

# HEALTHY Habits™

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NUTRITION  
& HEALTHY  
EATING

GRADES

4-5



## MyPlate, MyChoices: Tracking Healthy Eating

### The Big Idea

Students will track their eating habits and discover how **MyPlate** can help them choose healthier snacks and meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

**Education Standards:** (NHES) Health: 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 3.5.2, 4.5.1, 4.5.4, 5.5.5, 5.5.6, 6.5.1, 6.5.2, 8.5.2; (CCSS) English Language Arts: RI.4-5.4, W.4-5.4, SL.4-5.1, L.4-5.1, L.4-5.3; \*(CCSS) Mathematics: 4.MD.B.4, 5.MD.B.2

\*Met by extension activity

### GOALS AND SKILLS

#### Students will...

- Explore the **MyPlate** icon
- Identify healthy food options within the five **MyPlate** food groups
- Track and evaluate personal behavior and set a healthy goal
- Create a **MyPlate** meal recipe

#### Supplies and Preparation:

- **MyPlate** icon\*\*
- Chart paper
- Color markers: red, green, orange, purple, blue (to match the **MyPlate** colors)
- Art supplies (poster paper, color markers, crayons, markers, color pencils, glue sticks, tape, scissors, grocery store circulars, food magazines)
- Make copies of the student handout: **MyPlate 3-Day Food Tracker**



**\*\*Background for Teacher:** Visit USDA's website [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to learn more about and download the **MyPlate** icon. You can print it out or use a projector. To learn more about healthy foods that belong in each food group, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups). You can also download a two-sided and kid-friendly **MyPlate** poster here: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/eatsmartposter.pdf>.

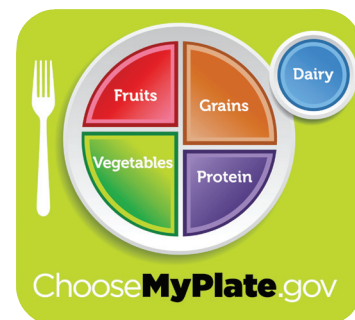
### INSTRUCTION STEPS

**1. MyPlate KWL.** Start by displaying the **MyPlate** icon or poster. (Keep it on display for student reference throughout the various lesson steps.)

Have students work in pairs and use their notebooks to complete the first two parts of a KWL chart about the icon and the five food groups ("What do I **KNOW**?" and "What do I **WANT** to know?") The third part, "What have I **LEARNED**?" will be revisited as a reflection).

Regroup and open a **MyPlate** discussion with the class. Invite pairs to share what they know about the icon and/or the five food groups, and what they want to know. Keep track of their answers on the board or chart paper.

Next, create a classroom **MyPlate** Food Group Chart with five columns, one for each food group. Label each column's title with the appropriate **MyPlate** color. As a class, have students brainstorm and categorize healthy foods that belong to each food group, using different colored markers for each column to correspond with **MyPlate** colors.



Start the list first without a reference; to enable students to expand upon it, pull up the list of foods in each food group from [www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups) on a projector (or print it out in advance). Complete the **MyPlate** classroom chart by adding a combination of foods that your students *like* as well as foods they *have not yet tried* to the list. (Leave the chart on display for reference during remaining lesson steps.)

**2. MyPlate Tracker.** Distribute one copy of the *MyPlate 3-Day Food Tracker* handout to each student. Explain that for the next three days, they are to track what they eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner as well as all snacks. During the three-day period, give students a few minutes each day to fill in their trackers. (At the end of the three days, they will evaluate their eating habits, set healthy goals, and reflect on what they can do together as a class to eat healthier.)

**3. Team MyPlate Chef Challenge.** As a fun challenge to practice making healthy choices, students will collaborate in teams to come up with a healthy **MyPlate** lunch or snack recipe/meal plan. Divide the class into teams of 4 to 5 students. To create their recipe or plan, they must choose at least one food from each food group. Encourage them to reference the **MyPlate** icon and the chart you created at the beginning of the lesson. Challenge teams to think about the combination of flavors. If a food group can't go in the dish itself, have them add it as a side item in their meal plan (for example, apple slices, carrot sticks or a glass of milk).

Once teams have decided upon a healthy recipe or meal plan, have them come up with a fun and catchy name for their dish! As a final step, teams will create a poster to advertise their original recipes/ingredients. The poster should include the following information: recipe/dish title, a catchy and informative description, ingredients categorized by food group, and a picture.

### For example:

“Super Power Crunch Wrap”

Check it out! This super wrap is packed with protein power and munchy-crunchy veggies.

**Grain:** Whole-wheat tortilla

**Vegetables:** Cucumbers, red peppers, celery

**Protein:** Grilled chicken

**Dairy:** Cheddar cheese

**Fruit:** Mango slices on the side

Invite them to use bright colors and descriptive words on their posters, to “sell” their recipes and make others want to try their creations. When they are finished, invite teams to present their work to the rest of the class, and then display posters around the school or in the cafeteria. You could also take and upload digital photos of each poster to create a **MyPlate** Chef Challenge slide show!

**4. MyPlate Tracker – The Sequel.** After three days, when students have completed the tracking activity, have them reflect on their habits and work together in pairs to set goals. Ask them to reflect on the following questions:

- *Did I eat from the five food groups at least once every day?*
- *Did I eat from the five food groups at lunch and at dinner each day?*
- *What food group do I eat the most of?*
- *What food group do I eat the least of?*

After a short discussion with their partners, have students write their answers in their notebooks.



**5. Goal Setting.** After discussion evaluating their own behaviors with their partners, have each student set a personal healthy goal for applying **MyPlate** food groups to their own daily eating habits.

- *What is my healthy food goal?*
- *What habits or support can I use to help me achieve my goal?*

Explain that they should base their goal on trying and choosing the healthy food options they have discovered in previous activities and using **MyPlate** as a guide. Examples of goals could be trying vegetables they haven't tried before; selecting fruits or vegetables as snacks; drinking lots of water and having milk each day; and choosing oatmeal for breakfast...with healthy cereal toppings like nuts, seeds or berries!

To help them stick to their goals, students should identify some things that can help them stay on track. For example: have a goal buddy to keep one another on track, bring extra fruit or vegetables for snack options if they tend to get hungry, avoid eating from the vending machine, and ask parents to provide healthier food options at home.

As a class, discuss the following:

- *What food groups do we (as a class) eat the most often?*
- *Are there food groups we do not eat enough of?*
- *What healthy goals can we set as a class?*

**6. Reflect.** As a final reflection, give students a few minutes to complete their **KWL** charts (started in the beginning of the lesson) individually, answering the last question: *What have I **LEARNED** (from this lesson)?* Tell students to be specific, and then invite volunteers to share with the class.

**7. Extend the Lesson.** Have students conduct a class or school-wide "Veggie Survey" of students' favorite vegetables. Surveys can also gather information on why participants eat *certain* vegetables. Is it taste? Availability? Other reasons? They can enter the results into a spreadsheet, calculate percentages, and create bar/pie/column graphs to visualize the data. Have them analyze and evaluate the results. Which veggies are the most popular? Which are the least consumed? What strategies could they come up with to encourage the school community to increase consumption of the least-consumed veggies?

### Modifications:

- For an extra challenge, students can evaluate the nutritional value of each vegetable using the USDA's Food-A-Pedia tool: <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodapedia.aspx>
- Is there a pattern between how nutritious a vegetable is and its popularity?

**8. Home Connection.** Have students bring their trackers home and share their healthy goals with parents. Share images and results of the Chef Challenge slide show on the class web page or at parent night along with images of the teams' colorful posters.

### STUDENT HANDOUT: MyPlate 3-Day Food Tracker

Use the chart below to track what you eat and drink every day for three days. When completed, fill out the questions at the bottom of the chart.

	Day 1:	Day 2:	Day 3:
<b>Breakfast</b>	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:
<b>Lunch</b>	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:
<b>Snack</b>	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:
<b>Dinner</b>	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:
<b>Other</b>	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:	Fruit: Vegetable: Grain: Protein: Dairy:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ate from all five food groups today? <input type="checkbox"/> Did I skip eating from a food group today? <input type="checkbox"/> Which food group did I eat the most of?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ate from all five food groups today? <input type="checkbox"/> Did I skip eating from a food group today? <input type="checkbox"/> Which food group did I eat the most of?	<input type="checkbox"/> Ate from all five food groups today? <input type="checkbox"/> Did I skip eating from a food group today? <input type="checkbox"/> Which food group did I eat the most of?