



UNIT 4: NUTRITION

Pyramid Power

Grade level: Primary

NATIONAL STANDARDS

NL-ENG.K-12.6

NM-NUM.3-5.1

NM-GEO.PK-2.1

NM-MEA.PK-2.1

NS.5-8.6

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain that the USDA Food Guide Pyramid is a guide to healthy living.
2. List the five major food groups and place familiar foods in their appropriate categories.
3. Describe the appropriate number of servings from each food group that should be eaten each day.

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies: Writing surface, clean paper for each student, markers for students, tape/glue, scissors, black pens, copies of Activity Sheets 13:1 and 13:2

Key Term(s): The Food Pyramid

Background Information

The food guide pyramid was developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services to help people understand how to choose a healthful diet. The pyramid calls for eating a variety of foods that provide needed nutrients and an appropriate number of calories.

The new food pyramid is made up of colored vertical stripes that visually represent the five food groups as well as fats, oils and sugar. **The food pyramid** is designed to depict a balanced diet that includes all food groups. The stripes start out wide and grow narrower to show that not all foods within a category are equal. Each of the food groups provides some, but not all, of the nutrients people need. Foods in one group can't replace those in another, and no one food group is more important than another. For good health, people need them all.

The orange stripe in the food guide pyramid represents grains, the green stripe represents vegetables, the red stripe represents fruits, the blue stripe represents milk and dairy products, and the purple stripe represents meat, beans, fish, and nuts. The smallest stripe of the pyramid is yellow; it represents fats, oils and sweets or foods such as salad dressings, oils, cream, butter, margarine, sugars, soft drinks, candies and sweet desserts. These foods provide calories but very little nutritional



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value to our daily diets. We should eat foods from this category only occasionally.

The food pyramid also shows a person running up the steps of the pyramid to represent how important it is to incorporate exercise into one's life. The steps also demonstrate that people can change their diets one step at a time to become healthier.

Interest Approach

FOOD—a topic that is near and dear to each of our hearts and stomachs! Here is a very important question for you. When I point to you, everyone at one time yell out your favorite food. Here is the question. What is your favorite food? Don't say anything yet. Think about it. Ready...

Point to the class.

Wow! I think I heard some of my favorites in the all the confusion. Let's think about our favorite foods a little more by drawing a picture!

Use a Hieroglyphics e-Moment® by having students draw their favorite food.

Let's begin. When I say ARTIST, draw that favorite food you just shouted. Each of us will need to use a clean sheet of paper and the markers that have been provided. Let's draw our favorite food. Ready – ARTIST!

Bring up the concept of healthy eating by asking students to draw arrows to the specific parts of their favorite food that is good for them.

Wow! Our drawings are looking great. As a matter of fact, I am getting very hungry. Now, before you can call your masterpiece finished, let's identify the specific parts of our foods that are good for us. For example, if your favorite food was spaghetti, perhaps you think the pasta and the tomato sauce is good for you. We would draw a line to each and label each line pasta and tomatoes. So, look at your food and draw a line to each thing that is good for you and label each line. Be prepared to explain why those particular parts of your favorite food are good for you.

As students finish the assignment, clarify with each student the reasons certain foods are healthy.

OBJECTIVE 1: Explain that the USDA Food Guide Pyramid is a guide to healthy living.

Great! We are having fun now! Now that we are thinking so hard about our favorite food, let's look at a tool the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published that should help us make decisions for healthy eating. The food guide pyramid is a guide to healthy eating.



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Hand out the Activity Sheet 13:1, "Pyramid Power."

Have any of you ever seen **the food pyramid** before? The food pyramid helps us choose a mixture of foods that are good for us.

Use the Show What You Know e-Moment® and have students share what they think they know about the food guide pyramid. Simply soliciting responses from the entire class is probably best since some may not know anything about the food guide pyramid.

So, let's all share what we just learned about **the Food Pyramid!** Who will be first?

Take as many responses as time allows.

OBJECTIVE 2: List the five major food groups and place familiar foods in their appropriate categories.

Follow along with me on the activity sheet as we list each part of the food pyramid.

Review each of the food groups. Start with the orange stripe of the pyramid.

The orange stripe of the pyramid represents grains such as breads, cereals, rice and pasta. We should eat about 4 to 6 ounces from this group each and every day. Raise your hand if you have eaten any foods from this food group today. Raise your hand if your favorite food was in this group.

Ask students to look at the green and red stripes of the pyramid.

The green stripe represents vegetables and the red stripe represents fruits. Most people need to eat more of these foods for the vitamins, minerals and fiber they supply. We should all try to eat 1 – 1 ½ cups a day from both of these food groups. Raise your hand if you have eaten any foods from the vegetable food group today. Raise your hand if your favorite food is in this group. Raise your hand if you have eaten any foods from the fruit food group today. Raise your hand if your favorite food is in this group.

Ask students to look at the yellow stripe of the pyramid.

The small yellow stripe of the pyramid has no pictures in it. If it did, there would be pictures of things that are made mostly of fats, oils and sugars. These include soft drinks, candy, butter, margarine, salad dressings, oils and sweet desserts. These foods provide calories but very little nutritional value to our diets. We should all eat fewer servings of these foods. Raise your hand if



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you have eaten any foods from this food group today. Raise your hand if your favorite food is in this group

Ask students to look at the blue stripe of the pyramid.

This blue stripe includes dairy foods such as milk, yogurt and cheese. An important mineral, calcium, is found in these foods. Calcium makes strong bones and teeth. We should drink 1 to 3 cups of milk or eat 1 to 3 cups of other calcium-rich foods every day. Raise your hand if you have eaten any foods from this food group today. Raise your hand if your favorite food is in this group.

Ask students to look at the purple stripe of the pyramid,

Our last stripe in the food guide pyramid is purple and represents meats, beans, fish, and nuts. An important nutrient, protein, comes from this group. It helps you grow and build strong muscles. We should eat 3 to 5 ounces from this group on a daily basis. Raise your hand if you have eaten any foods from this food group today. Raise your hand if your favorite food is in this group.

Ask students to look at the steps and runner on the left side of the pyramid.

Exercise is also very important to keep us healthy. The little guy on the side of the pyramid is running up steps to remind us that we need to exercise every day. How many of you have exercised today? Remember we can exercise in many different ways such as playing during recess, riding our bikes, playing sports, or even taking our pets for walks. Exercise does not always have to be a formal activity as long as we are active.

Hand out the Activity Sheet 13:2, "What Group Am I In?" This activity combines a Crayon e-Moment® with other activities.

Look at the activity sheet. Let's have some fun with it. When I say COLOR, let's color only the food around the pyramid. Use any colors you like. Ready – COLOR.

Great job! Now, let's cut out the foods around the pyramid we have just colored and glue them *in the appropriate food category*.

What should we do about a food like pizza? It is a mixed food. It belongs in several food groups. The crust is from the bread group. The tomato sauce is from the vegetable group. The cheese is from the dairy group. Sausage or pepperoni would be from the meat group. What are some other mixed foods you enjoy? How can we fit them into the pyramid?



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OBJECTIVE 3: Describe the appropriate number of servings they should choose from each food group.

It is important to understand that we should eat appropriate portions of foods. Each of the food groups provides some, but not all, of the nutrients we need. Foods in one group can't replace those in another. No one food group is more important than another.

Let's take a look at what the appropriate servings are for each category. Pull out your finished food guide pyramid that we have colored and pasted. Use a black pen and write the following serving sizes on each category.

Place these on a writing surface.

From the **Grain Group** we need **4-6 ounces** per day.

From the **Fruit Group** we need **1-1.5 cups** per day.

From the **Vegetable Group** we need **1-1.5 cups** per day.

From the **Dairy Group** we need **1-3 cups** per day.

From the **Meat, Bean, Fish, & Nuts Group** we need **3-5 ounces** per day.

Finally, use minimal amounts of **Fats, Oils, & Sweets**. In fact, use these foods sparingly.

And let's not forget we need to exercise everyday for at least 30-60 minutes

Use a Choral Response e-Moment® to review the appropriate servings for each food group.

SUMMARY/REVIEW

We identified the food guide pyramid as well as the parts of **the food pyramid**, and even the appropriate amounts of food we should eat daily. All of these lessons are some of the most important things we can ever learn. Let's challenge ourselves to share what we have learned today with as many people as possible. As a matter of fact, let's report how we shared this information with someone as an assignment for tomorrow. Eat well!

Who will tell us the name of an important tool developed by the USDA, which helps us make healthy eating decisions? Raise your hand.

Solicit the correct answer from a student.



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REFLECTIVE REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Think about what you eat on a daily basis. How does your diet compare to what the Food Pyramid suggests?
- Why would the United States Department of Agriculture have anything to do with our daily diet?
- Which piece of the Food Pyramid is most interesting to you and why?

APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION 1: Create a large Food Guide Pyramid on a bulletin board. Have students cut out pictures from magazines and place them in the appropriate food groups.

APPLICATION 2: Encourage students to strive to eat more fruits and vegetables every day. Have them keep track of the fruits and vegetables they eat.

APPLICATION 3: Good nutrition and fitness go together. Ask students about their favorite fitness activities. Have students keep records or draw pictures of the fitness activities they have done in a week.

APPLICATION 4: For an art project, have students work on a Pyramid Power picture. Ask them to write or draw something about how the power of the pyramid can make them healthier.



ACTIVITY SHEET 13:1

Pyramid Power

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Fats, Oils & Sweets - Yellow

USE SPARINGLY (all ages)

Vegetable Group - Green

1.5 cups per day (age 4 -8 years old)
2 cups per day (girls age 9-13 years old)
2.5 cups per day (boys age 9-13 years old)

Fruit Group - Red

1-1.5 cups per day (age 4 -8 years old)
1.5 cups per day (girls age 9-13 years old)
1.5 cups per day (boys age 9-13 years old)

Grains - Orange

4-5 oz. per day (age 4 -8 years old)
5 oz. per day (girls age 9-13 years old)
6 oz. per day (boys age 9-13 years old)

Dairy - Blue

1-2 cups per day (age 4 -8 years old)
3 cups per day (girls age 9-13 years old)
3 cups per day (boys age 9-13 years old)

Meat, Beans, Fish, & Nuts - Purple

3-4 oz. per day (age 4 -8 years old)
5 oz. per day (girls age 9-13 years old)
5 oz. per day (boys age 9-13 years old)

Exercise

30-60 minutes a day of vigorous play



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