



# Lesson 3:

## Vary Your Veggies and Focus on Fruits

### Lesson Highlights

#### Objective

##### Students will:

- Learn more about the nutritional qualities of fruits and vegetables.
- Brainstorm about ways they can increase their intake of fruits and vegetables.
- Set a goal of eating more fruits and vegetables and develop specific steps to reach their goal.

##### Curriculum Connections:

Language arts

##### Student Skills Developed:

- Thinking and analysis
- Writing
- Setting goals

##### Materials Needed:

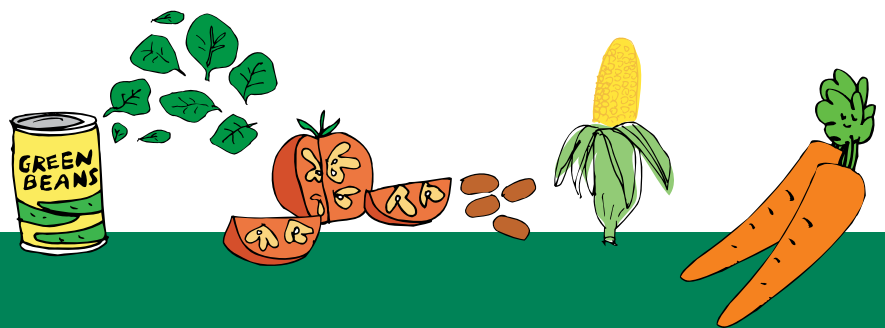
- *Steps to a Healthier You* worksheet for each student

#### Activity: Vary Your Veggies and Focus on Fruits

- Ask students if they eat fruits and vegetables every day.
- Ask them to name the fruits and vegetables they usually eat.
- Talk to students about the importance of fruits and vegetables. Eating fruits and vegetables can help them be healthy.
  - Fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of many nutrients, including vitamins A and C, potassium, and dietary fiber.
  - Most fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and do not contain cholesterol.
  - Vitamin A keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps to protect against infections.
  - Vitamin C helps heal cuts and wounds and keeps teeth and gums healthy.
  - Fiber keeps food moving through the digestive tract.
- Dark green and orange vegetables are important to eat. See if students can name some.
- French fries, which make up one-fourth of all vegetables eaten by elementary school students, are an exception. They are high in fat and calories. A medium order of fries has 460 calories, more than one-fourth the total daily calorie intake appropriate for most 8- and 9-year olds. A medium baked potato, however, has only about 100 calories.

#### Now pass out the worksheet, *Steps to a Healthier You*.

- Have students review the goal of trying a new fruit and vegetable.
- Ask students what vegetables and fruits they already enjoy. Remember that dried, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables count, too.
- Have students complete the worksheet.
- Next, have students brainstorm some other ways they can eat more fruits and vegetables. Add these to their worksheet.
- Finally, complete the “Where and How” box.



Ask students to look at the worksheet to see which of the steps they could take to meet their goal of increasing their intake of fruits and vegetables. Have students circle on the worksheet the steps they plan to take. Point out that small changes really add up. Once they try a new food and like it, they can add it to the foods they eat regularly. That's how they can meet their goal.

*Note to teacher: Students may add additional ideas on the back of their worksheet.*

**As students learn about goal-setting, here are some points to remember:**

- Success breeds success. Encourage children to set goals they can accomplish. A child who usually chooses only corn and apple juice might set a goal of trying one new fruit this week.
- Take one step at a time. Children do not need to change overnight what they eat. They can start with one new, good thing, and add a new one every day.

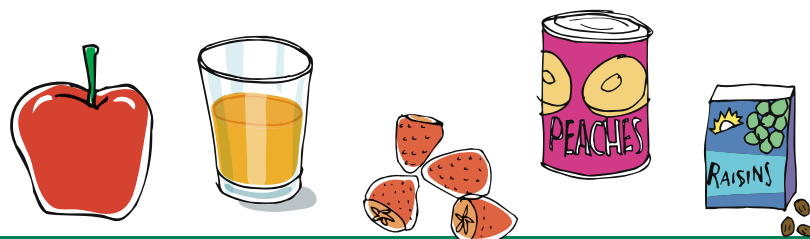
**Group Activity: Vegetable Ad Campaign**

Have students create an ad campaign for a vegetable. Working in groups, research a dark green or orange vegetable. (They can find information at [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov).) Why is it a nutritious choice? Have students use their creativity to create a poster and perhaps a TV ad – a jingle, a skit – that they can perform for the class.



**Lunchroom Link:**

Have students review the lunch menu to find out when dark green and orange vegetables are being served. Have them develop signs for the serving line to inform other students. Also, coordinate with the foodservice staff to offer a vegetable/fruit tasting party.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Steps to a Healthier You

## My Fruit and Vegetable Goals

### Fruits

Circle the names of the fruits you have eaten:

mango   papaya   kiwifruit   cantaloupe  
star fruit   pineapple   strawberry   blueberry

Other fruits I have eaten:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write the name of a fruit you would like to try:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How will you eat this fruit? *(Perhaps on cereal, as a snack, for dessert, with dinner, or on pancakes.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Vegetables

Circle the names of the vegetables you have eaten:

spinach   collard greens   sweet potato  
broccoli   jicama   zucchini squash

Other vegetables I have eaten:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Write the name of a vegetable you would like to try:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How will you eat this vegetable? *(Perhaps for a snack, as a salad, with dip, or for lunch.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Where and How

I will try these foods by: asking my parents to purchase them, helping my parents prepare these foods, choosing them from a restaurant menu, eating them from the school lunch menu, or eating them at a friend's house.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

