



You are What You Eat

Written by GEF Staff

Grades: PreK-2

Subjects: Science, Health

Time: 45 minutes



***Standards:** Students will...

Health Standard 6: Understand the essential concepts about nutrition and diet.

Benchmark 1: Classify foods and food combinations according to food groups.

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- Understand the structure of the USDA Food Pyramid
- Understand reason for different size stripes on the USDA Food Pyramid
- Utilize the USDA Food Pyramid to identify food groups and recommended number of daily servings from each group
- Understand that eating a variety of foods is a healthy eating practice

Materials:

- Roll paper
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Glue
- Magazines, used seed packets, catalogs, etc. (for pictures of foods)
- Coloring tools such as markers, crayons, and colored pencils
- Food Pyramid Cards
- Food Pyramid Basics worksheets (optional as resource)
- Food Pyramid worksheet

Overview: "Eat every color every day." The USDA recommends that foods from every food group be eaten each day to maintain a healthy diet. The USDA Food Pyramid is divided into six colored stripes each representing one of the food groups. The wider the stripes the greater amount of that food should be consumed daily. Here is a quick explanation of the stripes (moving from left to right) and the groups they represent. For more details see the Food Pyramid Basics PDF below or visit online the [USDA Food Pyramid](#).

- The Grain Group: Orange Section on the USDA Food Pyramid. Each day you should eat 6 servings or 6 ounces total from the Grain Group. In the grain group are any foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain is a grain product.
- The Vegetable Group: Green Section on the USDA Food Pyramid. Each day you should eat 4 servings or 2 cups total from the Vegetable Group. In the vegetable group are any vegetables or 100% vegetable juice. Vegetables may be raw or cooked; fresh, frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated; and may be whole, cut-up, or mashed.
- The Fruit Group: Red Section on the USDA Food Pyramid. Each day you should eat 3 servings or 1 ½ cups total from the Fruit Group. Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the fruit group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed.
- The Oils Group: Yellow Section on the USDA Food Pyramid. A person's allowance for oils depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity. The daily allowance for children ages four to eight years old is four teaspoons. Oils are fats that are liquid at room temperature, like the vegetable oils used in cooking. Some oils are used mainly as flavorings, such as walnut oil and sesame oil.

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- The Milk Group: Blue Section on the USDA Food Pyramid Each day you should eat 3 servings or 3 cups total from the Milk Group. All fluid milk products and many foods made from milk are considered part of this food group. Foods made from milk that retain their calcium content are part of the group, while foods made from milk that have little to no calcium, such as cream cheese, cream, and butter, are not. Most milk group choices should be fat-free or low-fat.
- The Meats and Beans Group: Purple Section on the USDA Food Pyramid. Each day you should eat 2 servings or 4 ounces total from the Meats and Beans Group. All foods made from meat, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds are considered part of this group.

Kid's Speak: " Eat every color every day." The USDA recommends that foods from every food group be eaten each day to maintain a healthy diet. The USDA Food Pyramid is divided into six colored stripes each representing one of the food groups. The wider the stripes the greater amount of that food should be consumed daily. The six groups include: the Grain Group (orange stripe), the Vegetable Group (green stripe), the Fruit Group (red stripe), the Oils Group (yellow group), the Milk Group (blue stripe), and the Meats and Beans Group (purple stripe).

Eco-Fact: Tomatoes are far the most popular vegetable grown by home gardeners.

Procedures:

1. The Food Pyramid needs to be displayed for the group to see so that there can be discussion about what it shows. Attention needs to be given during the discussion as to the reason for the varying sizes of the different food groups. For example: Why is the Bread, Cereal, Rice, & Pasta Group the largest? Students should evaluate what they eat from each of the groups every day and particularly if they eat food items from the fruit and vegetable group daily. Discussion could end with what the title "You Are What You Eat" means.
2. The students will then search through the magazines, catalogs, and other materials provided to find pictures of foods they eat. The Food Pyramid Cards will also work well for this activity. Students will then cut out as many pictures as they can find and save for later.
3. Next, the children will work with a partner for tracing. Each child will lie down on the roll paper and his/her partner will trace their outline in pencil. Once each partner is traced, the outlines will be cut out and names should be recorded on the back.
4. After tracings are cut out, the previously cut out food pictures will be glued down onto the outline in any way the child chooses. Most will look like a collage when done. If there is much blank area, the children can choose to draw foods they didn't find represented in pictures. Students can also show features of themselves such as their face.
5. When projects are done, an art gallery can be displayed around the class or school with small labels naming the "artists" hanging beside the outlines.

Wrap Up/Discussion:

Make a list on the board of the recommended number of servings of each food group each day. Students can evaluate and discuss if their body collages reflect the daily recommended serving amount from each group.

Discussion sample questions are included below.

- Look at your pictures on that you included on the body, do you have food from each of the the food groups?
- Why is it important to eat from each food group each day?
- Did you include the recommended number of servings from each group?
- What group do you usually eat from the most?
- What group should you eat from more often?



Adaptations:

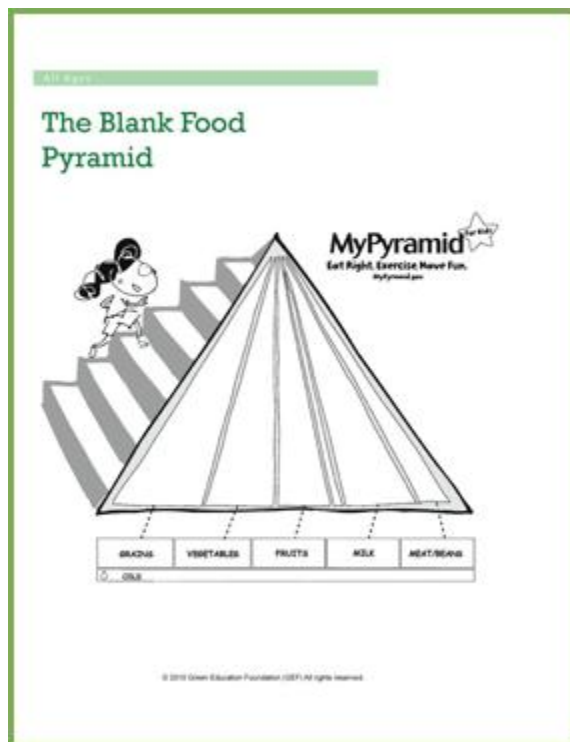
- Rather than use the large traced body to glue pictures, teacher could provide small body outline on worksheet for smaller project.

Extensions:

Check out other nutrition lessons on this site.

[My Great Big Food Pyramid](#)
[Food Pyramid Relay Race](#)

GEF Community: Join the GEF Community on-line. It only takes a minute. Share your ideas with other GEF Community students from around the country.



- To view full-size lesson plan and print, follow these directions:
1. Click on the image above
 2. Click on the small "print" icon at the top left of the lesson
 3. Make sure your "Page Scaling" is set to "Fit to Printable Area"
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Click on the second icon from the print button to save your lesson to your computer.

For technical assistance with printing any of the GEF lessons, please contact:

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