



The Six Healthy Food Groups

Grade Levels & Subjects: Early Childhood & Pre-K-2 English Language Arts

Learning + Food Objectives:

Students will learn how food impacts health by learning about the six healthy food groups and identifying foods that fit into each group.

Common Core Standards:

Common Core English Language Arts

Writing - Recalling information and categorizing information

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K-2.8](#)

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Pilot Light Video: "The Six Healthy Food Groups" <https://vimeo.com/511759696>
- Student Worksheet (Attached below)

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Note: The USDA lists six healthy food groups. Other sources may list food groups in different ways – so feel free to adjust at teacher's discretion.

The healthy food groups in this lesson/from the USDA are: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, dairy, and oils.

**Processed foods (like sweets) are also part of a realistic diet, but we are focusing on the six food groups in a healthy diet. It's up to the teacher how much to go into this topic, but it is important to mention everyone will not eat from these food groups all of the time. Processed foods can be very yummy, but they should be limited to once in a while.*

1. Ask students to think about healthy foods. Make a list of the foods that they mention.

2. After students have listed several foods, make connections between the foods. For example, if broccoli and carrots are on the list, ask students what group those both belong to. If there are missing groups, add a few items to the list, and then ask students which group of food they belong to. If students don't know, label them.

INSTRUCTION (45 minutes)

1. After brainstorming, make a list of the six groups in a healthy diet: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, dairy, and oils.
2. Tell students that they are going to learn more about these six groups and design a meal that includes all of the healthy food groups. Show "The Six Healthy Food Groups" video linked below that introduces the six groups and provides examples (<https://vimeo.com/511759696>).
3. After watching the video, provide a graphic organizer to students that lists the food groups and examples. The food group video could be re-watched, and students can use examples in the video in the graphic organizer.
 - a. The teacher could also create a fill-in-the-blank version of the graphic organizer.
 - b. A completed graphic organizer is provided below for teacher reference. Completed graphic organizer example also lists role of each food group. The teacher can talk with students about this, if appropriate.
4. Students will then independently create a meal with all six food groups. This can be done as a drawing and/or in writing for more advanced students. Teacher can adjust worksheet to students' ability levels. If this is done in the classroom, students can draw the food. If this is done remotely, students can search for images to paste onto their plates. The graphic organizer can also be completed as a class and students can use those pictures and words as a word/image bank for their healthy plate drawing.

CLOSING (teacher discretion)

1. Ask several students to share out their work and identify the different foods in their meal.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020 – 2025" from the USDA
https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf
- *Good Enough to Eat* by Lizzy Rockwell – children's book about nutrients found in food – an additional way food can be grouped or categorized

RECIPE

Below is the recipe for a video that contains ingredients from every healthy food group. Teacher could ask students to identify each of the healthy food groups in this video/recipe.

Easy Chicken Enchiladas by Chef Kristin Koury: <https://vimeo.com/416129906>

Serves 6-8

Ingredients:

- 2 cups chicken, cooked and shredded (from a roasted chicken from the store, roasted whole chicken leftovers, or cooked chicken breasts or legs and thighs)
- 2 ea 16oz jars of salsa (tomatillo salsa, red salsa, or canned enchilada sauce)
- 1½ cups shredded cheese (use whatever you have on hand: Chihuahua, mozzarella, cheddar, Monterey jack or a combination)
- ½ cup sour cream or yogurt
- 8 large tortillas
- (Optional toppings): cilantro, green onions, jalapeno slices, chopped tomatoes, avocado slices, and/or shredded lettuce

Materials:

- Oven
- Large mixing bowl
- Large spoon
- Sheet tray
- 9x13 baking pan and foil

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350F.
2. Combine shredded chicken, 1 jar salsa, 1 cup of cheese, and sour cream/yogurt in a large bowl and mix.
3. Pour ¼ of a jar of salsa in the bottom of the 9x13 pan.
4. Put a few spoons of salsa onto the sheet tray. Place one tortilla on top of the sauce and wet the tortilla (this makes it easier to roll – you may need to add more salsa as you go).
5. Place ¼ cup of chicken mix on the tortilla and spread down the middle. Roll and place in pan. Repeat.
6. Top rolled tortillas with remaining salsa then sprinkle with ½ cup of cheese.
7. Cover with foil and bake for 15 minutes. Remove foil then bake for an additional 10 minutes.
8. If using, garnish enchiladas with cilantro, green onions, jalapeno slices, avocado slices, chopped tomatoes, and/or shredded lettuce. Serve and enjoy!

The student worksheet below can be printed or copied onto any online learning platform.









The Six Healthy Food Groups

For teacher reference - blank student worksheet on next page:

Food Group	Role in a healthy diet	Examples
Fruits	Most fruits are low in fat and calories and provide important nutrients for your body like fiber, potassium, and vitamins.	Banana, apple, orange, blueberry, raisins
Vegetables	Most vegetables are low in fat and calories and provide important nutrients for your body like fiber, potassium, and vitamins.	Green bean (canned/frozen), spinach, carrot, broccoli, potato, avocado
Grains	Whole grains give us energy, fiber, and vitamins and minerals.	Pasta, bread/roll, rice, tortilla
Protein Foods	Proteins give us, of course, protein, iron, magnesium, and other vitamins and minerals.	Nuts, eggs, meat, fish or shrimp
Dairy	Dairy provides calcium, vitamins, and minerals that help us have strong bones.	Milk, cheese, yogurt
Oils	These foods should only be eaten sometimes - but they can provide fat that is healthy for us - like in nuts and seafood- and sometimes they help provide flavor to the food we eat.	Vegetable oil, olive oil, oils in some foods like nuts and seafood.



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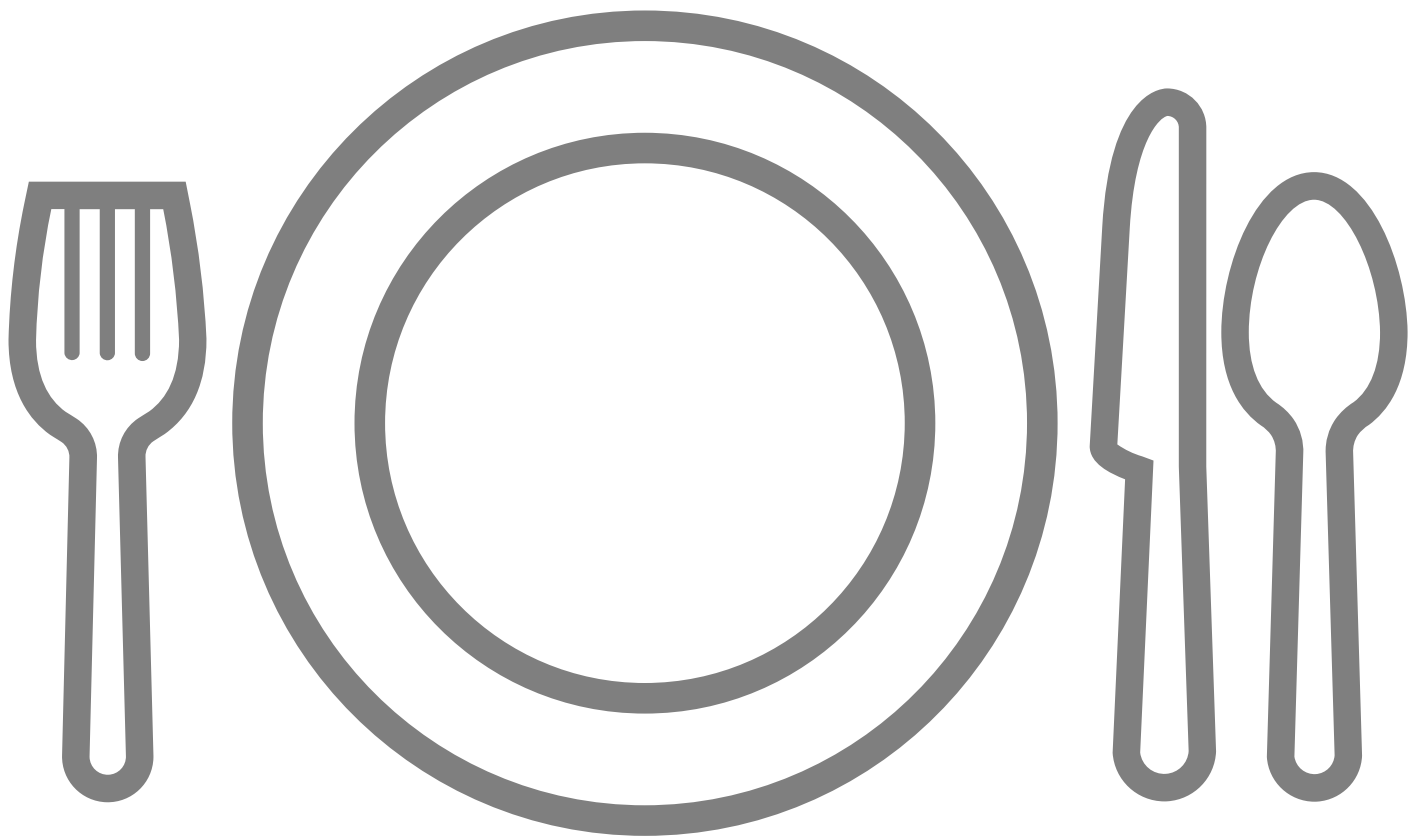
Food Group	Examples
Fruits	 apples
Vegetables	 spinach
Grains	 rice
Protein Foods	 beef from cows
Dairy	 cheese
Oils	 oils from seafood



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1. Draw and label different foods in each healthy food group.

2. Draw a meal that includes all of the six healthy food groups.





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My healthy meal has all of the healthy food groups.

Vegetables: _____

Fruit: _____

Grain: _____

Dairy: _____

Protein Foods: _____

Oils: _____