

## Grades 3-5: Lesson 1

### Objectives

1. Define healthy eating and explain why it is important.
2. Prepare a nutritious snack.
3. Differentiate between nutritious and less nutritious foods.

### Materials needed

- Different types of nutritious foods, such as: bread, crackers, pita bread, lettuce, spinach, cucumbers, celery, carrots, tomatoes, grapes, berries, apples, milk, yogurt, cheese, tuna, cold cut meats, grilled chicken, peanut butter, nuts, etc.
- Small plastic bowls, dishes and/or paper plates
- Paper towels
- Hand-washing soap
- Plastic utensils
- Measuring cups
- **My Food Diary** handout

### Things to do before

1. Make copies of **My Food Diary** handout (1 per student).
2. Cut food into bite-sized pieces. Place each food item onto its own dish and put a measuring cup next to each dish.
3. **Note: Be aware of children with food allergies. Check with children's parents about the proper precautions to take in cases of food allergies. For more information on food allergies, go to: [http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_fit/nutrition/food\\_allergies.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/food_allergies.html)**

### Language Development

**balanced diet:** a diet that includes a variety of foods the body needs to stay healthy

**diet:** food and drink eaten by a person or animal

**energy:** the strength to do things

**nutritious:** providing nourishment

**nutrients:** things needed by people, animals, or plants for life and growth

## Activity

1. Explain to the students that food provides us with the nutrients we need to do everyday things like talking, walking, and playing. Food helps keep our brains sharp so that we can think, learn, and remember things. Ask students, “What are some of your favorite activities?” Tell the students that food provides us with the energy to do things we love, such as swimming, biking, dancing, drawing, and playing sports.
2. Ask students, “What do you think healthy eating means?” Tell students that our bodies are super machines that are able to do all sorts of things by themselves and food is the energy source to fuel everything we do. Eating a variety of food provides us with the nutrients we need to grow strong and healthy. Eating a healthy, well balanced diet allows our bodies to do everything we like to do.
3. Take time to go around the classroom and ask students about their favorite foods to eat. Encourage students to name nutritious and healthy foods.
4. Distribute **My Food Diary** handout to each child. Explain to students that their job for this week is to keep track of what they eat. Tell them to draw pictures and write about what they eat for breakfast, lunch, snack(s), and dinner. Tell students to ask their family members, friends, and classmates to help them choose healthy things to eat. At the end of the week, ask students to look at their food diaries and write a paragraph about whether they are eating nutritious foods and how they can eat healthier.
5. Inform students that they are going to make a healthy snack. Ask students, “Do you know why it is important to wash your hands before you eat?” Explain that it is important to wash away the germs on their hands before handling food. Demonstrate proper hand washing. Wet hands with warm running water. Add soap and then rub hands together, making a soapy lather. Wash the front and back of hands, between fingers, and under nails. Rinse hands under warm running water. Dry hands with paper towels. Have students wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water.
6. Explain to students that they will take a scoop of whichever foods they like to eat, using the measuring cups provided. (Note: Be aware of students with food allergies.) Pass out small bowls and utensils to students. Encourage students to try all of the foods provided. Once students have made their own snack, ask each student to present his/her creation, telling the class which foods they chose and why. Eat and enjoy!