



UNIT 1:
Fruits and Vegetables
Take a Bite!

A nutrition and physical activity curriculum designed to help children develop healthy habits during out-of-school time

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This document was created by the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity for educational use in after school programs for children from kindergarten through fifth grade.

About Food & Fun After School

2nd Edition

The goal of **Food & Fun** is to assist program staff in providing healthier environments to children during out-of-school time. The curriculum is designed to incorporate lessons and activities about healthy eating and physical activity into regular afterschool program schedules. **Food & Fun** includes 11 teaching units that encourage healthy behaviors through active play, literacy and math skills development, creative learning, and hands-on snack time activities. With over 70 activities to choose from and a user-friendly layout for each lesson, Food & Fun makes it simple to promote healthy eating and physical activity in your program every day!

Environmental Standards for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Out-of-school Time Programs

- ★ Do not serve sugar-sweetened beverages.
- ★ Serve water every day.
- ★ Serve a fruit and/or vegetable every day.
- ★ Do not serve foods with trans fat.
- ★ When serving grains (like bread, crackers and cereals), serve whole grains.
- ★ Eliminate broadcast and cable TV or movies. Limit computer time to less than 1 hour each day.
- ★ Provide all children with at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day. Offer 20 minutes of vigorous activity at least 3 days per week.

Teaching about healthy behavior is most effective when the program environment is consistent with the **Food & Fun** messages on healthy eating and physical activity. Programs are encouraged to work towards achieving the Environmental Standards for Nutrition and Physical Activity.

Food & Fun materials were created by the Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity in partnership with the YMCA of the USA's Activate America initiative to help individuals and families lead healthier lives. In addition to afterschool programs, these materials are appropriate for use in a wide variety of out-of-school time programs, like summer camps, sports programs, extended day programs, and before school programs.

For more information on the Environmental Standards, see the **Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center's Environmental Standards for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Out-of-School Time Programs**. All **Food & Fun** materials, including parent engagement tools, tip sheets on implementing the Environmental Standards, snack recipes, and assessment tools can be downloaded at no cost from the Food and Fun website: www.foodandfun.org or www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/

Unit 1 Information for Leaders

Behavior Goal

Children will eat more fruits and vegetables (5-a-day!)

Key Messages for Kids

- Go for Five! Eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables (combined) each day.
- Try to eat a fruit or a vegetable with every meal and snack.
- Just take a bite! Don't be afraid to try a new fruit or vegetable – chances are you'll like it.

Key Information for Program Staff

Fruits and vegetables are important foods to include in a healthy diet, but many children (and adults!) eat much less than the recommended 5 or more servings each day. Fruits and vegetables are packed with lots of vitamins and nutrients. They are also a great source of fiber, which helps you feel full.

The trick is that each type of fruit or vegetable has unique benefits, so it is important to eat different types. Encourage children to eat a variety of different fruits and vegetables so they get all the vitamins and nutrients they need to be healthy. Tell children it is fun to try new fruits and vegetables, and they taste great! They say that “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”, but don't forget your oranges and broccoli! Striving for variety also means you should also try to incorporate fruits and vegetables that are relevant to the lives of the children you serve. Take time to talk to kids about the kinds of fruits and vegetables they eat at home and make sure to incorporate them into your snacks and activities in this unit.

What's a Serving?

- ¼ cup of dried fruit, like raisins
- ½ cup of cooked or raw vegetables, like baby carrots or cooked green beans
- ½ cup of canned or cut-up fruit, like applesauce or canned pineapple
- 1 medium piece of fresh fruit (an apple the size of a tennis ball, or 1 medium banana)
- 1 cup of leafy greens like spinach and lettuce (dark greens pack more nutrients than pale iceberg lettuce)

Tip: September is National 5-a-Day month, so check out the resource section and connect to organizations that may offer free materials or ideas. School food service directors may also have promotional material, or they may be interested in working with school-based programs on taste-tests or other activities.

Refer to the “*Fruits & Veggies!*” *Tip Sheet* for ideas on how to serve fruits and vegetables for snack at your afterschool program. The Tip Sheets are also available on the Food and Fun website: www.foodandfun.org or www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/

Activity Options for Children



Arts & Crafts

Make a fruit & vegetable placemat! Use it to track which fruits and vegetables have been tried.



Active Games

Warm Up & Cool Down – do this whenever the children are active

Fruit & Vegetable Relays – use the various modifications to teach children about fruits and vegetables



Other Group Games or Activities (can be used in circle time or small groups)

Going on a Picnic – pack an alphabet of fruits and vegetables

Find the Favorite – interview friends to determine group favorite, with modifications for older and younger children

Bingo –make your own board using template provided



Suggested Books

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert takes children through the ABC's of fruits and vegetables.

I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child follows Charlie's creative nature as she convinces her picky sister Lola to try vegetables in disguise.



Snack Time Ideas

Bugs on a Log – a snack time classic!

Build a snack – Fruit Kabobs with Spiced Yogurt Topping

Oven Baked Carrot Strips

Taste test ideas – take a bite of a new fruit or vegetable

You can also find these recipes in the Food & Fun 2nd Edition Recipe Packet, available on the Food and Fun website: www.foodandfun.org or www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/

Connect with Parents!

Key Messages for Parents

- Go for Five! Eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables (combined) each day.
- Serve a fruit or vegetable with every meal and snack, even if your child doesn't always eat them.
- Involve your child in healthy eating. Ask your child to help choose which fruits and vegetables you buy for the family and pick which you serve with meals.
- Encourage your child to at least “take a bite” of every fruit and vegetable you serve.

Parent Engagement Options

It is important to engage parents on a regular basis in a variety of ways. Here are some ways that you can engage parents at afterschool:

- Have a conversation with parents at pick up
- Create a bulletin board with the key messages from each Food & Fun unit
- Involve parents in daily physical activities and snack time
- Hold regularly scheduled events each month
- Plan a potluck! Invite parents to participate in a fruit and veggie potluck. Ask parents to bring their favorite fruit or veggie dish to share with other parents and children. Ask them to bring copies of the recipe for other parents so they can make the dish at home.
- Offer fruits and veggies at pick-up. Put a bowl of fruits or veggies by the sign-out book for parents to grab when they pick up their kids from afterschool.

Refer to the Parent Communications and Parent Handouts, available in English and Spanish, to reinforce the messages in this unit of Food & Fun:

- **Newsletter Article:** “Fruits and vegetables for better health”. Insert this into your program newsletter.
- **Email Message:** “Healthy Habits Power Tips: Get your 5 servings of fruits and veggies!”. Email this message to parents at the start of this unit.
- **Parent Handout:** “Fruits and vegetables: Eat 5 or more servings for your health”. Send this handout home in a mailing, insert it into your next newsletter, or have copies available for pick up at your program’s sign-out area.

Parent Communications and Handouts are also available on the Food and Fun website: www.foodandfun.org or www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/food-fun/

Resources



Web Sites:

Food & Fun After School has an interactive website, where you can download materials for free:

www.foodandfun.org

Harvard School of Public Health publishes an online nutrition news and resource center:

www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/

The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity works with community partners to design, implement and evaluate programs that improve nutrition and physical activity, and reduce overweight and chronic disease risk among children and youth. The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center offers additional materials and resources on nutrition and physical activity:

www.hsph.harvard.edu/prc/

Let's Move is First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to provide parents with the support they need to make healthy family choices, provide healthier school foods, help kids to be more physically active, and make healthy, affordable food available in every part of the U.S.

www.letsmove.gov/index.html

Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a joint venture between the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation with a mission to reduce the nationwide prevalence of childhood obesity by 2015 and to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices.

www.healthiergeneration.org

Action for Healthy Kids is a nonprofit and volunteer network fighting childhood obesity and undernourishment by working with schools to help kids learn to eat right, be active every day and be ready to learn. Their website includes tools and fact sheets about childhood obesity, nutrition and physical activity.

www.actionforhealthykids.org/

The Produce for Better Health Foundation provides tips for eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, nutritional information, as well as ideas about planning, shopping and cooking meals and snacks packed with fruits and vegetables.

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/

Dole produces a website that has a section for educators with lesson plans and activities about fruits and vegetables:

www.dole.com/SuperKids/Educators/tabid/744/Default.aspx

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has a website dedicated to information about fruits and vegetables. It includes recipes, budgeting tips, and guides to healthy meals.

www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has an interactive website that provides information about the MyPlate food guidance system with specific information on each food group, which can be tailored for individual needs.

www.choosemyplate.gov/

The Nemours Foundation's Center for Children's Health Media created KidsHealth to provide families with doctor-approved information that they can understand and use. Includes sites for parents, children, and teenagers and provides a variety of health information, including nutrition and fitness topics. Available in English and Spanish.

www.kidshealth.org

www.kidshealth.org/parent/en_espanol/esp_land_pg/spanish_landing_page.html

Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition (We Can!) provides families and communities with helpful resources to help prevent childhood overweight.

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/

Web Sites for Kids:

The BAM! (Body and Mind) program provides tweens with tips on nutrition and physical activity. Children can explore the over 30 physical activities, including the necessary gear and how to play. They can also find great ideas for healthy snacks and meals.

www.bam.gov

KidsHealth also has a website especially for kids in English and Spanish.

www.kidshealth.org/kid/index.jsp?tracking=K_Home

www.kidshealth.org/kid/en_espanol/esp_land_pg/spanish_landing_page.html

The Produce for Better Health Foundation has a fun interactive website designed just for kids! It includes recipes, games, activities and more!

www.foodchamps.org/

Self-Assessment Tools:

The Produce for Better Health Foundation provides educators with several options that can be used to help children monitor their fruit and vegetable intake. Use these materials to help promote 5-a-day in your program.

www.pbhfoundation.org/educators/teachers/activities/tracking.php

Activities

FRUIT & VEGETABLE PLACEMAT



Objective:

Children make a colorful placemat to remind them of fruits and vegetables they like, and to discuss the fun of trying new fruits and vegetables.

Preparation and Materials:

- Construction paper
- Magazines (food or home type) or local grocery circulars
- Scissors
- Glue or glue stick
- Lamination materials, clear contact paper, or packing tape (recommended)
- Dry-erase markers for tracking activity (optional)

Instructions:

1. Distribute 1 sheet of colorful construction paper to each child and have magazines and/or grocery circulars available to share. Get a variety of circulars from different stores in your area to ensure a wide choice of fruits and vegetables children might eat at home.
2. Tell children that they will make a placemat for their snacks or to take home.
3. Instruct children to search for pictures of fruits and vegetables to cut out and paste on their paper. Have them select fruits and veggies they like as well as fruits and veggies they are willing to try.
4. When the decorating is complete, laminate the page or use clear contact paper or packing tape to seal page.

Extension Activities:

- Using dry-erase markers, have children check off the fruits and vegetables that they have eaten that day.
- Discussion: Have kids sit in a circle and share their placemats.
 - How many fruits and vegetables did they eat today? Were there other things that they did eat, but do not have a picture of?
 - How did they select the items for their placemat? How and when do they usually eat fruits and vegetables? What new fruits or vegetables would they like to try?
 - Remind kids to that they should try to have 5 fruits or vegetables every day—a least 1 with every meal and snack!

- Encourage kids to try something different this week! As the group to select a fruit or vegetable that they would like to try and serve it for snack!
- Instead of making individual placemats, make one large mural using a roll of butcher paper. As a group children can identify the fruits or vegetables that they consumed that day by placing check marks or small post-it notes next to the foods they had to eat.
- Have children create placemats with 4 sections (one for each season) and draw or paste fruits and vegetables that grow in each season. Then serve snacks that use seasonal fruits and veggies! See examples below.

Fruit and Vegetable Seasonality

Summer—apricots, avocados, blueberries, watermelon, green beans, and corn

Fall—apples, cranberries, grapes, lettuce, sweet potatoes and pumpkins

Winter—broccoli, clementines, oranges, kiwi, cauliflower, celery, and cabbage

Spring—cherries, carrots, asparagus, grapefruit and beets

NOTE: Tell kids that while it may be winter here, it's summer in other parts of the world (which is why oranges, for example, are a "winter" fruit!)

WARM UP, COOL DOWN



Objective:

It is important for children (and adults!) to warm up their muscles and get the blood flowing before engaging in more vigorous/heart pumping activities. It is also important to allow the body to slow down instead of abruptly stopping an activity. Below are some ideas to help children ease into and out of the physical games.

Warm Ups:

- Walk around the gym or field, or up and down corridors if using modified space for activity. Begin at a slow pace, then increase the speed of each lap, but do not run.
- Play a short movement game such as “Red Light, Green Light” (children move across room when you say, “Green Light”, and stop when you call out, “Red Light!” Alter movement instructions with each start, e.g.: tip toe, hop or gallop.)
- Play “Simon Says” and incorporate stretching moves (such as “reach to the sky” or “touch your toes”) along with warming moves (such as “march in place” or “hop on one foot”)
- Perform simple stretches sitting on the floor. Remind children not to bounce or pull. For younger children, offer visual cues like, “reach forward and hug the beach ball”, or “paint a rainbow with your right hand...now paint one with your left”.

Cool Downs:

- Race across the gym or field with progressively slower movements: run then gallop then skip then walk then tip toe, etc.
- Repeat simple stretching activities.
- Introduce deep breathing or simple yoga moves as a way to cool down and relax (remind children that these can be used any time!).
 - Slowly (to the count of five) breathe in while bringing your hands together and rising over the head. Then slowly breathe out with a loud “whoosh” while bringing your arms down to the side.
 - “Cat” pose: create a table, supporting the body with the hands and knees. Breathe in and arch back so that the belly moves to the floor and the shoulders move back to look up. Breathe out to reverse the curve of the back like a cat stretching its back.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE RELAY GAMES



Objective:

Teams collect and sort as many fruit and vegetable containers as possible.

Preparation and Materials:

- Collect, empty, and clean a variety boxes or cans of fruit/vegetables or juice. You could also use pictures/write names of fruits and vegetables to paste on small boxes (like empty milk cartons)
- 2 large containers (milk crates or paper grocery bags work well) for each team; label one box “fruit” and one box “vegetable”

Instructions:

1. Arrange group in 2 or more teams and have each team line up on opposite sides of a gym/field/large open space.
2. Place fruit/vegetable containers in the middle of the space, between the teams.
3. On “Go!” each team member takes turns running to grab a fruit/vegetable container and returning to their team to sort the items. All team members should run in place, stretch, or do jumping jacks when waiting for their turn.
4. The team with the most items, correctly sorted, wins.

Extension Activities:

- Search for an item that meets the description called out by the leader. For instance, the leader calls out “orange fruit” and the team members in line run out and find an orange fruit to return to their teams. The next person in line searches for a different item, such as “green vegetable”. Other options include: part of plant, how the food is typically served (lunch bag fruit, dried fruit snack, mashed vegetable, etc). For older students who have been introduced to key nutrients, categories may include options like “lots of vitamin C” or “little vitamin C”
- As a class, make labels for a few of the fruits and vegetable that are translated into the different languages spoken by the group (Spanish, French, etc). Have children assist with translations. Review the names as a class and then play the game again.
- To add variety to the game and encourage family involvement, have children bring in boxes and cans from home.

I'M GOING ON A PICNIC



Objective:

Children take turns naming fruits and vegetables to follow the alphabet.

Suggested Book:

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert

Instructions:

1. Children sit in a circle and the leader explains that the group is going on a picnic and needs to pack a fruit or vegetable that begins with each letter in the alphabet.
2. Begin by saying “I’m going on a picnic and I’m going to bring an (apple, avocado, apricot, etc)”
3. The next person repeats the line as well as the foods already listed (see modification for young children) and adds a food from the next letter in the alphabet.
4. The goal is for all children to pack some fruit or vegetable for the picnic. When a child can’t remember something, the game ends and it’s time to start packing again!

Extension Activities:

- Younger children may simply name a food for each letter in the alphabet, while older children can be challenged to remember and repeat each food listed.
- Smaller programs may play this game with all ages together.
- This game can be expanded to include health snacks and drinks; for instance, arts on a log or fruit-flavored water.

FIND THE FAVORITE



Objective:

Children learn what fruits and vegetables are enjoyed by their friends and family members, and are encouraged to try new ones themselves.

Preparation and Materials:

- Print and copy “Find the Favorite” worksheet
- Pens or pencils for children who can write, crayons or colored pencils/markers for children who prefer to draw pictures

Instructions:

1. Distribute interview sheets and pens/pencils to each child.
2. Instruct the children to ask 3-5 friends the following questions:
 - a. What is your favorite fruit? How do you like to eat it?
 - b. What is your favorite vegetable? How do you like to eat it?
 - c. Is there a fruit or vegetable that you do not like? What is it?
3. Tally the results and make plans to serve the favorites.
4. Discuss why children do not like a particular fruit or vegetable— is there a way that they might like it better? Come up with creative serving options (example: eat with a fun dip, try it with a sauce, or add a new spice). Remind children that most vegetables taste different when prepared differently. Conduct a taste test to compare some raw versus cooked foods, such as carrot sticks and cooked carrots or apples and applesauce.

Extension Activities:

- Conduct activity at pick-up time or give children the interview sheets to take home; have children interview their parents or caregivers and report on the results the next day.
- Have children bring in their favorite fruit or vegetable “recipes” from home and share with the group. Select some for snack. Compile into a fruit and veggie recipe book that students can decorate as part of a quiet activity and then take home.
- For older groups: create ads (on poster board) to represent the favorite fruits and vegetables of the group, with benefits, nutritional information, etc. Include the message that kids and adults should eat 5 a day.

BINGO



Preparation and Materials:

- Create bingo boards using the Worksheet. Give each child a blank BINGO board to decorate with pictures of fruits and vegetables (they may draw or cut pictures from magazines or grocery circulars). Photocopy these cards and cut out the pictures to use as call cards (or create a list).
- Coins or markers

Instructions:

1. Play BINGO according to the usual directions:
 - a. Draw the cards one by one and call out the fruit or vegetable to the group.
 - b. Have each child search their board for the item called out and place a marker over the fruit or vegetable if it appears on their card.
 - c. The first person to get 5 in a straight line (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally) yells out “BINGO!” to win.
2. Play with creative rules for winning:
 - a. First to get any 5 on board
 - b. First to cover entire board
 - c. First to get cover all green or red fruits and vegetables

Extension Activities:

- Play with creative ways of calling out cards (*Note: several fruits or vegetables may fit the description*):
 - Describe color (“I’m a deep green vegetable”)
 - Describe common way to consume the food (“People drink my juice”)
 - Describe region where fruit/vegetable is from or which season it grows in (for example “fall”=pumpkins, apples, etc).
 - Learn names of fruits and veggies in different languages spoken by the group and call out by these different languages

Recipes and Taste Tests



Recipe Criteria

All recipes included in the Food & Fun 2nd Edition were selected to meet the United States Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutritional standards for healthy snacks, and are consistent with the Environmental Standards. All recipes below are priced at under the current 2009-2010 CACFP reimbursement rate of \$0.74 per serving for afterschool programs.

Remember to serve each snack with water!

Each recipe is classified into levels of kitchen equipment requirements so you can easily determine if you have the resources to make the snack at your after school program:

- Level 1. No cooking required
- Level 2. Basic (e.g. sink, fridge, microwave, blender, and/or toaster)
- Level 3. Full Kitchen (e.g. basic plus stove).

Each recipe corresponds to a unit in the curriculum. However, many of these snacks meet multiple nutrition criteria (for example, low sugar, healthy fats and whole grains). Feel free to mix and match as well as create your own recipes!

Bugs on a Log



Level 1: No cooking required

Price per serving: 33¢

Serving size: 2 logs

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Servings per recipe: about 24

Supplies:

Plastic knives for spreading

Sharp knife for cutting vegetables

Ingredients:

1 16oz package of celery hearts, each stalk cut in half

2 12oz tubs of cream cheese

½ cup raisins

Adult Preparation:

Wash and cut celery stalks in halves.

Directions:

1. Spread about 2 Tbsp of cream cheese on each piece of celery.
2. Top with a row of raisins.

Modifications:

Experiment and be creative with different types of “bugs”, “logs”, and spreads! Try raisins or golden raisins as “bugs”, carrot or jicama sticks as “logs”, and peanut butter or hummus as spreads- mix and match!

Fruit Kebobs



Level 1: No cooking required

Price per serving: 45¢

Serving size: 1 kabob

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Servings per recipe: 24 kabobs

Supplies:

Bamboo skewers

Melon baller or Knife

Ingredients:

Just about any fruit can work for this recipe, so try fruit that is fresh and in season. Here are a few ideas for fruits that are easy for children to skewer.

2 pints fresh strawberries

2 bunches seedless grapes

1 pint blueberries

1 cantaloupe

24 6-inch bamboo skewers

Adult Preparation:

Cut cantaloupe in half and scoop out seeds. Cut cantaloupe into squares or scoop into melon balls.

Directions:

1. Alternating the fruits, thread them onto bamboo skewers. Place about 5 pieces of fruit per kabob.
2. Children should select their fruit. Encourage them to try at least 2 different types!
3. *Optional:* Serve the fruit kabobs with Spiced Yogurt Topping (see page 20 for recipe).

Spiced Yogurt Topping



Level 1: No cooking required

Price per serving: 17¢

Serving size: 2 Tbsp

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Servings per recipe: 24

Supplies:

Bowl

Mixing and measuring spoons

Ingredients:

3 cups vanilla, or banilla (banana-vanilla) yogurt

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp nutmeg

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp cinnamon

Salt to taste (*optional*)

Directions:

1. Put yogurt and honey in a bowl and mix thoroughly.
2. Mix in spices and salt and serve with fruit salad or fruit kebobs (see page 19 for recipe).

Modification:

Try it warmed up! Microwave the yogurt topping on medium low (50%) power for 1 minute. Stir and check temperature of yogurt. Microwave in 10-second intervals until mixture is warm, but not boiling hot.

Oven Baked Carrot Strips



Level 3: Full Kitchen

Serving size: About 10 carrot strips

Servings per recipe: 20 servings

Price per serving: 40¢

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Supplies:

Shallow pan or baking sheet

Tin foil

Sharp knife

Ingredients:

4 lbs. carrots

1 Tbsp sugar

5 Tbsp olive oil

2 tsp salt

1 Tbsp fresh rosemary

Black pepper to taste

NOTE: Depending on the size of your pan, estimate if you will need to make the recipe in batches. If so, how many? Cooking time will be longer if you need to prepare multiple batches.

Adapted from: That's My Home: Cooking with Children
www.thatsmyhome.com/recipes-for-kids

Adult Preparation:

Using a sharp knife, slice off the tip and end of each carrot. Peel each carrot completely. Cut carrots in half cross-wise, then cut length-wise, then cut length-wise again.

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425° F.
2. Line a shallow pan with foil.
3. In a mixing bowl, combine the carrot sticks, oil, rosemary, salt and pepper. Stir until carrots are evenly coated.
4. Place carrot sticks in pan, spreading them out as much as possible so they are a single layer. You may need to make 2 batches if the pan isn't big enough to arrange carrots in a single layer.
5. Bake for 20 minutes or until carrots are tender. Serve hot or at room temperature.

A Basic Guide to Taste Tests

Key Information for Program Staff

Taste tests encourage children to try new healthy foods in a non-threatening manner. You can test just one item or recipe at a time, or compare new and familiar foods. Don't be afraid to reintroduce foods as children's taste and acceptance of new foods often change! Finally, when selecting foods, consider any food allergies that may be present.



Instructions and Things to Keep in Mind:

1. Determine how many children will taste the food and purchase the appropriate amount of food to be tasted.
2. Prepare food samples in advance, if possible, and have all materials (plates, small cups, napkins, etc.) readily available, along with clean-up items such as paper towels, wet wipes and trash bins.
3. Maintain proper sanitation procedures: clean work and surface areas, wash and dry all produce, and wash all hands.
4. Copy the taste test rating sheet (one per child), and consider writing in the foods to be tasted before copying the sheet. Each page has space to try two food items, so copy additional pages if you are trying more foods.
 - If you do not have access to a copier, try a creative rating method, such as placing popsicle sticks into coffee cans or other containers labeled with the rating options. (Like A Lot! Like Somewhat. Do Not Like Very Much.)
5. Ask children to wait until everyone has received his or her samples before eating, then have the children try the food and praise them for doing so.
6. Do not force a child to try a food; however, explain to the children that although they may not think they are going to like the new food, that tasting is a good way to find out.

Praise children for trying something new!

7. Instruct children to express their opinions on their rating sheets without verbalizing how they feel about the new food. Summarize the group's evaluation (Did they like the food a lot? Somewhat? Or Not very much?) and decide whether or not they would eat/drink/make that food/beverage/recipe again. Provide opportunities for the children to offer feedback and comments on the taste, texture and smell of the food.
 - Be creative! Try blindfolded taste tests or incorporate taste tests into a team or group activity!
 - Be sure to serve those items that they like again!

Take a Bite! Taste Test Ideas for Fruits and Vegetables



- Go Seasonal – serve fruits and veggies that are “in season and available locally.”
- Be Adventurous – try fruits like kiwi, pomegranates or star fruit. Have children from different cultural backgrounds suggest fruits that they commonly eat at home (platanos, guava, etc.)
- Taste by Color – try different green vegetables (broccoli, green beans, kale) or orange fruit (peaches, nectarines) or a fruit and vegetable of the same color (red pepper and red cherry)
- Eat the Alphabet – try fruits and vegetables of the same letter (refer to the book *Eating the Alphabet* by Lois Ehlert for an alphabet of ideas). Examples may include: apricots and apples, or melons and mangos.
- Taste by Part of the Plant – use the “What Part of the Plant are You Eating?” worksheet for a guided testing plan and/or use the examples below:
 - Root: carrot, onion, potato, turnip, yam, beets
 - Stem: asparagus, rhubarb, celery, fennel
 - Leaf: spinach, chard, cabbage, lettuce, collards
 - Flower: broccoli, cauliflower, artichoke
 - Fruit (of the vegetable plant): squash, tomato, cucumber
 - Seed: beans, corn, peas, soy beans
- Taste by Variety – compare different apples, pears, peppers, berries, etc., or compare the same food prepared different ways (for instance, raw apples versus applesauce, which is cooked; or raw versus steamed broccoli). Have kids bring in vegetable recipes that are part of their (or their parent’s) culture.

Taste Test Rating Sheet

Today I tried: _____

I liked this:



A lot!

Somewhat

Not very much

Comments on the look, taste, feel or smell of this food: _____

Today I tried: _____

I liked this:



A lot!

Somewhat

Not very much

Comments on the look, taste, feel or smell of this food: _____

Worksheet List

What Part of the Plant Are You Eating?

Pages 25-26

Find the Favorite

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Page 29

What Part of the Plant Are You Eating?

Directions: Put one check mark next to your choice for each food listed.

1) Carrot

___ Root

___ Leaf

___ Seed

4) Spinach

___ Stem

___ Leaf

___ Flower

2) Celery Stick

___ Leaf

___ Stem

___ Fruit

5) Corn

___ Root

___ Fruit

___ Seed

3) Apple

___ Fruit

___ Stem

___ Root

6) Broccoli

___ Leaf

___ Flower

___ Stem

What Part of the Plant Are You Eating?

ANSWER SHEET

Directions: Put one check mark next to your choice for each food listed.

1) Carrot

Root

Leaf

Seed

4) Spinach

Stem

Leaf

Flower

2) Celery Stick

Leaf

Stem

Fruit

5) Corn

Root

Fruit

Seed

3) Apple

Fruit

Stem

Root

6) Broccoli

Leaf

Flower

Stem

Find the Favorite

Interview 3 to 5 friends and discover which fruits and vegetables are the favorites.

Questions:	Name:	Name:	Name:	Name:	Name:
1. What is your favorite fruit?					
2. What is your favorite vegetable?					
3. Is there a fruit or vegetable you do not like? What is it?					

My Bingo Board

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