

# There's a Rainbow on My Plate

## A Guide for Teachers

*There's a Rainbow on My Plate* makes learning about fruit and vegetables fun! The purpose of this guide is to provide instructional resources that you can use in the classroom to teach K-6 students the concept of eating a rainbow of fruit and vegetables every day. The easy-to-follow lesson plans are complete with games, activities, and handouts that focus on the nutritional value of fruit and vegetables and the importance of eating a colorful variety of fruit and vegetables each and every day.

### OBJECTIVE

- Use *There's a Rainbow on My Plate* activities to teach nutrition education for K-6 students.
- Introduce the concept of eating a "rainbow" of fruit and veggie colors every day.
- Teach K-6 students about the important role that fruit and veggies play in maintaining good health.
- Encourage students to develop healthy eating habits that include more fruit and vegetables.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN THIS UNIT

#### Word Games

Word search, Word scramble, Crossword puzzle

#### Creativity

Fruit & veggie poems, Imagine if you were a fruit or vegetable, Coloring pages, draw a rainbow of fruit and veggies

#### Fruit & Veggie Trivia

#### Fruit & Veggie Identification

Matching, group fruit and vegetables by color

#### Recipes

#### Fitness

"Fit Fun Kids" activity suggestions

#### Just for Fun

Maze, "corny" jokes, Hidden pictures, Trading cards

### MODEL

- Establish a section in the cafeteria dining area or near the serving line to display student art work from the *There's a Rainbow on My Plate* materials.
- Hold a coloring or other contest for student work done with the *There's a Rainbow on My Plate* materials. Provide special fruit or vegetables as prizes.
- Use *There's a Rainbow on My Plate* coloring book, activities, and related curriculum materials with students either on an ongoing basis, during March in conjunction with National Nutrition Month®, or during September in conjunction with National Fruits & Veggies—More Matters Month®.
- Have a ceremony where you present students with Fruits & Veggies—More Matters Expert certificates.



*Eat Your Colors Every Day!*

## INTRODUCTION

Filling half your plate with a colorful variety of fruit and vegetables every day is key to developing a healthy lifestyle. Colorful fruit and vegetables provide a wide range of the vitamins, minerals, fiber, and phytochemicals our bodies use to stay healthy and energetic. They also help us maintain a healthy weight, protect us against the effects of aging, and reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, and other chronic diseases.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

*There's a Rainbow on My Plate* is designed for use with students in grades K-6.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students to the concept of grouping fruit and vegetables by color.
- To help students understand that grouping fruit and vegetables by color is an easy way to remember to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables each day, and get the variety of nutrients they need to stay healthy.
- To encourage students to eat a variety of fruit and vegetables within each of the five color groups because individual fruit and vegetables contain different nutrients and phytochemicals.
- To help students realize that fruit and vegetables come in different forms—fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice.
- To reinforce the importance of eating a variety of fruit and vegetables every day.
- To encourage students to monitor their eating habits to be sure they are eating enough colorful fruit and vegetables every day.
- To motivate students to find new ways to add a rainbow of fruit and vegetables to their daily diet.
- To encourage families to work together to make sure they eat enough colorful fruit and vegetables every day.

## PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- This teacher's guide, with suggestions for implementing the program, answer keys, and follow-up activity ideas.
- Seventeen reproducible activity sheets.
- Three reproducible recipe sheets.
- Six reproducible trading cards.
- One reproducible "Fruit & Veggies—More Matters Expert" certificate.

## USING THE PROGRAM

### Activity Sheets

Select the activity sheets appropriate for your grade level. Make enough copies to provide a complete set for each student. The activities build upon one another and are most effective when used in the order presented. Since each class is unique, however, you may wish to change the sequence to better meet the needs of your students.

### Pledge Certificate

Conclude the program by awarding each student a personalized copy of the pledge certificate in a classroom "graduation" ceremony. Have students repeat the pledge and sign in the space provided; then, as they color their certificates, add your signature to each one.

## ACTIVITY ONE

### Put a Rainbow on Your Plate

#### Objectives

- To teach students that fruit and vegetables can be grouped by color.
- To educate students on the need to eat fruit and vegetables from all the five color groups to stay healthy.

#### Primary Grades (K-3)

Introduce the activity by helping students associate fruit and vegetables with color. Write the following color words on the chalkboard: blue/purple, green, white, yellow/orange, and red. Then name some different kinds of fruit and vegetables and have students put them in the right color group.

Talk about fruit and vegetables that come in different colors, such as peppers (red, green, yellow, purple) and grapes (green, red purple). Also talk about classifying fruit and vegetables by the part we eat. For example, bananas are part of the white group because we eat the white fruit, not the yellow skin. Green apples are part of the green group because we eat the green skin.

#### Intermediate Grades (4-6)

Challenge students to think about the fruit and vegetables they ate yesterday. What were they? What colors were they? Did they fill half their plate with fruit and vegetables at every meal?

Direct students to complete Part 1 of the activity, stressing that it is not a quiz, but merely a check for them to see what they

already know about fruit and vegetables. Then use the statements to initiate a class discussion.

## Answer Key

### Part 1:

1. USDA MyPlate recommends that you fill half your plate with fruit and vegetables every time you eat.  
**Agree.** Specifically, USDA recommends you make half your plate fruit and vegetables, at least half your grains whole grains, and switch to fat-free or low-fat milk.
2. Fruit and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals.  
**Agree.** Fruit and vegetables provide many of the vitamins and minerals our bodies need to stay healthy. vitamin A, for example, helps keep our eyes healthy. It can be found in carrots, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, spinach, and collards.
3. Phytochemicals (pronounced fight-o-chemicals) help keep people healthy and give plants their color.  
**Agree.** Many of the phytochemicals and other compounds that make fruit and vegetables good for us also give them their color. That's why it's essential to sample the five color groups every day to get the full preventative benefits of fruit and vegetables.
4. Fruit and vegetables can be grouped by color.  
**Agree.** Fruit and vegetables can be classified into five color groups—Blue/Purple, Green, White, Yellow/Orange, and Red.
5. Bananas belong to the yellow/orange color group.  
**Disagree.** Only the skin of the banana is yellow. The part you eat is white and that is what counts.
6. Grouping fruit and vegetables by color is an easy way to remember to eat a variety of them every day.  
**Agree.** Since the different color groupings give us different nutrients our bodies need, you should eat from each group every day. You should try to eat different fruit and vegetables within each group, too.
7. Eating fruit and vegetables from each of the five color groups and exercising will help you stay healthy and fit.  
**Agree.** It's not enough to just eat your colors every day. Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. It helps make your muscles strong, helps you maintain a healthy weight, keeps your body fit, and makes you feel good.

8. The best way to get the vitamins, minerals, and other essential nutrients our bodies need is by taking vitamins and other supplements.  
**Disagree.** The best way to get the nutrients your body needs is through the food you eat. Vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals work together naturally in a way supplements can't. Remember to eat a balanced diet that includes a colorful variety of fruit and vegetables every day.
9. It's easy to add color to your diet every day.  
**Agree.** Simply add colorful fruit and vegetables to every meal or snack. Try adding sliced bananas or berries to your cereal, put some baby spinach on your sandwich, and grab a handful of baby carrots for a snack.
10. I eat enough colorful fruit and vegetables every day.  
**Answers will vary,** but stress that "Agree" is the best answer. Everyone should make half of what they eat fruit and vegetables.

### Part 2:

**Peppers**—red, green, yellow, blue/purple

**Pineapple**—yellow/orange

**Broccoli**—green

**Grapes**—green, red, blue/purple

**Grapefruit**—yellow/orange, red

**Kiwifruit**—yellow/orange, green

**Apples**—red, green, yellow/orange

**Endive**—green

**Okra**—green

**Mushrooms**—white

### Follow-Up Activities:

#### Coloring Activities

Use the coloring sheets "Color Mix-Up" and "Canned Pineapple Colors by Numbers" to reinforce the idea of grouping fruit and vegetables by color.

#### Snack by Color Week

Have students bring in a fruit or vegetable snack from a different color group each day of the week—something from the blue/purple group on Monday, from the green group on Tuesday, etc.

## ACTIVITY TWO

### Rainbow Shopping

#### Objectives

- To teach students that fruit and vegetables come in different forms.
- To acquaint students with different sections of the supermarket.

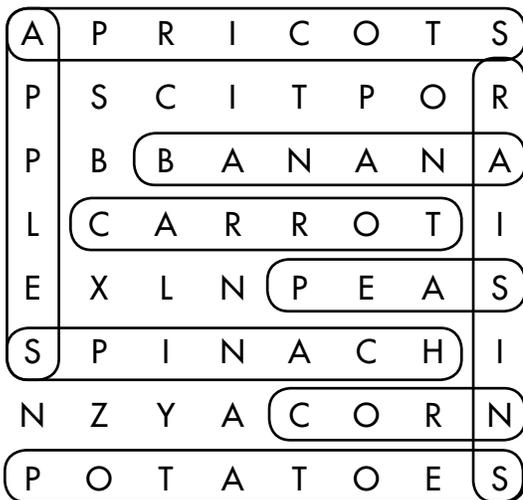
#### Primary Grades (K-3)

Introduce the activity by informing students that they are going to take a food shopping trip on their worksheets today. In Part 1, they are to find foods in a word-find puzzle. In Part 2, they are to find different forms of fruit and vegetables.

#### Answer Key

##### Part 1:

Begin the word-find as a class. Remind students that some fruit and vegetables such as apples can come in different colors. They are to choose one of the colors to color in those words. Items from the white group do not need to be colored.



**Apples**—red, green, or yellow

**Apricots**—orange

**Banana**—white

**Carrot**—orange

**Peas**—green

**Spinach**—green

**Potatoes**—can be white, red, yellow, or purple

**Raisins**—purple

**Corn**—can be yellow or white

##### Part 2:

**Fresh**—all fruit and vegetables

**Juice**—pineapple, grapes

**Frozen**—pineapple, peas, corn, potatoes

**Canned**—all fruit and vegetables

**Dried**—pineapple, peas, and plums

#### Intermediate Grades (4-6)

Begin the lesson by writing the following two column headings on the chalkboard—**tuirf** and **gelesvetab**. Inform students that they are to find these items as part of today's activity.

Work with them to unscramble the words—fruit and vegetables—before they complete Part 1 of their worksheets.

As students complete Part 2, remind them to visualize food shopping trips and what they remember seeing in different areas of the supermarket.

#### Answer Key

##### Part 1:

1. cherries
2. canned tomatoes
3. dried mango
4. pineapple juice
5. bananas
6. spinach
7. broccoli
8. eggplant
9. blueberries
10. frozen peas.

##### Part 2:

**Produce**—all

**Dairy**—oranges

**Frozen Foods**—peas, green beans, potatoes, blueberries, carrots, oranges

**Packaged/Canned Goods**—all

#### Follow-Up Activities

##### Coloring Activities

Use the coloring sheets "Truly Tasty Tongue Twisters" and "A Rainbow of Colors Shopping List" to broaden awareness of the variety of fruit and vegetables and the different forms in which they are available at the supermarket.

##### Spell Across

Play a crossword game by writing "watermelon" horizontally on the chalkboard. Have students take turns writing vertically the names of fruit and vegetables that share a letter with "watermelon."

## ACTIVITY THREE

### Draw a Rainbow on Your Plate

#### Objectives

- To clarify the definition of a serving.
- To encourage students to create new ways to add color to their diets.

#### Primary Grades (K-3)

Introduce the activity by talking about ChooseMyPlate and reminding students that they should make at least half of what they eat fruit and vegetables every time they eat. Ask if anyone knows what a serving is, then read and discuss the serving definitions on the activity sheet. Encourage students to be creative in their menus.

#### Intermediate Grades (4-6)

Create an interest in serving sizes by asking students to hold up their fingers to show how many fruit and vegetables they have had so far today.

#### Follow-Up Activities

#### Health Graph

Reinforce math skills by having students bring their charts back to class and graphing the class intake of colorful fruit and vegetables.

#### “Gotta Try It . . . ” Ads

In small groups, have students use the color system to create ads that encourage other kids and their families to make half of what they eat fruit and vegetables at every meal and snack. Younger students can design magazine ads, while older students might develop skits for TV, including creative jingles and handcrafted props.

## EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

#### Shopping the Color Way

On index cards, have students design personalized shopping guides with a column for each of the colors. Students can list and draw their favorite fruit and vegetables for each color, and make a column for fruit and vegetables they want to try but haven't yet tasted. At the grocery store, they can add more fruit and vegetables to their lists as they explore the fresh produce section and the canned and frozen aisles. (Don't forget the 100% juice aisle!) Every month, ask students to bring their

guides back to school to see what new fruit and vegetables they have tasted. Then have them complete charts that show the results.

#### Seeds, Seeds, Seeds

Have students collect, wash, and dry a variety of seeds at home and/or in class, storing them in plastic snack bags. Students can sort their seeds into categories such as: size; whether they are vegetable or fruit seeds; and what color group the fruit or vegetable belongs to. To add kid appeal, have students create a mystery-matching game by drawing colorful pictures of each fruit or vegetable. Have them challenge each other to identify which fruit or vegetable matches each type of seed.

#### Fruit & Veggie Patch Collage

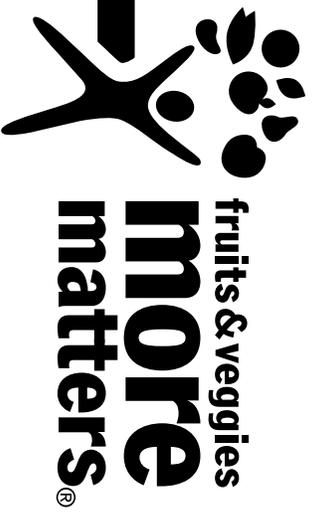
First, have students make colorful, textured collage paper using the peeled skin from fruit and vegetables, color crayons, and plain paper. Lay the paper on a peeling and rub the crayon gently to create a textured pattern. Cantaloupe and pineapple skins produce outstanding textures. Students can tear or cut their textured papers into fruit and vegetable shapes, or make small pieces to create a mosaic. Arrange and glue onto paper, then overlap the students' fruit and vegetable designs into a colorful collage, and display in your school hallways or cafeteria.

#### Soup

Read *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown or Jon J. Muth aloud to your class, then create a class recipe booklet by having students ask their families to help them collect soup recipes that involve multiple fruit or vegetables. Have students write and illustrate the recipes, drawing pictures of each ingredient in the quantities required. Send photocopies of the booklet home for families to try, and, if possible, use a slow-cooking electric pot to prepare one recipe in class, having students bring in the ingredients.

#### Go Fruit!

Play a variation on “Go Fish” by having each student create a set of four matching cards that features a fruit or vegetable. Students can glue their coloring pages to thin cardboard. Photocopy the finished deck onto card stock so every student can play with family and friends at home.



# Congratulations!

This is to certify that

\_\_\_\_\_

(Student's Name)

has become a Fruits & Veggies—More Matters Expert!

## Yes!

I will help protect my family's health by encouraging everyone in my family to eat a rainbow of colorful fruit and vegetables every day.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Student's Signature)

Certified by:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Teacher's Signature)

