

A Healthy Lifestyle Food

Month: Feb.

Week #: 21

Day: T - W Time: 30 min.

The Food Pyramid

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

The students will: be able to explain the Food Pyramid and apply it to their diet and eating habits.

Materials

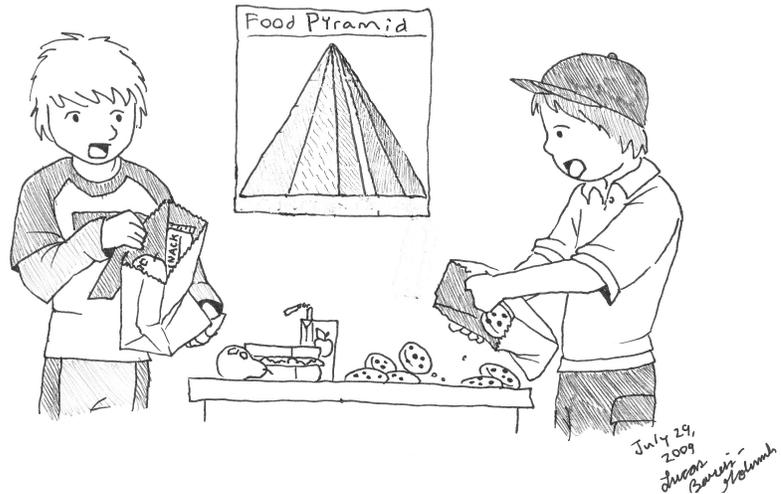
go to <http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html> to download a Food Pyramid poster

Illustration

Look at what the two boys brought for lunch. Which one brought the healthy lunch?

Background

What constitutes 'healthy food' is dependent on one's culture, values, physiology and current scientific research. For many people, one's diet is almost as personal a topic as one's religious beliefs. It is important that students understand this and be tolerant and nonjudgmental of others' eating habits. Ultimately, they need to understand that their diet is a personal choice, but an extremely important one that affects both their emotional and physical health.



The new Food Pyramid has been

completely revamped. It now takes into account the different nutritional needs of people relative to their age, sex and activity level. In addition, the 'Tips' section of 'My Pyramid Plan' on the web site, makes a differentiation between healthier and less healthy food (e.g. white bread compared to whole wheat, a fruit roll-up compared to an apple).

Group Activity

1. Ask for a volunteer who doesn't mind sharing what they had to eat for the previous three meals (including snacks). At this juncture, point out to the students that 'healthy food' is dependent on one's culture, values, physiology and current scientific research. For many people, one's diet is almost as personal a topic as one's religious beliefs, so we need to be respectful of their eating habits.

2. Show the students the USDA Food Pyramid poster. Then, go to the USDA web site at <http://www.mypyramid.gov/> and enter the volunteer's meal information into 'My Pyramid Plan.' Ask them to compare what the volunteer ate to what the USDA recommends. Repeat this process with several students.

Group Discussion Questions

1. What are the different food groups?
A: Refer to the poster.

Group Discussion Questions (continued)

2. What does each food group give us nutritionally? (For additional information see 'Health benefits and nutrients' also at the web site.)

A: Grains: carbohydrates = give us energy

Vegetables: vitamins = help the body perform many functions; fiber = aids digestion

Fruit: vitamins = help the body perform many functions; fiber = aids digestion; fructose = gives us quick energy

Oils/Fats: don't give us much of anything

Dairy: calcium = build bones; protein = builds muscle

Meat/Beans/Nuts: protein = builds muscle³. Think about what you eat each day and then

answer these questions inside your head: According to the USDA's Food Pyramid, do you eat a healthy diet? What do you need to add or delete in order to make it healthier?

4. Why is a healthy diet important?

A: It affects one's emotional and physical health.

5. What do people mean when they say, "You are what you eat"?

A: What you eat affects one's mood and demeanor.

Variations/Extensions

1. Have the students make their own blank Food Pyramid and then fill in what they had for their last three meals, including snacks.

2. Play 'My Pyramid Blast Off,' also found the the web site.

Conclusion

Say, "What you eat is very important. Too much of some foods can make you overweight, give you diabetes and clog your arteries. Too little of some foods can cause vitamin deficiencies, loss of energy and even make it hard to go to the bathroom (constipation). Eating a healthy, balanced diet can help you lead a happy, healthy life."



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