

## GRADE 3: LESSON PLAN 2

### NUTRITION: MAKING HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES—GO HEART!

#### Goals

Students will understand that personal health decisions and behaviors affect their health. They will recognize that the body needs foods from all the food groups to receive the nutrients it needs to grow and stay healthy.

#### Instructional objectives

Students will be able to

1. Identify the basic food groups.
2. Discriminate healthy food choices from unhealthy food choices.
3. Describe the effects of eating too much fat and sugar.
4. Recognize that the size of food portions depends on the age and activity level of a person.

#### Background information

The basic food groups have been modified over the years. Essentially foods are categorized as fruits, vegetables, grains, protein (including eggs, beans, and nuts), and dairy. It is important to include foods from all of the basic food groups in our daily diet to provide our bodies with the nutrients we need for growth and health maintenance. Nutrients include vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates, fiber, and fats. The amount of food that a person should eat depends on his or her age and activity level. Foods high in saturated fats and sugar should be limited. Saturated fats raise our cholesterol levels. A diet that does not restrict saturated fat can lead to heart disease. Foods that are high in sugar content should be limited or restricted because they are “empty-calorie” foods, with little or no nutritional value. High-sugar foods can also lead to cavities in our teeth.

#### Materials

1. Poster or transparency of a traffic light
2. Red, yellow, and green hula hoops
3. Pictures of different foods, mounted on index cards
4. Poster of the basic food groups or MyPlate
5. Worksheet: “Heart-Smart Meals and Snacks” (Healthy) (Activity 3–K)
6. Worksheet: “Heart-Smart Meals and Snacks” (Unhealthy) (Activity 3–L)
7. Worksheet: “Today’s Lunch” (Activity 3–M)
8. Worksheet: “Heart-Smart Choices”/“Heart-Smart Student” certificate (Activity 3–N)
9. Scissors, glue, crayons

#### Introduction

Present a poster or transparency showing a traffic light. Ask students what they would do if they were driving a car and came to a red light (stop). Follow with the other traffic signals, asking about the meaning of the yellow light (slow down) and the green light (go). What if we could use the same type of signals to tell us what to eat to be healthy? It would be great if we could make choices that simply.

#### Lesson procedures/activities

1. Explain to the students that healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, are good for our hearts and that junk food and desserts usually are not. If we used traffic signals to help us make healthy choices, what signal could we use for fruits and vegetables?

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(Green for “go”.) Tell students we should have 3 to 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Ask students to look at a chart of the basic food groups or of MyPlate and try to decide which foods we need to eat in moderation. What traffic signal would we use for foods like pork chops, eggs, and hamburger? (Yellow for “slow down”.) What signal would we use for foods that have a lot of butter or sugar in them? (Red for “stop”.) Explain to students that we need to eat a variety of foods from each food group to get enough of the nutrients our bodies need to grow and stay healthy. Different foods have different nutrients. Ask students if they would agree that apples are a healthy food. But what would happen if we ate just apples?

Discuss with students the importance of portion sizes and amounts of food. Ask students if “go” means that a person can eat all he or she wants of those kinds of foods. Guide them in recognizing that the amount of food a person eats from any of the food groups should depend on the age and activity level of the person. Ask questions to elicit discussion about specific categories of people. For example, should we expect a baby to eat as much as a 12-year-old girl who plays baseball everyday? Should an elderly adult who gets very little vigorous exercise eat as much as a man who works a construction job everyday? Ask students to consider what would happen if a person eats more or less than he or she should for that person’s age and level of activity. Why does age affect the amount of food a person should eat?

2. Explain to the class that some of the nutrients that we need to help us grow and stay healthy are vitamins and minerals that help different parts of our bodies. Protein helps our bodies and muscles grow and stay strong. Carbohydrates give us energy. Fiber helps us digest our food. Fats are also a source of energy. Have students look at the different food groups to see if they can guess which nutrients each group would contain.
  - Fruits: Name some of the fruits that you like to eat. What nutrients do they contain? (vitamins, carbohydrates, fiber)
  - Vegetables: Name some of the vegetables that you like to eat. What nutrients do they contain? (vitamins, minerals, fiber)
  - Grains: Name some grain-containing foods that

you like to eat. What nutrients do they contain? (carbohydrates, fiber)

- Protein (this group also contains eggs, nuts, and beans): Name some of these types of food that you like to eat. What nutrients do they contain? (protein, vitamins, minerals)
- Dairy (this group also contains yogurt and cheese): Name some of these foods that you like to eat. What nutrients do they contain? (protein, vitamins, minerals)

Which foods in large amounts would not be good for our bodies? Talk about how foods high in fat are also high in cholesterol, which can lead to heart disease and stroke. High-fat foods also cause weight gain. Also mention that foods high in sugar content are also bad for us. High-sugar foods lead to tooth cavities, can cause diabetes, and lead to weight gain.

Why would we need to eat some foods, such as meat, eggs, and yogurt, in moderation? (Allow discussion about why we need to choose lean meats and low- or no-fat milk products, etc.)

3. Place 3 hula hoops (red, yellow, green) on the floor. Pass out a folded piece of paper with the name and picture of a food to each student. Line up students in teams of three to four members. Tell them that on the word “Go,” they must look at their food on the piece of paper and decide whether it is “go” food, a “slow down” food, or a “stop” food. Have students place the piece of paper in the correct hoop. After they have made their choice, they must tell the class the reasoning behind choosing the red, yellow, or green hoop. They may include in their reasons the nutrients contained in the food or the food group to which the food belongs. Have students continue until all teams have had a turn.

After all students have had a turn and the foods are placed in the colored hoops, take all of the foods placed in the green hoop and ask the students if anyone wants to make a change. Review with the students that “go” foods are good for us and can be eaten often. Repeat this process with the foods in the yellow hoop. Review with the students that “slow down” foods can be good for us but need to be eaten in moderation. (For example, meat is a good source of protein, but some meat has more fat in it

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and should be eaten in moderation.) Repeat this process for foods in the red hoop. Review with students that “stop” foods contain too much fat or too much sugar.

### Guided practice

With table groups, have students plan a healthy breakfast, lunch, dinner, and two snacks for a single day. They will plan a pretend trip to the grocery store to purchase items and ingredients needed to prepare the meals and snacks. Remind them to make certain their meals are balanced and include foods from different food groups. Have them write the answers to the following questions:

- What foods did you plan for each meal?
- What foods did you place in your shopping cart?
- Did you make sure each meal included foods from different food groups?
- Were you tempted to buy food items that have little nutritional value or were unhealthy choices? If so, what were they?
- Did commercials or food packaging play a role in your food choices?
- Did you decide to substitute a healthier choice? If so, what was your choice and why did you choose it?

Allow the groups to share their menus and shopping experiences. Lead a group discussion about nutrition with the class.

### Independent practice

Have students complete the worksheets “Heart-Smart Meals and Snacks (Healthy Choices)” (Activity 3–K) and “Heart-Smart Meals and Snacks (Unhealthy Choices)” (Activity 3–L) using pictures from magazines.

### Extension

Provide labels from various food products that can be purchased in most grocery stores. Allow students who are ready for more complex learning and more difficult tasks to examine the ingredients and nutritional facts listed on those food products to determine both the primary food types represented by the first three ingredients and the nutritional value of the product. Have them look for information about calories per serving; serving size; total protein, carbohydrate, and fat content; types of fats; and cholesterol and sodium content. To help students visualize how much a gram is, tell them that 4 grams=1 teaspoon of sugar. So, if a product lists 8 grams of sugar, they divide that number by 4; they can then visualize 2 teaspoons of sugar in that particular serving of food.

Have students conduct a Web search to find the recommended daily amount of nutrients for different age groups and compare those amounts to what a serving of a particular food provides.

### Assessment

Students’ understanding of the lesson objectives can be measured by observing them in group activities and by assessing their independent practice work.

Objective	Demonstrated lesson objective	Partially demonstrated lesson objective	Did not demonstrate understanding of the objective
Identified the basic food groups	X		
Discriminated between healthy and unhealthy food choices		X	
Described the affects of eating too much fat and sugar			X
Recognized that portion sizes depend on age of person and level of activity	X		

## **Project Heart**

**Activities for the Classroom**

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### **Culminating activity**

Using the worksheet “Today’s Lunch” (Activity 3–M), have students track their lunch choices for a week and evaluate whether those choices are “healthy” or “junk food.” The goal of this food diary is to increase their awareness about healthy food choices.

### **Challenge**

For students interested in keeping a food diary for all meals for one week, challenge them to track their “go” foods by including three to five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Provide the “Heart-Smart Choices” worksheet (Activity 3–N) for recording their results.