

Health

4.NPA.1.3

Use the Food Facts Label to plan meals and avoid food allergies.

Materials Needed:

Appendix 1 – MyPlate poem (one copy cut apart)

Handout from the FDA, <https://www.fda.gov/media/135197/download>

Assorted food packages with labels (enough for each pair to have one)

Video from Children’s Allergy and Asthma Education Centre (Canada) 1:40,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1f_lk1Eerg

Appendix 2 – ACT! Poster

Background content for teachers can be found at: <https://www.fda.gov/food/new-nutrition-facts-label/whats-new-nutrition-facts-label>

Statement of Objectives:

We have been studying MyPlate, a way of planning meals that encourages everyone to eat from all food groups and eat in moderation. What does the word moderation mean? [It means that we do not over-do or eat too much of one food.] Today we will use another tool, the Nutrition Facts Label, to plan meals. By the end of the lesson, you will understand how to read a food label for meal selection and to avoid food allergies. Let’s begin with a review of MyPlate.

Focus:

Copy and cut apart the six stanzas of the poem, MyPlate (Appendix 1). Number them 1 – 6. Ask six students to come to the front of the room to read the poem.

Ask these questions:

- MyPlate is a guide for _____? [planning meals]
- What do we mean by balance and moderation in food choices?
- What are the five food groups? [fruits, vegetables, dairy, protein, grains]
- What kinds of grains should be chosen for fuel? [whole grains]
- What kinds of protein sources should we eat? [lean]
- Which group supplies calcium? [dairy]
- What are examples of “once in a while foods”? [sweets]
- Why is it a good idea to read food labels? [to make smart food choices]

Teacher Input:

In pairs, provide students with a copy of the revised (2019) Food Label handout from the FDA, <https://www.fda.gov/media/135197/download>

What are the four big changes to the nutrition label?

1. Serving sizes get real
2. Calories go big
3. The lows and highs of percent daily value
4. Nutrients: the updated list

Ask students to explain what each of these statements mean.

All foods, except for fresh fruits and vegetables and meats, are required to have a Nutrition Facts Label on their packaging.

Give each pair of students a food product with a label.

- Stand if your food is from the protein group.
- Stand if your food is from the fruit group.
- Stand if your food is from the dairy group.
- Stand if your food is from the vegetable group.
- Stand if your food is from the grain group.

Ask them to identify these items:

- How much is in a serving?
- How many calories are in a serving?
- Is the food a “good source” of any nutrient? [more than 20% of Daily Value?]
- Does anyone have a food low in fat? [Less than 5% DV]
- Does anyone have a food high in sugar? [More than 20% DV]

Totals recommended by MyPlate for a fourth grader (written on whiteboard):

Vegetables: 2 cups

Grains: 5 ounces

Dairy: 3 cups

Fruits: 1 and ½ cups

Protein: 5 ounces

You should always read a Nutrition Facts Label if you are allergic to any food. For example, if you were allergic to nuts, you would need to know if a cookie you want to eat has nuts as an ingredient. Common food allergies are peanuts and other nuts, seafood (such as shrimp), milk, eggs, soy, and wheat. [Place those foods on the whiteboard to assist students with the ACT! Poster.]

Play the video from Children’s Allergy and Asthma Education Centre (Canada) 1:40, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1f_lk1Eerg Ask students to tell you the acronym used to remember what to do if you have food allergies (ACT). What does each letter stand for? Avoid allergens, Carry epipen, Tell others.

Another reason for reading a food label is to plan meals that are nutrient-dense. It is a good idea to know how to find specific information on the food label to choose foods lower in sugar and sodium or foods higher in vitamins and minerals.

A food is a “good source” of a nutrient if it supplies at least 20% of the Daily Value needed. Nutrients that are good to look for are Vitamin C, protein, calcium, iron, and fiber. For a cereal to be nutrient-dense, it needs to be low in sugar and fat, but be a good source of fiber.

Assessment:

Let’s put our foods together to plan three - five meals.

Have students bring a food or food model to the front for each group. After foods are arranged by group in the front of the room, select from each group to create each meal. Ask if they think each meal is nutritious. Have them add servings to determine if the meals provide the needed servings for an average fourth grader.

If the meals do not “add up”, ask students to add a snack to provide the additional serving of that group.

Distribute copies of Appendix 2 ACT! Poster and crayons or makers, then ask students to fill in the sections with information about food allergies. When students are finished ask for volunteers to read what they included in the different sections of the poster.

Closure:

Reading food labels is a good health practice for good nutrition as well as safety. Don’t forget to read the nutrition label and ACT if you have a food allergy.

Appendix 1

MyPlate

The best way to plan healthy meals
Is to follow the guide: MyPlate.
The goals are for balance and moderation,
And for nutrition that also tastes great.

One side of the plate has fruits and veggies
For the vitamins and fiber we need,
Eating a variety of colors and flavors,
Is a guideline so important to heed.

The other side is for grains and proteins,
Whole grains have energy to fuel the day,
Proteins are the building blocks for the body.
Lean choices are the very best way.

Dairy has calcium for teeth and bones.
The best choices are low-fat or “skim.”
Eating the right amounts of each of these groups
Means we won’t be too fat or too thin.

There are foods we should eat less of.
That is especially true of sweets.
They should not be everyday foods
But thought of as “once in a while” treats.

It is a good idea to read labels
To make smart choices among the foods we love.
To get the most helpful information,
Go to ChooseMyPlate.gov.

Appendix 2

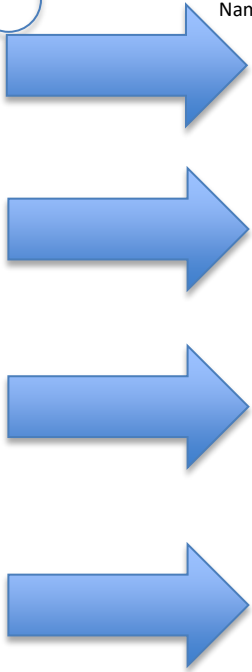
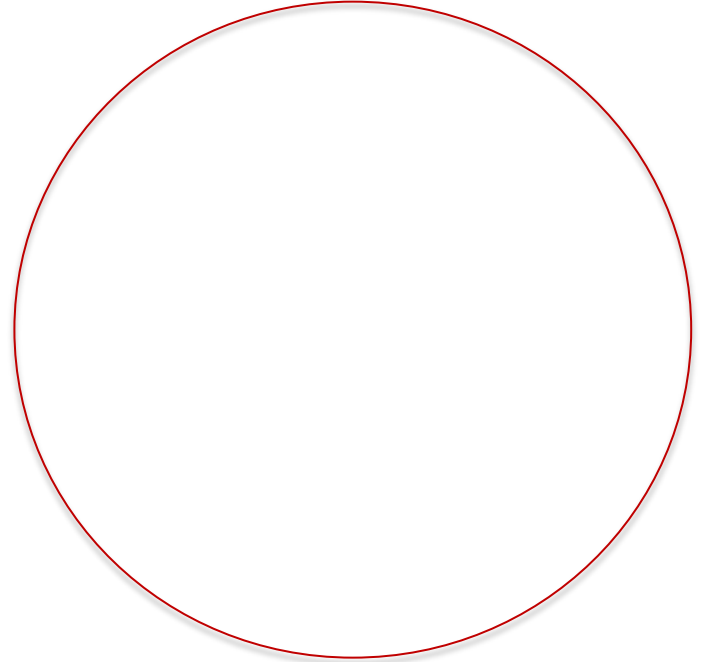
ACT! Poster

Fill in the sections with the correct information on food allergies

Create a food allergy motto or hashtag here:

Draw a food that might cause a reaction

Name four common foods that cause food allergies.



Complete the ACT acronym

