



#2 - MyPlate! My Lunch!

GOALS:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Using MyPlate, identify and give examples of healthier options in each food group.
- Understand that many factors influence food choices but new habits can be learned.
- Explain that food is the body's fuel and that it needs to be balanced with activity.

PREP:

- Review "Build a Healthy Meal" page & "Talking Points" so you can lead the classroom discussion.
- Draw a very large 'MyPlate' on the chalk or white board, (see "MyPlate" poster) including the titles of the food groups in each section.
- Write the lunch meal (PHS staff will email this) on the board next to the plate.
- Give each student a paper plate as they walk into class and ask them to write on the back what they ate at their last meal.

PROPS:

- Paper plates
- "ChooseMy Plate" graphic (8.5"x11" or poster
- Pens/pencils

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- **Be ready to talk about MyPlate in detail:** Read the "Talking Points" and "Build a Healthy Meal" sheets that are inserted after this lesson and go to <http://www.choosemyplate.gov> for more information.

WHAT TO DO:

1. **ACTION:** As class is getting started hand out a paper plate to each student and ask them to write what they had to eat and drink at their last meal on the back of the plate.
2. **SAY (1 min):** To maintain a strong body we need to be in energy balance, balancing the food and beverages we consume with the activity that we do. That means, for most of us, we need to be more active. So let's move. *Have everyone jog in place for one full minute, slow down to a 'walk in place,' then sit.*
3. **ASK (3 min) :** What makes cars go? (Fuel or gas). Do humans need fuel? (Yes). What do we call energy for humans? (*Allow time for responses. Students may say food or calories*). What do we do that needs energy? (*Allow time for responses. Make sure to emphasize that we are always using energy, even when sitting still but when we are more active we use MORE energy*). Our energy comes from food, not gas. We can tell how full our tank is by using calories to measure how much energy we have taken in. A calorie is a unit of measurement that tells us how much energy each food provides. Carbohydrates (like grain foods, fruits, veggies and sugar), proteins (meat, beans, nuts, seeds and eggs) and fat (like cooking oils, the fat in meat, butter or margarine) all have calories. Some foods, called nutrient-rich foods, are better for us than others because of the fiber, vitamins or minerals they provide and all the things they do for our bodies. Other foods have lots of fat, sugar and/or salt, like chips or energy drinks. We call these empty calorie foods since they aren't good fuel for our bodies. So we know what we should be thinking about when we make food choices: nutrient-rich foods that provide high quality energy. That's what we should be thinking but most of the time we make our choices based on how foods taste.
4. **ASK (3 min) :** What are some foods that taste good to us? (*Take some examples from kids. If it does not arise on its own point out how fat and sugar are the common elements in most foods that taste "good"*). Foods high in fat and sugar provide lots of energy or, as we say they are "high calorie foods." This was desirable long ago when humans struggled to find enough food to survive. Foods with a lot of salt, fat and/or sugar were not eaten often because they weren't available Today large companies add salt, fat and sugar to many foods to make them taste better, prepare them quicker to prepare or so they last longer. Think about eating a fresh apple and then think about what a piece of apple pie, a food with lots of added fat and sugar tastes like to you. Prepared foods are a part of almost every meal we eat. Sometimes foods that are high in fat and sugar are easier to prepare and less expensive than foods like fresh fruits and vegetables that have no added sugar and are low in fat.



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5. **ASK (3 min):** While our brain encourages us to eat things that aren't necessarily the best for us we also learn what we like to eat! How do you think we learn what we like to eat? *(Allow time for responses. Help them to realize they learn to like most foods that are served over and over at their home. Ethnic or cultural backgrounds make a difference as does the family's income and how close they live to a grocery store. Give examples breakfasts from other cultures, i.e., in Japan they eat rice with fermented soybeans, in Mexico they eat refried beans with tortillas. Emphasize that we can learn to like foods that are healthy just like we learned to like less healthy choices.)*
6. **SAY & ASK (1 min):** Humans are complex! People of different heritages have different food preferences. That is what is nice about a tool like "ChooseMyPlate." It can help each of us understand what's best for our bodies. We know we need to eat from the different food groups to keep our bodies in great shape. Today we are going to briefly review the food groups and tips for making the best choices in each group. Do you remember learning about MyPyramid in 4th grade? It has changed now and here's the new "ChooseMyPlate" graphic *(point to poster)*.
7. **SAY & ASK: (5 min)** We can learn about 'ChooseMyPlate' using a hot lunch menu from the cafeteria. *Point to the meal you wrote on the board. Ask the class to tell you which category each food item fits into and have student volunteers fill in the plate by writing on the board each lunch item in the correct food group. Remember some foods may have components from 2 or 3 groups, such as a ham and cheese sandwich would have a grain, protein and a dairy component. Discuss what you should remember about each food groups as you categorize the lunch, focusing on the Talking Points included with this lesson.*
8. **SAY & ACTION (5 min):** Now that you know what it takes to make a healthy plate, it's time to give it a try yourself! Divide the blank side of your plate just like the plate on the board and label each section like I did. *(Point to the plate on the board.)* Since the dairy group is off to the side of the plate, you can just draw a circle for it in the fruit and veggie section and label it "Dairy." Take the first item you wrote down on your plate when you came into class, think about which group it fits into, and write it down. Do this for all the foods you have listed. You have four minutes to do this.
9. **SAY (2-4 min):** Look at your plate, are any of the food groups empty? If so, fill in something you could have eaten from this food group. Circle any whole grain foods on your plate. Write in one you might try if you didn't include any. Did you include too many foods that were high in salt, fat or sugar? Can you consider choosing these less often? No one eats perfectly all the time, but we can take small steps to do better. Write down one change on your plate that you will make to create a healthier plate at your next meal. Does anyone want to share the change they will try to make or their idea for a healthier plate? *(Share your own plans for change with the class, if you are willing.)*
10. **ASK (1 min):** Great job today and hopefully you got some good meal ideas that make a healthy plate. Think about what small steps or changes you can make with each meal so your plate looks more like "ChooseMyPlate"! Take your paper plate home and talk to your family about this.

Extra time?

- Show graphs of the average amount of calories consumed and what each food group contributes at <http://civileats.com/2011/04/05/where-do-americans-get-their-calories-infographic/>
- Have partners create a healthy plate (breakfast, lunch or dinner) that they would eat.