

NUTRITION INTEGRATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Arizona Nutrition Network

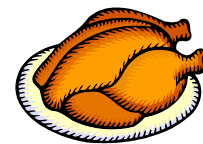
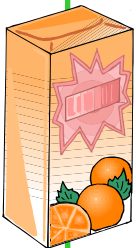
SOCIAL STUDIES/GEOGRAPHY

- Study foods from different countries. Where do they fit on MyPyramid?
- Research how foods were prepared, preserved and stored historically.
- Research the availability of foods in various seasons and locations around the world. Use the harvest calendars or season schedules for your state or country.
- Write a paragraph and describe how culture influences food choices.
- Design a taste test of healthy foods from various regions of the world or the U.S. and hold a TASTE and TRY Festival, inviting other classrooms to participate.
- Learn different dances and physical games from around the world that people do to be active and perform them in class. Research popular healthy foods from the country of the game or dance.



SCIENCE



- Predict the benefits of eating healthy for disease prevention.
- Prepare and taste foods from the food groups of MyPyramid.
- Examine a variety of drinks, such as water, fruit juice, soda, energy drinks and discuss their effects on personal health.
- Conduct experiments on foods, such as testing the pH levels of different types of fruit juices. (or the fat content, presence of sugars, leavening agents, etc).
- Examine the potential health risks associated with physical inactivity and poor dietary habits.
- List five or more strengthening activities that you do at home or school and identify what muscles they help strengthen. Add low-fat protein sources you can eat at home and school to keep muscles strong.



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LANGUAGE ARTS

- Write a recipe with ingredients and directions for your favorite healthy meal or snack, then make a shopping list for the ingredients you'll need.
 - Write a story to convince a friend to more fruit and vegetables, or a letter to parents asking them to send healthy snacks to school.
 - Keep a food journal for a week. At the end of each day or week, compare and contrast which days or meals were the healthiest options, or which nutrients were included in the meals.
 - Write alliterations ("*Pears Provide Plenty of Power*") and acronyms (*PEAR= Perfect Edible Asian Ripe*) for various foods.
 - Write an oral report on the important nutrients in each MyPyramid food group.
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- Draw a "healthy" person. Write a paragraph to define healthy, and explain your drawing. Set a goal to find a way you can be that healthy person.
 - Brainstorm a list of healthy snacks, fruits, vegetables, crunchy foods, soft foods, healthy foods to eat using categories like "crunchy," "round," "juicy," etc.
 - Use nutrition concepts such as variety, balance, and moderation, and nutrients and physical activity concepts like frequency, intensity, and aerobic for spelling/vocabulary words.
 - Take-off on a story book, such as *Brown Bread, Brown Bread What Do You See?* ("I see a red apple looking at me")
 - Read folk tales to your students that explain how the *Lion Got Its Roar* or *How The Hyena Got Its Laugh*. Have students write a story to explain how the Raisin Got Its Wrinkles, How the Tomato Got Its Color, How The Peach Got Its Fuzz, etc.
 - Create a healthy class cookbook, including favorite healthful snack recipes, fruits and vegetables of the world, ABC book of fruits and vegetables and/or physical activities.
 - Create a monthly class calendar and write a healthy eating and physical activity behavior for each day of the week, such as walking around the playground at recess, trying a new vegetable, or picking out a high fiber cereal at the grocery store.
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MATHEMATICS



- Have students track the variety and amount of different vegetables they eat in a week. At the end of the week, tally the servings of vegetables eaten and create a class graph to show how many servings of each vegetable were consumed.
- Have students keep track of the number of servings of fruits/vegetables they eat in a week. Students can create charts for their own daily consumption. Repeat the activity over multiple weeks and students can measure their improvement.
- Create food related math word problems. If I plan to eat a grain food, a milk food, and a fruit for breakfast, how many servings of each group will I need for the remainder of the day?
- Learn how to calculate the fat content in foods. Look at the label of the food, multiply the number of grams of fat by 9 and divide this number by the total calories per serving. This is the percentage of calories from fat.
- Explore the geometry of MyPyramid and the reasons it is used to illustrate good nutrition.
- Double or half a recipe and learn how to use measuring equipment in cooking.
- Make Venn Diagrams and graph class preferences, i.e. "I like soccer/I like apples."
- Make bar graphs for favorite vegetables, flavor of smoothie, physical activity, etc.
- Develop student surveys using nutrition or physical activity related questions:
 - What's your favorite fruit juice: orange, apple, grape, grapefruit, or cranberry?
 - Which is your favorite way to consume dairy products: cheese, chocolate milk, plain milk, yogurt, ice cream?
 - What's your favorite healthy snack: apples, bananas, grapes, oranges, pretzels, carrots, or yogurt?
 - What is your favorite food from the Grain group: pretzels, noodles, bread, rice, or crackers?
 - What is your favorite way to be active?



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ART/MUSIC

- Create a class or individual MyPyramid collage and display your favorite foods and physical activities.
- Create puppets for a student-written nutrition puppet show.
- Write a nutrition or physical activity poem and set it to music.
- Create colorful signs and messages that advocate healthy foods to help kids make better food choices and display them around the school.
- Develop a list of nutrition/physical activity words and play a game of Pictionary; students draw clues to words for the class to guess.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Use food cards and a blank pyramid for a relay game where students must correctly place their food cards on the pyramid. The quickest team wins.
- Discuss energy balance by running in place to illustrate how long it would take to burn off a candy bar compared with an apple.
- Form a circle and do movement activities while students practice classifying foods on the pyramid (run in place and name as many red fruits and vegetables as you can, perform jumping jacks and name whole grain sources).
- Draw a picture of your body and label exercises that help make your muscle groups strong. Perform the exercises with music for an exercise break. Include the 6 nutrients, carbohydrates, proteins, fats, water, minerals, vitamins, and write the function they help the body perform (e.g. proteins build strong muscles, vitamin D builds strong bones etc).
- Start each morning moving to a popular line dance such as the “Cupid Shuffle” or an action song like “If You’re Happy and You Know It.” After the activity, take a poll to see how many students ate breakfast.



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LINKING NUTRITION TO THE CAFETERIA

- Look at the lunch menu and have students place items on MyPyramid.
- Have students create conversation starter table tents for the cafeteria with nutrition and physical activity topics or questions.
- Encourage teachers and the school cafeteria manager to jointly sponsor an art/essay contest to get students thinking about how school meals feed body and mind and contribute to overall good nutrition, health, energy, and learning.
- Bring food service staff, teachers, parents, and the community together for a health fair or other event that makes it fun to learn about nutrition and physical activity. Students can help plan activities and staff their own educational tables.

OTHER STEPS TO A HEALTHY CLASSROOM

- **Join First Lady, Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Campaign.** Lead your school's Fuel up to Play 60 program, a school based program designed around one or more Adult Program Advisors and students working together to improve school wellness. Sign up at: <http://www.fueluptoplay60.com/>
- **Order grade appropriate free nutrition and physical activity materials** to use with your students from the following sites:
 - <http://www.dairyCouncilofaz.org/catalog/default.asp?page=catalog=main>
 - <http://www.tn.ntis.gov/index.aspx>
 - <http://www.uanutritionnetwork.org/educational-resources/>
- **Use good food sense!** Ensure that foods and beverages served during classroom celebrations are in compliance with the district wellness policy. Avoid using food as incentives or rewards for good behavior or academic performance. Be a good role model and pave the way for healthy eating habits. Encourage students to adopt healthy eating behaviors such as eating breakfast, drinking water and choosing nutritious foods at meal and snack times.