

Learn.Grow.Eat.

Lesson Overview

This lesson plan is designed to help assist educators and students in identifying fruits and vegetables, their health benefits, and daily recommendations, learning about how fruits and vegetables grow, and encouraging eating a variety of fruits and vegetables. In addition, students will explore benefits of composting and gardening and complete a hands-on gardening activity.

Objectives

At the end of the nutrition education session, the students will be able to:

- State the recommendations for daily intake of fruits and vegetables.
- Evaluate own intake of fruit and vegetable consumption compared to the recommendation.

Grade Level: 6-12

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Materials

- Ingredients for yogurt parfait (bananas, strawberries, low-fat yogurt)
- Cups/napkins
- Dirt and seeds for planting
- Pre & Post Evaluation Survey
- Four Handouts
 - o MyPlate
 - o Benefits of Gardening
 - o Composting Activity
 - o Yogurt Parfait & Smoothie Recipes

Before the Lesson

- Organize materials and handouts so they are ready to be distributed to each student: 4 handouts, pen/pencil, pre & post evaluation surveys, ingredients for parfait (bananas, strawberries, low-fat yogurt), materials for planting (dirt and seeds), and cups for the parfait and planting.

Introduction

- Welcome everyone and educators introduce themselves and the nutrition education program.
- Explain the program schedule & objectives.
- Have students complete Pre-Evaluation.

Lesson Plan

Part I: MyPlate and the Importance of Fruits and Vegetables

Today's nutrition education lesson is about fruits and vegetables. We will identify fruits and vegetables, their health benefits, and intake recommendations. We will also learn how these foods grow and complete a hands-on activity!

- Show MyPlate visual. Ask, "Has anyone seen/heard of MyPlate? Can anyone share what MyPlate is used for?"
 - MyPlate is a visual that helps us create healthy and balanced meals. It shows five sections: whole grains, dairy, protein, fruits, and vegetables, which represent the five food groups.
- Today we will be talking about two of the food groups -- the fruit group and the vegetable group. Ask, "Who sees where the fruit and vegetable groups are located on the plate? What colors are they?"
 - The fruit and vegetable groups are on the left side of the plate. The fruit group is red. The vegetable group is green.
- Notice how these two-food groups take up half of the plate. Ask, "What do you think this means?"
 - We should aim for making our meals consist of half fruits and vegetables. We can also consume fruits and vegetables in between meals as snacks.
- Ask, "Why is it important that students your age consume fruits and vegetables?"
 - Fruits and vegetables contain many vitamins and nutrients that are especially important for growth and development. Eating a balanced diet, including fruits and vegetables, can help create healthy habits and prevent long-term illnesses like heart disease, type II diabetes, and obesity.
- Ask, "How much fruit and vegetables do you need to consume for your age?"
 - Refer students to MyPlate handout and point out the serving suggestions for females and males.
- Ask, "How can you incorporate fruits and vegetables into your diet?"
 - Fill half your plate with Fruits and Vegetables
 - Breakfast
 - Load a variety of your favorite vegetables into your eggs.
 - Top your oatmeal or low-fat yogurt with fresh, dried, or canned fruits.
 - Blend a smoothie with leftover fruits, add spinach too!
 - Lunch & Dinner
 - Reduce meat/cheese on your sandwich, add more veggies.
 - Choose hearty soups with lots of vegetables.
 - Add a side salad.
 - Add vegetables to pasta dishes.
 - Wash, Cut, Store Fruits and Vegetables for easy on-the-go snacks.

Part II: Demonstration and Benefits of Composting

- In this part of the lesson, we will demonstrate how to incorporate fruits in to 2 simple recipes. We will make a fruit parfait and discuss composting.
- Show video and demonstrate to students how to make a fruit parfait.
- Show the video of the smoothie.

- o Discuss alternatives for fruits, granola, and dairy substitutes to use with the parfait and smoothie. Lead into composting by saying “You can use the scraps from the fruit to start a compost which makes the plants healthier.”
- Discuss composting handout and how to compost. When adding compost to plants, you will want to add it when it starts to look like dirt. It takes 2 parts dirt to one part compost. You can even add worms to your compost, which will help break the scraps down as well. When composting, the nutrients from the fruit and vegetable scraps transfer to the plant and makes it healthier.

Part III: Benefits of Gardening

- In this part of the lesson, we will discuss the benefits of growing your own food. There will also be a hands-on activity in which you will learn to plant your own seeds.
- Show gardening video. Your garden will need plenty of sunlight, water, and nutrient-rich soil to grow your fruits and vegetables.
- Walk around to each table and answer questions/assist when needed and praise.
- Encourage students to have fun and take pictures of the students creating their plant.

Evaluation and Exit

- After students complete the gardening activity, gather them to the front of the room to complete post evaluation survey.
- Collect evaluations and make any final announcements.
- Encourage students to further research gardening and plant unfamiliar fruits and vegetables when creating their school garden so that they can try new produce. By taking pictures along the way, students will be able to see their fun journey of creating a garden and learning together as a class.