

# Fabulous Fruits

## Early Childhood Health Lesson



**Objective:** Learn the importance of eating a variety of fruits every day.

### **WE CAN! MESSAGES**

Eat a variety of fruit daily.

Increase availability and accessibility of healthy foods in the home.

Limit the availability of high-fat, high-calorie/low nutrient foods in the home.

### **NATIONAL PRE-K–2ND GRADE HEALTH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Identify that healthy behaviors impact personal health.

### **ADULT MESSAGE**

Eating a variety of fruits each day helps provide your body with essential nutrients, antioxidants, fiber, and water, and helps reduce the risk of developing certain diseases.

### **DEVELOPING PRESCHOOL READINESS SKILLS**

Learn pre-math skills, such as: counting, sorting, categorizing, color, shape, and pattern recognition.

Learn language skills by building a descriptive vocabulary.

### **PROGRAM CONTENT**

Themed lesson plans incorporating art, literacy, movement and music support a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching young children and adults.

Program Length: 70 minutes

### **INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION**

**Materials:** Name stickers, markers

Welcome families with name stickers and “hello” song. Ask children and adults to name their favorite fruit and when they like to eat it. Ask children to describe their favorite fruit. Introduce descriptive vocabulary to help identify colors and textures, (i.e., bumpy, smooth, sweet, hard, and soft).

Discuss where fruit comes from, how fruit is natural, and grows on plants, trees or vines. Important to discuss the multiple benefits of fruits: not only is it very beneficial to the body, filled with many good nutrients, making people feel good and helping us grow, *but* it is also sweet and juicy, fun to eat, and is a GO food snack!

**Visual References:** Pictures of familiar and less common fruits, pictures of where different fruits grow, chart listing specific benefits of fruits (nutrients, vitamins, fiber, and water).

## Key Teaching Messages

- Eat two to four servings of fruit a day to help build healthy bodies and reduce the risk of developing certain diseases.
- Fruit provides nutrients, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals that benefit the body.
- Fruits are nutrient-dense. (Nutrient-dense means foods rich in nutrients)
- Fruit is a GO food.

## ART ACTIVITY: MODEL MAGIC FRUIT BASKETS

Using model magic and watercolors, children and adults will create a healthy fruit basket. Children will explore texture, shapes, size, and colors. Laminated pictures of fruit, as well as fruit samples, will be available to help introduce new fruits and build vocabulary.

**Materials:** model magic, watercolors and large paintbrushes (or washable markers), large popsicle sticks, and small paper bags.

**Set-up:** Form balls of model magic (can be a little bigger than a golf ball). Place one ball of model magic and one watercolor tray at each seat. Use a small amount of water in water cups or take a sponge or paper towel and squeeze water onto the watercolors, making them easier to use. Place a paintbrush next to each watercolor tray. Use large paintbrushes for the younger children since they will be easier to hold. Have extra balls of model magic ready in case a child needs more.

When the children are done with their projects, place projects on top of a paper bag and write the child's name on the bag. Children will be able to transport their creation home in the bag when it is time to leave.

**Clean-up:** Give children a 5 minute warning. Always let children know that you will be transitioning and ending the project soon. After the warning, sing a clean-up song to focus children and encourage participation in the clean-up process. One example: "Clean up, clean up, one, two, three. I'll help you and you help me. Clean up, clean up, one, two, three. I'll help you and you help me."

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: MOVEMENT/MUSIC

**Weekly Structure:** Warm-up, Active Play Time, Movement/Music (song/activity), Cool-down. Children should do at least 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity each day.

### Warm-up:

#### Marching Movement Song

We're marching, marching, marching  
We're marching in a circle  
We're marching, marching, marching until it's time to stop!  
We're jumping, jumping, jumping  
We're jumping in a circle,  
We're jumping, jumping, jumping until it's time to stop!  
(add hopping, stomping, running, tiptoeing, etc.)

#### In and Out Circle Song

Let's go in and in and in  
And out and out and out  
And in and in and in and in  
And out and out and out!





### Active Play Time:

Do 5 or 10 minutes of each exercise

- Playing Tag
- Hopscotch
- Jumping Jacks
- Jumping (one foot, together then apart, front to back)

### Movement/Music: Fruit Dancing With Scarves

Children and adults will learn creative movements; to roll like apples and oranges, peel like bananas, hang like cherries, bunch like grapes. Children and adults will also learn The Banana Song (see next page).

### Cool-down:

It is important for the body to cool down gradually.

- Breathing—Place hands on belly or lower back. Inhale and fill the lungs. Feel the abdomen and ribs inflate. Exhale and empty the lungs. Feel the chest and abdomen relax.
- Yoga Moves
  - Downward Dog—Have the children make a bridge with their bodies. From here you can kick one leg up at a time and start to stretch body long.
  - Tree Pose—Have the children balance on one leg, bending their other leg at a 90 degree angle, stretching their hands above their heads.
  - The Horse—Stand in place for 30 seconds with a wide stance and knees bent (like a halfway down squat position).

### GROUP STORYTIME

*Oliver's Fruit Salad* by Vivian French

*The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry and the Big Hungry Bear* by Don Wood

*Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey

### HEALTHY SNACK: VARIETY OF FRESH FRUITS AND WATER

Offer different types of fruits (i.e., oranges, blueberries, kiwis, strawberries, raspberries, etc.)

Using the chart of fruit benefits, tell families the benefits of the fruit they are eating. For example, strawberries are FULL of nutrients, like vitamin C, which helps heal cuts and wounds and keep teeth and gums healthy\*. (\*Information from [www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/benefits/nutrient\\_guide.html](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/benefits/nutrient_guide.html))

Encourage children to wash hands with soap and warm water before eating snack. **Hand Washing Strategy:** Wash hands for 20 seconds to fight off all germs and then rinse well under running water. Sing the ABC Song while you wash.

### REVIEW FAMILY HANDOUT

**Goal:** Eat three fruit servings every day!

**Bonus:** Try one new fruit.

**Fact of the Week:** It can take 8–15 tries before a child will accept a new food. Eat new foods with your child to set an example of healthy eating habits.

## At-Home Strategies:

- Replace dessert with fruit.
- Wash fruit before eating.
- Add fruit to cereal, non-fat or low-fat yogurt, and whole grain toast.
- Add banana or apple slices to peanut butter sandwiches.

## FRUITS SONGS

### The Banana Song

Grow banana, grow, grow banana (bring one arm at a time above your head)

Peel banana, peel, peel banana (bring one arm at a time down)

Go bananas, go, go bananas (jump up and down doing the mashed potato)

OR

Grow the apple, grow, grow the apple (standing straight)

Pick the apple, pick, pick the apple (hands above head picking apple off tree)

Eat the apple, eat, eat the apple (pretend you are eating the apple)

## LESSON VISUALS

- Strawberry Plant
- Five (5) pages of fruits with letters

