Colors of Food

Lesson Overview

Lesson Participants: CACFP personnel and school-age child care staff

Type of Lesson: Short face-to-face training session

Time Needed to Conduct the Lesson: 20 minutes

Lesson Description: This lesson will focus on the colors of food through activities and games.

Lesson Objectives
At the completion of the lesson the participant will be able to encourage healthy eating habits using food activities and games that focus on the colors of foods.

Get Ready to Train

The format for the CARE Connection lesson plans includes an overview, preparation checklist, lesson-at-a-glance with timeline for conducting the lesson, script, and lists of references and other resources. The instructor will use the script to present the lesson to the participants. Each script gives directions to the instructor—DO, SAY, ASK—to deliver the lesson.

The lesson can be presented in the child care center or family day care home, media center, or classroom.
**Preparation Checklist**

**Directions:** Use the Preparation Checklist to get ready for the training session. Keep track of your progress by checking off tasks as they are completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Done</th>
<th>Lesson Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td>Gather Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Materials Needed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructor’s Script</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|      | • Handout 1: *Fruits and Vegetables Color List*  
|      | • Handout 2: *Fruit and Vegetable Activities that Focus on Color* |
|      | • Cloth drawstring bag |
|      | • Two fruits and vegetables (real or plastic) |
|      | • Pens or pencils (one for each participant) |
|      | • Session Evaluation/Feedback Form (one for each participant) |

**Prepare for Lesson**

**Before the Training:**

- Make copies of Handouts 1 and 2 (one of each for each participant).
- Place fruits/vegetables in cloth drawstring bag.
- Make copies of Session Evaluation/Feedback Form (one for each participant). You may use the sample NFSMI evaluation form or develop your own.

**On Training Day:**

- Place pens or pencils on tables (one for each participant).
- Distribute Handouts 1 and 2 to each participant at appropriate time.

**On the Instructor’s Table:**

- Instructor’s Script
- Instructor’s copies of Handouts 1 and 2
- Cloth drawstring bag
- Session Evaluation/Feedback Forms
Lesson at a Glance  
(20 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td>Introduction and Overview</td>
<td>Introduce topic</td>
<td>• Instructor’s Script</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 16 minutes | Objective: Encourage healthy eating habits using food activities and games that focus on the colors of foods. | Participant review and discussion         | • Handout 1: *Fruits and Vegetables Color List*  
• Handout 2: *Fruit and Vegetable Activities that Focus on Color* |
| 1 minute   | Summary and Close                                                    | Review Key Points                         | • Script                                                                 |
| 2 minutes  | Session evaluation/feedback                                          | Conduct a short evaluation of the lesson. | • Sample evaluation/feedback form or standard form used in your nutrition program |

References

*Choose my plate.* (n.d.). Retrieved from United States Department of Agriculture:  
http://www.choosemyplate.gov

*Fruits and veggies, more matters.* (n.d.). Retrieved from Produce for Better Health:  
http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Internet Resources

*What color is your food? Taste a rainbow of fruits and vegetables for better health.*  
SAY:
Fruits and vegetables are considered to be nature’s perfect convenience food. They taste good, come in many forms, and are available year round. Fruits and vegetables are rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Most are low in calories and high in fiber. Also, fruits and vegetables help the digestive system, while assisting children and adults feeling fuller longer for extended time periods.

DO:
Distribute copies of Handout 1: *Fruits and Vegetables Color List* to each participant.

SAY:
Fruits and vegetables come in a variety of colors and textures, which makes them appealing to the senses. They can generally be divided into one of five color groups: white, red, yellow/orange, green, and blue/purple. Each color group is full of nutrients that offer benefits that are specific to that group.

ASK:
What are some of the benefits of each of the groups?

DO:
Call on volunteers for responses. Possible answers: Red assists the heart and memory. Yellow/Orange assists the heart, eyesight, and prevention of some cancers. Green assists in building strong bones and teeth. White assists the heart and prevention of some cancers. Blue/Purple assists the mind and the ability to remember.

SAY:
Moderately active toddlers need about 1 cup of fruit and 1 1/2 cups of vegetables per day and preschoolers need one half cup more of each per day. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables every day as a part of the Child and Adult Care Food Program meal pattern. When offering new foods, offer one new food at a time. Some children may be reluctant to try new foods, but continue to offer the new food. Often children will acquire a taste for the new food.

DO:
Distribute Handout 2: *Fruit and Vegetable Activities that Focus on Color.*
SAY:
There are several activities on Handout 2 that can be used to promote healthy eating. Let’s do the “What’s in the bag?” activity. As I pass the bag around, feel the item from the outside of the bag and guess the item and color.

DO:
Pass the bag around and have participants guess the item and the color. After everyone has had an opportunity to feel the item and guess the color, pull the item out of the bag for everyone to see.

SAY:
This activity is very easy to do, but can be expanded to teach multiple topics. For example, after the children learn about different types of fruits and vegetables, then focus on texture, size, and weight. Also to expand this activity, visit a local grocery store or farm. What are some other ways you can expand this activity?

DO:
Allow volunteers to respond to the questions.

SAY:
Look over the other activities on Handout 2. The color groups can be used to form a rainbow. Eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables is an easy way to remember to eat a wide variety of the foods that provide nutrients that are important for the body. Your handout gives suggestions for activities and games to reinforce the concept of eating healthy, using colors.

DO:
Ask two volunteers to share which of the activities they would like to try with children.

Review Key Points to Close Lesson

SAY:
Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables increases the chances that children will get more of the nutrients their bodies need. Healthy eating habits developed while young, generally continue into adulthood.
DO:
Distribute the session evaluation/feedback form.

SAY:
Thank you for participating in the lesson today. Please take a couple of minutes to complete the session evaluation/feedback form. Thank you for your input.
## Fruits and Vegetables Color List
### Handout 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Red</strong></th>
<th><strong>Yellow/Orange</strong></th>
<th><strong>Green</strong></th>
<th><strong>White and Tan/Brown</strong></th>
<th><strong>Blue/Purple</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helps the heart &amp; memory; helps to prevent some cancers</td>
<td>Helps the heart, eyesight, &amp; healing; helps to prevent some cancers</td>
<td>Helps prevent some cancers; helps with eyesight; helps to build strong bones &amp; teeth</td>
<td>Helps the heart and prevents some cancers</td>
<td>Helps with memory and preventing aging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fruits:
- **Yellow**: Apples, Apricots, Cape Gooseberries, Cantaloupe, Yellow Figs, Grapefruit, Golden Kiwifruit, Lemons, Mangoes, Nectarines, Oranges, Papayas, Peaches, Yellow Pears, Persimmons, Pineapples, Tangerines, Yellow - Watermelon.
- **Green**: Avocados, Green Apples, Green Grapes, Honeydew, Kiwifruit, Limes, Green Pears.
- **Blue/Purple**: Blackberries, Blueberries, Black Currants, Concord Grapes, Dried Plums, Elderberries, Grape Juice 100%, Purple Figs, Purple Grapes, Plums, Raisins.

### Vegetables:
- **Yellow**: Beets, Butternut Squash, Carrots, Yellow Peppers, Yellow Potatoes, Pumpkin, Rutabagas, Yellow Summer - Squash, Sweet Corn, Sweet Potatoes, Yellow Tomatoes, Yellow Winter - Squash.
- **White and Tan/Brown**: Cauliflower, Garlic, Ginger, Jerusalem - Artichokes, Jicama, Kohlrabi, Mushrooms, Onions, Parsnips, Potatoes (White Fleshed), Shallots, Turnips, White Corn.
- **Blue/Purple**: Black Olives, Purple Asparagus, Purple Cabbage, Purple Carrots, Eggplant, Purple Belgian, Endive, Purple Peppers, Potatoes (Purple Fleshed), Black Salsify.
Fruit and Vegetable Activities that Focus on Colors

Large Group Activities:

Mystery Salad

*Materials needed:*
Bowls of chopped fruits or vegetables (Include at least two from each of the color categories)
Individual serving bowls and spoons (one per child)
Cardstock, cut into 3-inch strips
Markers

*Directions:*
1. Place bowls of fruit on the table.
2. Students will make their own “mystery salad” by selecting one fruit from each color and placing in their bowls.
3. Allow children to name their salad.
4. Write the name (or assist child in writing the name) of the new salad on cardstock strips and display on table.
5. Eat the salad.
6. Allow children to take their strips home to share and recreate their new salads with family.

Color of the Day

*Directions:*
Pick one fruit and vegetable of the same color group per day to feature. Read related books during story time; have that fruit and vegetable served during lunch or snack. Throughout the day, have children point out items in the classroom that are of the same color. Send a calendar of events home with children. Encourage parents to talk about the “color of the day” at home with children.

Rainbow Chart

*Materials needed:*
Large rainbow made from poster board or cardstock
Cutouts of fruits and vegetables (use the color group chart as a guide)
Loops and hooks fasteners (1-inch strips)

*Directions:*
1. Laminate rainbow and cutouts.
2. Attach one side of the fasteners on the back of each cutout.
3. Randomly space the other sides of the fasteners to the rainbow.
4. Attach rainbow to wall.
5. Ask children to take turns placing the cutouts on the corresponding rainbow color.
**Fruit and Vegetable Color Bingo** (See sample cards)
Materials needed:
Bingo cards
Markers
Call sheet (Use handout1: Fruits and Vegetables Colors List)

Directions:
As caller names fruit or vegetable from call sheet, children place markers on corresponding picture. First child to fill a row up or down will call out “color bingo”.

**Small Group Activity:**

**What’s in the Bag?**
Materials needed:
Cloth drawstring bag
Variety of fruits and vegetables

Directions:
Place a fruit or vegetable in cloth bag. Pass the bag around. Children will guess the color and which vegetable or fruit is in the bag. Tally the answers given.
Variation: Add shredded paper to the bag. Give clues such as, it is blue, has seeds, etc.

**Child-directed Activities:**

**Color Sort**
Materials needed:
Large bowl or basket of a variety of fruits and vegetables

Directions:
Children will sort fruits and vegetables according to their color category.

**Fruit and Vegetable Color Puzzles** (See attached puzzles)
Materials needed:
Paste
Scissors
Card stock or heavy duty paper
Plastic bag

Directions:
Print two copies of the puzzle. Paste one copy of the puzzle on card stock or heavy duty paper. Cutout each piece and place in a plastic bag. Allow children to put the puzzle together. Place the second copy of the puzzle inside of the plastic bag for children to view when completing the puzzle.
## Color of Food

### Handout 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
<td>blueberries</td>
<td>broccoli</td>
<td>oranges</td>
<td>white potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomatoes</td>
<td>grapes</td>
<td>asparagus</td>
<td>pumpkins</td>
<td>cauliflower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherries</td>
<td>purple plums</td>
<td>limes</td>
<td>peaches</td>
<td>onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strawberries</td>
<td>eggplants</td>
<td>green cabbage</td>
<td>cantaloupes</td>
<td>turnips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watermelons</td>
<td>raisins</td>
<td>kiwi</td>
<td>yellow corn</td>
<td>bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raspberries</td>
<td>purple cabbage</td>
<td>green peas</td>
<td>carrots</td>
<td>mushrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>O</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>zucchinis</td>
<td>grapes</td>
<td>peaches</td>
<td>cherries</td>
<td>onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pineapples</td>
<td>Brussels sprouts</td>
<td>asparagus</td>
<td>pumpkins</td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oranges</td>
<td>lemons</td>
<td>limes</td>
<td>green cabbage</td>
<td>bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>limes</td>
<td>eggplants</td>
<td>pears</td>
<td>cantaloupes</td>
<td>onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow squash</td>
<td>raisins</td>
<td>kiwi</td>
<td>strawberries</td>
<td>mangos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green peppers</td>
<td>purple cabbage</td>
<td>green peas</td>
<td>broccoli</td>
<td>mushrooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Red
Fruit and Vegetable Color Puzzles

tomato
cherrys
strawberry
apple
rasberries
watermelon
White
Fruit and Vegetable Color Puzzles

WHITE

white potatoes
cauliflower
onions
mushrooms
turnips
banana
Yellow and Orange
Fruit and Vegetable Color Puzzles

YELLOW and ORANGE

- pumpkin
- peaches
- pineapple
- mango
- lemon
- orange
- cantaloupe
- carrots
Blue or Purple
Fruit and Vegetable Color Puzzles

BLUES or PURPLES

purple plum  blueberries
raisins  purple cabbage
eggplant  purple grapes
Green
Fruit and Vegetable Color Puzzles

Green
Brussels sprouts
green peppers
broccoli
leaf lettuce
green peas
asparagus