

3rd Grade Nutrition Unit

Unit Overview

The Nutrition unit is designed to promote an understanding of the overall importance of nutrition, a balanced diet, and healthy food choices. The unit also includes basic information about the importance of physical activity and sleep. Students are introduced to the food plate icon, major food groups, and concept of a balanced diet. They analyze their daily food intake and reflect on the degree to which it meets daily recommended servings within each major food group. The students learn to read food labels and extract basic information such as serving size. Through an experiment, students discover common discrepancies between suggested serving size and the actual amount consumed. Throughout the unit, students apply what they have learned to their actual eating habits and food choices.

Essential Questions

1. What is the food plate icon? Why is it important?
2. What are the basic food groups?
3. How is the new food plate icon different from the old pyramid? Why did it change?
4. What can be learned from food labels? Why is the information important?
5. What do you need to do to be physically healthy?

Lesson Summary:

Lesson 1: Students are introduced to the food plate icon and the major food groups. The lesson provides the teacher an opportunity to uncover students' current conceptions and misconceptions regarding food groups, the food plate icon, and the idea of a balanced diet.

Lesson 2: Students focus extensively on the major food groups and learn which foods belong to each group. Healthy versus less healthy choices within each food group are also explored.

Lessons 3 & 4: With a growing understanding of a balanced diet and the major food groups, students reflect on a previous day's menu. They identify which food groups were well represented and which food groups were under- or overrepresented. Students reflect on their food choices, set goals, and create a plan for either sustaining healthy choices or improving healthy food choices. The students also create a fictitious menu that exemplifies a realistic, balanced diet for a child.

Lesson 5: Lesson 5 serves as an assessment of students' understanding of the major food groups and the plate icon.

Lesson 6: Students learn how to read and interpret food labels. Through a lab activity, students learn what actual serving sizes look like and compare them to the amount they might normally consume.