils**
- **Plan**
- **Pyramid**
- **Vegetables**

Background Information

American Farmers Feed the World

America's farmers are the world's most productive. Today, each U.S. farmer produces food and fiber for 144 people.

Number of People Fed Annually By One Farmer:

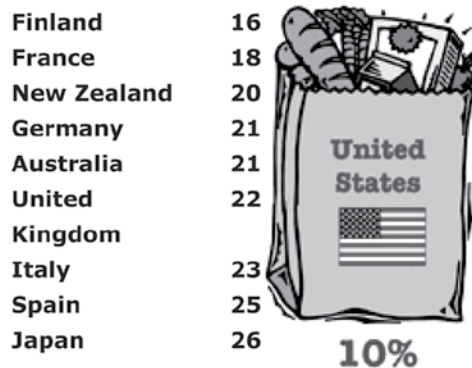


Source: American Farm Bureau

Food is Most Affordable in the United States

U.S. consumers spend just 10 percent of their disposable annual income on food.

Here is How Other Countries Stack Up:



Preparation:

- Enlarge and print "MyPyramid Class Display" and mount on heavy weight paper. Laminate "Food Cards" and photos or graphic representations of foods from each food group gathered by students.
- Locate the Web site www.mypyramid.gov and the lesson plan introducing students to MyPyramid found at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson1.pdf. Both of these sites will provide good background information for teaching this lesson.
- Make arrangements for computer station(s) for student use.
- Make copies of student handouts you choose to use from "Lesson 2: Eat Smart with MyPyramid for Kids" found at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson2.pdf
- Make copies of "MyPyramid Table Tent"
- Set up play space for "Run the Rainbow Challenge: Random Harvest Relay"



Activity Outline

1. Open the lesson by asking students to name foods which adults say are “good for them” (healthy and nutritious). Discuss why they think certain foods help them grow and stay healthy while other foods should be enjoyed in smaller quantities. Talk with students about nutritious foods vs. non-nutritious foods, making sure they understand that foods that provide vitamins, minerals and energy are better for developing bodies-helping them grow healthy and strong.
2. Direct students’ attention to a blank bulletin board, magnetic board or flannel board. Show students the copy of “MyPyramid Class Display” and lead a discussion interpreting MyPyramid and each food group. Note the colors on the pyramid and how each one represents a food group. Information about each food group is available at www.mypyramid.gov
3. Allow students to arrange food cut-outs on the display board according to food groups. As each child places an item on the board, the class should name the food and the food group to which it belongs (i.e., an apple belongs in the “fruits” group). As students list foods, have them note the health value of each food.
4. Challenge students to work as a team to sort foods by MyPyramid food groups and place items on the board to create a “rainbow” of good foods. Note that although each category (i.e., Fruits, Vegetables, Milk) of MyPyramid are identified by a specific color, all food groups contain food items which are composed of a variety of colors. Watch for students using MyPyramid food group colors as guides for sorting foods and direct them toward an understanding that the color of the foods does not necessarily correspond with the food group color.
5. As reinforcement, have students complete activities in “Lesson 2: Eat Smart with MyPyramid for Kids” found at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson2.pdf
6. Once students have an understanding of health benefits of various foods, assign an essay using the prompt designed for their grade level:

Kindergarten- Draw a picture of yourself enjoying a healthy meal. Write about the foods you are eating. Tell why you like them and one reason why each food is good for you.

First Grade- Write a letter to your dentist. Tell why the baby (primary) teeth you are losing are so healthy. Share with your dentist reasons why your permanent teeth will be healthy for life. Include information about foods you eat, how you care for your teeth and why it is important to visit a dentist regularly. Tell why healthy teeth and gums are important.

Second Grade - Write about a time when you ate too much or put too much on your plate. Tell some healthy ways to make sure you are eating the right amount of food.

Third Grade - Write a short report about one of the food groups found on MyPyramid. Tell the name of the food group, the nutrients found in this group or why these foods are good for you. Include examples of foods in the group. Tell why the healthy choices are not “empty calorie” foods (i.e. foods that do not provide nutrition and are high in calories).

7. Ask students to identify the farmer standing by the pyramid on the “MyPyramid Table Tent” sheet. Make sure they realize he is a farmer. Discuss the concept that all of our food is produced on farms by farmers. Sing the song “The Farmer Grows a Rainbow.” Share with students the fact that they live in the country with the safest, most abundant, varied and most affordable food supply in the world.

8. Share with the students that the farmer by the “Rainbow” pyramid represents farmers, but the child on the MyPyramid Web site is a character that represents all children. In both cases, the character represents physical activity. Go to http://www.Mypyramid.gov/pyramid/physical_activity.html for more background information as you prepare for this discussion. Discuss the fact that varying amounts of activity will directly affect the amount of food needed to maintain a healthy body. Consider the activity level of farmers and other workers. Many of them are very active in their daily work; therefore, their bodies need more “fuel” than a “desk jockey” (a person whose job requires them to sit at a desk every day). Make comparisons among levels of activity and food intake needed for growth and sustenance. Invite a nutritionist to share information on this topic with your class.
9. Provide information for accessing the Web site www.mypramid.gov. Have each student follow the directions on the Web site to obtain their personal “MyPyramid Plan.” A sample “Plan” is included in this lesson. Visiting the Web site can be a class activity or information can be shared with parents to be completed at home.
10. To reinforce concepts presented in this lesson, have students make and color a “MyPyramid Table Tent.” Encourage students to take their table tents home and share information they learned in this lesson with parents and other family members.
11. For physical activity, have students participate in “Run the Rainbow Challenge: Rainbow Harvest Relay.”

Materials Provided

- MyPyramid Class Display
- Food Cards
- “The Farmer Grows a Rainbow” Song
- Sample “MyPyramid Plan”
- “MyPyramid Table Tent”
- “Run the Rainbow Challenge: Random Harvest Relay”

Materials Needed

- Computer(s) with web access to www.mypyramid.gov
- Additional pictures of foods from each group name in MyPyramid. (These can be collected by students from supermarket advertisements, Internet clip art and magazines.)
- “Level 1, Lesson 1: Exploring MyPyramid for Kids” located at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson1.pdf
- “Level 1, Lesson 2: Eat Smart with MyPyramid for Kids” located at http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resources/mpk1_lesson2.pdf
- 6 hula hoops
- 6 large serving bowls or 6 paper bags of colors that correspond to MyPyramid colors
- At least 4 dozen hollow plastic balls or at least 4 dozen sealing disks used in home canning(jar lids)
- Food pictures

Discussion Questions

1. What are some foods that are good for you?
2. What are some healthy ways to know you are eating the right amount of food?
3. Why are healthy teeth and gums important?
4. How many food groups are there?
5. What are the names of the different food groups?

Related Activities

1. Ask students to look more closely at the farmer on the “MyPyramid Class Display.” Ask them to make observations about the farmer’s clothing. What does he wear to keep himself safe from the sun? (Wide brimmed hat, long sleeved shirt, boots, long pants and gloves). Discuss with students why they should and ways they can, protect themselves from the sun and stay hydrated while working outdoors.
2. Have students go to www.mypyramid.gov and enjoy the “MyPyramid Blast-Off” activity. This is an excellent game which strengthens student understanding of foods that are good for their bodies and foods that are not as healthy for their bodies.
3. The grade tailored lessons included in “The Farmer Grows a Rainbow” located in the health section of this curriculum guide.
4. The Food Pyramid Bead Activity- Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom located at the end of this lesson.
5. The lesson “Be a Food Explorer” located in the health section of this curriculum guide.
6. The lesson “Food...Can You Handle It?” located in the health section of this curriculum guide.
7. The lesson “Build a Burger” located in the health section of this curriculum guide.
8. Nature’s Toothbrush

Book Resources

1. Additional lessons are available-and highly recommended – at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/resoruces/mypyramidclassroom.html>.
2. “Growing Colors” by Bruce McMillan
3. “The Milk Group” by Mari Schuh
4. “The Meat and Beans Group” by Mari Schuh
5. “The Vegetable Group” by Mari Schuh
6. “The Grain Group” by Mari Schuh
7. “The Fruit Group” by Mari Schuh
8. “A Fruit and Vegetable Man” by Roni Schotter
9. “Being Active” by Mari Schuh
10. “Good for Me and You” by Mercer Mayer

Acknowledgement: This lesson was provided courtesy of North Carolina Agriculture in the Classroom and the United States Department of Agriculture.

“The Farmer Grows a Rainbow” Song

The farmer grows a rainbow, a rainbow, a rainbow,
The farmer grows a rainbow
For me to eat each day!

A bright and healthy rainbow, a rainbow, a rainbow,
A bright and healthy rainbow
To fuel my work and play!

The farmer grows the grassy grains, the grassy grains, the grassy grains,
The farmer grows the grassy grains
To give me energy!

The farmer grows the vegetables, the vegetables, the vegetables,
The farmer grows the vegetables
With vitamins, you see!

The farmer grows the fresh fruits, the fresh fruits, the fresh fruits,
The farmer grows the fresh fruits
To keep away disease!

The farmer cares for dairy cows, for dairy cows, for dairy cows,
The farmer cares for dairy cows
To give me milk and cheese!

The farmer raises beef cows, and swine for pork, and poultry,
The farmer raises catfish
For protein so I'll grow.

I want to thank the farmer, the farmer, the farmer,
I want to thank the farmer
For growing my rainbow!

Food Pyramid Bead Activity

Creating a bracelet or book mark will help students understand the new food pyramid and how to calculate their dietary needs for each food group. Students should refer to the <http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/kids-pyramid.html> Web site for complete information on the new food pyramid, serving sizes and portions and other nutritional information. There is more information also available at www.zip4tweens.com. The amounts listed below are averages and not for a specific age group or body size.

Materials Needed:

- One 12"-14" brown leather strap, jute string, pipe cleaner (for book marks) or other item to string beads on.

- Beads

Color	Representing
Clear bead	Serves as the adjuster bead
3 Blue pony beads	Milk Group
2-3 Green pony beads	Vegetable Group
2 Red pony beads	Fruit Group
6 Orange pony beads	Grains Group
5-6 Purple pony beads	Meat and Beans Group
1 Yellow pony bead	Oils Group

Procedure:

Tie a knot on one end of the string close to the end. Begin with the clear bead as it will serve as the adjuster bead. String the colored beads either a) grouped as a color (easier for students to see the numbers involved or b) in random order for aesthetic purposes. Take the end of the string without a knot and lace it through the clear bead. Tie a knot at the end. Now your clear bead has become an adjuster for the bracelet. Excess string below knots can be trimmed.

If using a pipe cleaner, make a knot or twist the cleaner at one end so the beads stay on. A clear bead is not needed. You can make a loop after all beads are put on the pipe cleaner that can be used for the top of the bookmark.

Discuss the resources that each colored bead represents: Amounts and types of food based on a total of 2,000 calories.

1. Blue-3 cups or equivalent of milk or dairy products
2. Green-2-3 cups of vegetable group
3. Red- 2 cups of the fruit group
4. Orange- 6 ounces or the equivalent of the grains group
5. Purple- 5.5 ounces or the equivalent of the meat and beans group
6. Yellow-Oils are not a food group, but you need some for good health. Get your oils from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as corn oil, soybean oil and canola oil.