

## **Lesson Plan**

**Prepared by:** Eva Star

**Title:** “The Food Pyramid”

### **Teaching Resources:**

- Poster of Food Pyramid
- 2 bags of various food items for nutritional comparison
- Six posters labeled with the food groups
- 3 worksheets for participation, assessment, and independent study
- Newspaper ads from grocery stores
- “Nutrition Jeopardy Game” including 12 colored sheet of game materials
- Stickers and pencils (for game prizes)

### **Standards Addressed:**

California Department of Education:

#### **Section 1: Nutrition Competencies and Grade Level Expectations: Grade Four**

##### **Nutrition Competency I:**

Students will know and understand the relationship between the human body, nutrition and energy balance.

(A) Know the six nutrient groups and their functions:

Report on at least one key nutrient provided by each food group.

Classify food products made from plant and animal sources (such as wheat, beef, milk, and soybeans) by the major nutrients they provide.

##### **Nutrition Competency II:**

Students will know current nutrition and physical activity recommendations and how to apply them.

(A) Know nutrition guidelines:

Illustrate appropriate serving sizes for foods in each food group of the current USDA guidance for daily food choices.

Compare nutritional values of a variety of similar food items.

### **Description of Students:**

There were 36 4th grade students, both female and male, in a classroom setting at a private school. They had no prior nutrition related courses.

## **Learning Objectives:**

At the end of the lesson the children will be able to:

- Understand the six food groups on the food pyramid.
- Sort food items into the correct food groups.
- Identify healthy snacks.
- Understand the importance of exercise.

## **Opening Strategy (Anticipatory Set):**

Have two bags with different food items in them:

“Healthy” bag: pomegranate, apples, carrots, whole grain bread, milk

“Unhealthy” bag: candy bar, can of soda, white bread, Twinkies, potato chips

Hold up each item in pairs (i.e. candy bar and an apple) and ask the students which food item is healthier for their bodies and why.

## **Learning Activities or Extended Agenda:**

- (1) Hold up item (candy bar and an apple) and ask the student which food is healthier for their bodies and why. We will discuss the items.
- (2) Teacher will post the food pyramid on the white board and ask the children what they know about the pyramid:
  - What does the pyramid tell us?
  - What do the different colors mean?
  - What are the six food groups and why is one really small?
  - Will show items from the food groups.
  - How much should they eat from each food group?
  - What is the figure on the side of the pyramid doing?

While explaining the different food groups, each of the children are filling out a handout of the MyPyramid worksheet. The children will color the food pyramid and label the food groups accordingly.

- (3) Each child cuts out three pictures of food items of their choice from a newspaper advertisement and sticks them on one of six labeled posters related to the appropriate food groups.
- (4) After doing this exercise the children will be assisted by filling out an *Eat Smart* handout and we will discuss the results after the children are finished with the paper.
- (5) A *Food Math* handout will be given to take home and do independently.
- (6) The lesson will end with the students playing *Nutritional Jeopardy*. The class will be divided into 2 groups and a coin is tossed to decide which side goes first. The children on

the winning side will get to pick their prizes first. (See attachment for complete rules and perimeters of game).

- (7) Review will be done of the material that was just learned by asking the children different question about the food groups and the foods in them.

### **Student Assessment (Check for Understanding):**

1. Will recognize the right food groups by marking them on the *Eat Smart* handout.
2. Playing *Nutritional Jeopardy* – children will answer questions about the food pyramid.
3. Students will cut out different foods from food advertisements and then put them on the poster marked with the names of the food groups.

### **Summary Closure**

After the *Nutritional Jeopardy* game I will reinforce the learned material by going over the food pyramid colors, food groups, and exercise. I will then thank them for their participation and enthusiasm.

### **Independent Practice:**

Students will be given a *Food Math* hand-out and asked to fill out the worksheet at home.

### **Teacher Reflections:**

I met with the teacher a few week before the lesson and based on her suggestion I taught the lesson before their first recess since the children were bound to be more attentive. The teacher made me feel especially welcome, and I think that for teaching the first time things went well. It was particularly thoughtful of her to encourage the children to participate before I got there. It was helpful that the children had name tags so I could address them by name.

From the start the children were very engaged. They were very interested in how I started the lesson, especially in how I compared the amount of healthy food items they could eat compared to the unhealthy ones. The 4th graders also were eager to share their knowledge of the different food groups. It was my goal that the children understand the food groups in the food pyramid and the relationship of exercise to nutrition. I reinforced their knowledge by independently cutting out different foods from grocery store advertisements and pasting them on the appropriate poster. Most of the children did well on the assessments. We particularly had fun with *Nutritional Jeopardy*.

I tried to have most of the children help with one task or another. They helped with handing out papers and picking up the trash from the left over newspapers. I gave the children easy to follow instructions. I praised them and was positive and enthusiastic throughout the lesson. I tried to encompass the different learning styles of most children. My teaching included audio, visual and hands on activities.

There are a few things which I would change. The first thing I need to stop doing is to stop pulling on my blouse. Secondly, when I gave the children the grocery ads to cut out the food items, I did not tell them which food groups they should pick so there was a little confusion and the children spent a lot of time trying to choose what they should cut out; I should have assigned food groups to different rows in the class so that they would have been more focused. Thirdly, I would not play sudden death with the children again when they are tied. Instead I would recognize that they were all winners, allowing one side to pick the pencils first and other side to pick the stickers first (particularly since I had two prizes to give to them). Lastly, I would do the review before the final game since it took awhile to calm down the children before doing the review.

## References

*MyPyramid.gov*. USDA (2008, October 14), Retrieved October 25, 2008 from  
<http://www.mypyramid.gov/index.html>

*Nutrition Competencies and Grade Level Expectations*. Grades Four through Six. California  
Department of Education (2008, Feb.), Retrieved October 28, 2008. from  
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/ncccindex.asp>