

## **Learning Module Six: Mealtime Behavior & Fun with Food**

### **Objectives of Module Six Lessons:**

Children will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a healthy mealtime routine.
2. Describe how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Practice following directions for a recipe.
4. Explore being a member of a family meal.

#### **Lesson 1: Mealtime Routines and Behaviors**

Children will:

1. Practice using good manners.
2. Describe what utensil to use with specific foods.
3. Explain how to set up and cleanup for mealtime.

#### **Lesson 2: Growing a Garden**

Children will:

1. Discuss what plants need to grow.
2. Learn how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Design a salsa garden.
4. Make and taste a garden salsa recipe using items that could be grown in a salsa garden.

#### **Lesson 3: Cooking Activities**

Children will:

1. Name different kitchen appliances and utensils and will practice safe behaviors to use in the kitchen.
2. Children will explore the ideas of more and less.
3. Children will follow a picture recipe and make individual bowls of fruit salad.

#### **Lesson 4: Taking Nutrition Home**

Children will:

1. Discuss the importance of eating together.
2. Explore how they can be a part of the family meal.
3. Make a healthy meal together which includes a variety of fruits or vegetables.

## Module Six Resources:

1. Berenstain, Stan, and Berenstain Jan. *The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners*. 1985. Random House New York. ISBN 978-0-394-87333-6
2. Garland, Sarah. *Eddie's Garden and How to Make Things Grow*. Frances Lincoln Children's Bks. 2009. ISBN: 978-1845070892.
3. NFSMI. More Than Mudpies, A Nutrition Curriculum Guide for Preschool Children: Mealtime Routines for Health and Manners.  
<http://nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20090120023846.pdf>
  - a. Preliminary Skills Lesson 1
  - b. Measuring Manipulation: Preliminary Lesson 3
  - c. Kitchen Safety: Preliminary Skills Lesson 4
  - d. How to Follow a Picture Recipe: Preliminary Skills Lesson 5
4. University of Maryland Extension Services. Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program. Read for Health: <https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/read-for-health>
  - a. Lesson 4: Family Meals.
  - b. Lesson 12: Whole Grains.
  - c. Lesson 14: Healthy Gardens.
5. University of Maryland Extension Services. Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program Feeding for Healthy Eating.  
<https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/feeding-healthy-eating>
  - a. Parent Handouts: Cooking Together.
  - b. Parent Handouts: Eating Together
6. US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Team Nutrition. Grow It, Try It, Like It. 2013 edition. FNS-406:  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit\\_book1.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit_book1.pdf)
7. US Department of Health and Human Services: We Can! Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition, We Can!: Parent Tips, Getting Kids in the Kitchen.  
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/eat-right/index.htm>
8. Warren, Dianne. *Family Meals*. Oasis Publications 2007. ASIN: B0010A5HN4.

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#### Children will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a healthy mealtime routine.
2. Describe how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Practice following directions for a recipe.
4. Explore being a member of a family meal.

### Lesson 1: Mealtime Routines & Behavior

#### Children will:

1. Practice using good manners.
2. Describe what utensil to use with specific foods.
3. Explain how to set up and cleanup for mealtime.

#### Teacher:

1. Tell the children that today they will be talking about mealtime routines and manners.
2. Ask the children some of the following questions depending on the current mealtime routine at the center:
  - a. What are some things that we do before we start eating lunch?
  - b. What are some things that we do during lunch besides eating?
  - c. What are some things that we do after we eat?

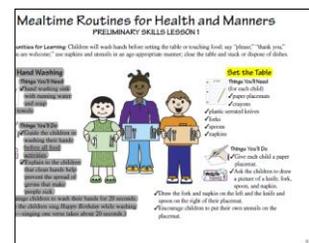
3. Lead the “Set the Table” activity on the right side of page 11 “Mealtime Routines for Health and Manners,” from *More than Mud Pies*.

4. Ask the children to identify which utensil to use for specific foods. Ask the questions listed below. Have children either hold up or point to the utensil.
 

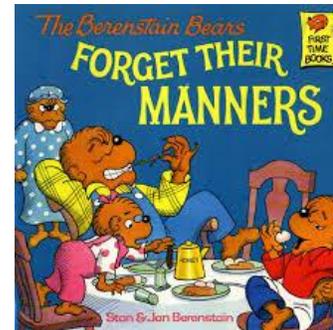
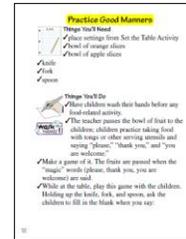
a. I eat my cereal with a _____.	d. I spread jelly on my bread with a _____.
b. I eat my meat with a _____.	e. I eat my soup with a _____.
c. I eat my green peas with a _____.	

### Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.



5. Follow pg. 12 “Practice Good Manners” from *More than Mud Pies*.
  - a. Suggestion: you could use this activity with a snack, as long as it includes a fresh fruit or vegetable.
  
6. Read the *Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners* by Stan and Jan Berenstain.
  - a. Note: this book is long enough that you may want to break it into 2-3 separate sections. Younger children especially may have a hard time sitting through the entire book in one reading.
  - b. Review the mealtime manners discussed in the book. Teacher may offer reminders about any mealtime manner expectations at the center.



**Optional:**

Lead the “Hand Washing” activity on the left side of page 11 “Mealtime Routines for Health and Manners,” from *More than Mud Pies*.

**Supplies Needed:**

1. Supplies needed for the “Set the Table” activity: for each child
  - paper placemat, small plates and napkins
  - utensils (consider plastic knife, forks, spoons to not dirty ones intended for meal)
2. Crayons
3. Supplies needed for the “Practice Good Manners” activity:
  - place setting from “Set the Table” activity
  - bowl(s) of orange slices
  - bowl(s) of apple slices
  - serving spoons and tongs
4. Book: *Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners* by Stan and Jan Berenstain. Random House Books for Young Readers. 1985. ISBN: 0394873335.

**Resources:**

1. Berenstain, Stan, and Berenstain Jan. *The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners*. 1985. Random House New York. ISBN 978-0-394-87333-6
2. National Food Service Management Institute. *More Than Mud Pies*, Sixth Edition, 2012. <http://nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=247>

# Mealtime Routines for Health and Manners

## PRELIMINARY SKILLS LESSON 1

**Opportunities for Learning:** Children will wash hands before setting the table or touching food; say “please,” “thank you,” and “you are welcome;” use napkins and utensils in an age-appropriate manner; clear the table and stack or dispose of dishes.

### Hand Washing



#### Things You'll Need

- ✓ hand washing sink with running water and soap
- ✓ paper towels



#### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Guide the children in washing their hands before all food activities.



- ✓ Explain to the children that clean hands help prevent the spread of germs that make people sick.

- ✓ Encourage children to wash their hands for 20 seconds. (Have the children sing *Happy Birthday* while washing hands—singing one verse takes about 20 seconds.)



### Set the Table



#### Things You'll Need

- (for each child)
- ✓ paper placemats
- ✓ crayons

- ✓ plastic serrated knives
- ✓ forks
- ✓ spoons
- ✓ napkins



#### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Give each child a paper placemat.
- ✓ Ask the children to draw a picture of a knife, fork, spoon, and napkin.



- ✓ Draw the fork and napkin on the left and the knife and spoon on the right of their placemat.
- ✓ Encourage children to put their own utensils on the placemat.

Note: It is okay if the table settings are less than perfect.

## Practice Good Manners



### Things You'll Need

- ✓ place settings from Set the Table Activity
- ✓ bowl of orange slices
- ✓ bowl of apple slices
- ✓ knife
- ✓ fork
- ✓ spoon



### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Have children wash their hands before any food-related activity.
- ✓ The teacher passes the bowl of fruit to the children; children practice taking food with tongs or other serving utensils and saying “please,” “thank you,” and “you are welcome.”
- ✓ Make a game of it. The fruits are passed when the “magic” words (please, thank you, you are welcome) are said.
- ✓ While at the table, play this game with the children. Holding up the knife, fork, and spoon, ask the children to fill in the blank when you say:



I eat my cereal with a \_\_\_\_\_. (spoon)  
I eat my meat with a \_\_\_\_\_. (fork)  
I eat my green peas with a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(fork or spoon)  
I eat my lettuce with a \_\_\_\_\_. (fork)  
I eat my yogurt with a \_\_\_\_\_. (spoon)  
I spread butter on my bread with a  
\_\_\_\_\_. (knife)  
I eat my soup with a \_\_\_\_\_. (spoon)

## Clean Up



### Things You'll Need

- ✓ dishpan
- ✓ disposable bag
- ✓ plastic scraper
- ✓ paper towels



### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Put disposable bag or dishpan on the table.
- ✓ Show the children how to scrape excess food into a disposable bag or dishpan using the plastic scraper.
- ✓ Sort and stack glassware, flatware, and dishes.
- ✓ Have the children wash their hands at the sink with running water after handling the dirty dishes.

## **Learning Module Six: Mealtime Behavior & Fun with Food**

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#### **Children will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate a healthy mealtime routine.
2. Describe how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Practice following directions for a recipe.
4. Explore being a member of a family meal.

### **Lesson 2: Growing a Garden**

#### **Children will:**

1. Discuss what plants need to grow.
2. Learn how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Design a salsa garden.
4. Make and taste a garden salsa recipe using items that could be grown in a salsa garden.

#### **Teacher:**

1. Follow “Lesson 14: Healthy Gardens” from the University of Maryland Extension’s *Read for Health* Curriculum, labeled pages 81 - 82.
  - a. Explain: gardens are a great way to eat more fruits and vegetables, and may come in different forms. Some gardens are big, others small. Some are inside, others outside.

### **Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:**

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed. This lesson has a tasting activity!
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior



**READ FOR  
HEALTH**

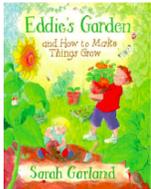
Lesson 14 · Healthy Gardens

**Recommended Book**  
“Eddie’s Garden and How to Make Things Grow” by Sarah Garland

**Book Summary:** What makes Eddie’s garden grow? Earth, rain, sun, and all sorts of creatures, of course! Eddie works hard — digging, pulling weeds, and watering his plants — and soon his garden is magnificent, from his string bean house to his tall sunflowers.

**Lesson Objectives**  
Children will:

1. Discuss what plants need to grow.
2. Learn how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Design a salsa garden.
4. Make and taste a garden salsa recipe using items that could be grown in a salsa garden.



**Food Demo Summary**  
Students will have the opportunity to taste some of the vegetables and herbs that can be grown in a salsa-themed school garden. See reverse for materials, prep-work and “Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden” instructions.

**Lesson Format**

- b. Read *Eddie's Garden and How to Make Things Grow* by Sarah Garland.
- c. Use the discussion guide on page 81 after reading the book
- d. Lead the "Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden" food demonstration and activity on page 82.

Lesson 14 • Healthy Gardens

**Lesson Format Continued**

6. Give each student a piece of brown construction paper and explain that this is going to be their garden space. It has been cleared of weeds and the soil is ready for planting.
7. Have each student cut out the plans for their garden from the Salsa Garden worksheet located in the Materials Appendix.
8. Tell the class that vegetable and herb plants need plenty of space to grow and ask them to place their plants where they would like to plant them in the garden.
9. Once the vegetable plan is placed, have the students glue them to the page using a glue stick.
10. When the garden plan is complete, prepare the garden salsa recipe.

**Materials**

- Recommended book
- *Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden* supplies
- 20 pieces of brown construction paper
- Markers
- Salsa School Garden photo cards (in Materials Appendix)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Supplies for School Garden Salsa Recipe
- Small plates
- Whole-grain tortillas
- Large Spoon
- Lettuce leaves
- Can opener

**Prep Work**

- Wash and chop tomatoes, pepper, onions, and chileño
- Open cans of black beans and corn and rinse and drain
- Print 20 copies of Salsa School Garden photo cards (in Materials Appendix)

**School Garden Salsa**  
Makes 20 portions

<p><b>Ingredients</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 can crushed whole-kernel corn, drained</li> <li>1 can black beans, rinsed and drained</li> <li>2 cans tomatoes, seeded and chopped</li> <li>½ red pepper, seeded and chopped</li> <li>½ red onion, diced</li> <li>1 ½ cups fresh chileño</li> <li>1 ½ cup lime juice</li> <li>1/4 cup olive oil</li> </ul>	<p><b>Directions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Combine the first 7 ingredients in a large bowl.</li> <li>2. Serve with baked tortillas.</li> </ol>
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- 2. Lead the children in one of the Garden songs, *The Garden Song* or *My Garden*. Get the children up and moving and have them act out the actions in the song.

### Garden Songs

The Garden Song - Sung to "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Dig, dig, dig your garden  
Make it smooth and neat  
Push, push, push that shovel,  
Push it with your feet.

Plant, plant, plant your seeds  
Push them down an inch  
Cover your seeds with some soil  
Cover with a pinch.

Water, water, water your seed  
This will help them sprout,  
Sprinkle lightly and let 'em pour  
And don't let them dry out.

Sun, sun, sunshine  
It will nura them green,  
Carrots and radishes and peppers, too  
Tomatoes and some beans.

Watch, watch, watch them grow  
See them grow so tall  
Put a scarecrow in the ground  
to protect them all.

Pull, pull, pull the weeds  
Keep your garden clear  
to make them grow up and out  
And stretch out here and there.

Pick, pick, pick your feast  
Cook some veggie soup  
You'll have lots and lots to eat,  
Enough to feed the group.

- 3. Send the parent handout (Page 83 from Read for Health) home with the children

**READ FOR HEALTH**

**Healthy Gardens**

It takes a lot of work to build a garden that is healthy and full of life. It takes a lot of work to build a garden that is healthy and full of life. It takes a lot of work to build a garden that is healthy and full of life.

**Did You Know?**

- 1. Healthy gardens provide a great place for children to learn about plants and animals.
- 2. Healthy gardens provide a great place for children to learn about plants and animals.
- 3. Healthy gardens provide a great place for children to learn about plants and animals.
- 4. Healthy gardens provide a great place for children to learn about plants and animals.
- 5. Healthy gardens provide a great place for children to learn about plants and animals.

**Bring Gardening Home**

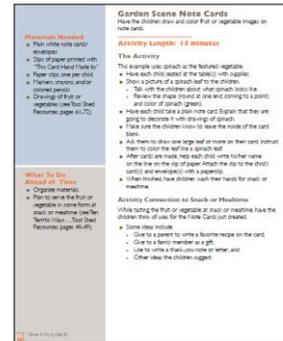
When planting outdoors, think of what you want to grow. Do you want to grow vegetables, fruits, or flowers? Do you want to grow herbs, or something else? Do you want to grow something that you can eat, or something that you can use for decoration?

**Take Action!**

- 1. Dig a hole for your seedling and plant it.
- 2. Water your seedling every day.
- 3. Watch your seedling grow.
- 4. Harvest your seedling when it is ready.
- 5. Enjoy your seedling!

## Optional Follow-Up Activities:

1. “Garden Scene Note Cards” activity from Grow It, Try It, Like It pg. 30. This activity asks children to draw and color fruit or vegetable images on note cards.

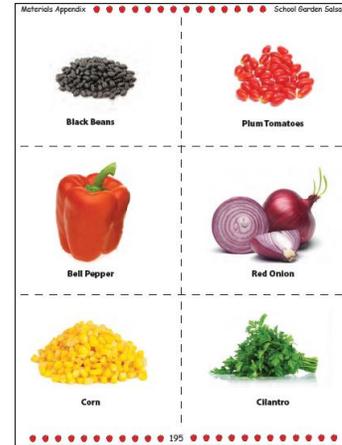


2. “Painted Pots’ activity from Grow It, Try It, Like It on pg. 35. The children paint and/or color images of fruits or vegetables on clay pots. Pots could be used at the center or preschool for a container garden or given to family member filled with a seeds



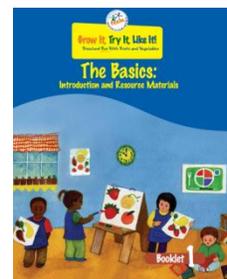
## Supplies Needed:

1. “Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden” supplies:
  - a. 1 piece for each child of brown construction paper
  - b. 1 copy for each child of the “School Garden Salsa” photos (labeled page 195, seen to the right →)
  - c. markers
  - d. scissors
  - e. glue sticks
2. School Garden Recipe (the recipe makes 20 portions):
  - a. pre- wash and chop the tomatoes, pepper, onions, and cilantro
  - b. washed and opened cans of black beans and corn and rinse and drain
  - c. lime
  - d. small plates
  - e. whole grain, baked tortilla chips
  - f. large spoons
  - g. lettuce knives
  - h. can opener
3. Book: *Eddie’s Garden and How to Make Things Grow* by Sarah Garland.
4. A copy of The Garden Song for each teacher and adult in the classroom during lesson.
5. Copies of the Parent Handout from Read for Health (page 83)
6. For optional activities, look at the activity handout for the supplies list.



## Resources:

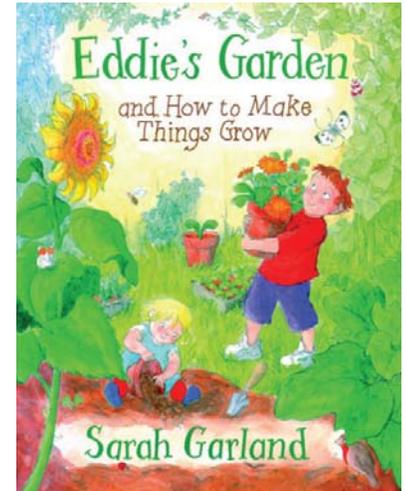
1. Garland, Sarah. *Eddie’s Garden and How to Make Things Grow*. Frances Lincoln Children's Bks. 2009. ISBN: 978-1845070892.
2. University of Maryland Extension Services. Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program. Read for Health: <https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/read-for-health>
3. US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Team Nutrition. Grow It, Try It, Like It. 2013 edition. FNS-406: [http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit\\_book1.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit_book1.pdf)



### Recommended Book

“Eddie’s Garden and How to Make Things Grow” by Sarah Garland

**Book Summary:** What makes Eddie’s garden grow? Earth, rain, sun, and all sorts of creatures, of course! Eddie works hard — digging, pulling weeds, and watering his plants — and soon his garden is magnificent, from his string bean house to his tall sunflowers.



### Lesson Objectives

Children will:

1. Discuss what plants need to grow.
2. Learn how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Design a salsa garden.
4. Make and taste a garden salsa recipe using items that could be grown in a salsa garden.

### Food Demo Summary

Students will have the opportunity to taste some of the vegetables and herbs that can be grown in a salsa-themed school garden. See reverse for materials, prep-work and “Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden” instructions.

### Lesson Format

1. Explain that gardens are a great way to eat more fruits and vegetables, and they can be grown in many different ways. (Recycled containers, window boxes, pots, raised beds, etc.)
2. Read the book aloud to children.
3. Use the following questions to guide a discussion:
  - a. What are some of the benefits of a garden?
  - b. If you were going to start a garden, at home or at school, what would you like to grow? (For more information on vegetable gardening, visit [www.extension.umd.edu/growit](http://www.extension.umd.edu/growit) and click on publications.)
  - c. Plants need water, food, air, sun and space to survive. How can we, as gardeners make sure our plants are healthy? (Water, fertilize, pull weeds, give plants enough space to grow when planting them.)
4. Lead students in the “Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden” food demonstration and activity.
5. Explain to the class that they are going to plan a salsa garden and prepare a salsa recipe using the vegetables in the recipe and gather the necessary materials listed on the following page.

### Lesson Format Continued

6. Give each student a piece of brown construction paper and explain that this is going to be their garden space. It has been cleared of weeds and the soil is ready for planting
7. Have each student cut out the plants for their garden from the Salsa Garden worksheet located in the Materials Appendix.
8. Tell the class that vegetable and herb plants need plenty of space to grow and ask them to place their plants where they would like to plant them in the garden.
9. Once the vegetables are in place, have the students glue them to the page using a glue stick.
10. When the garden plan is complete, prepare the garden salsa recipe.

### Materials

- Recommended book
- “Plan and Taste a Salsa Garden” supplies:
  - 20 pieces of brown construction paper
  - Markers
  - Salsa School Garden photo cards (In Materials Appendix)
  - Scissors
  - Glue sticks
- Supplies for School Garden Salsa Recipe:
  - Small plates
  - Baked tortilla chips
  - Large Spoon
  - Lettuce knives
  - Can opener

### Prep-Work

- Wash and chop tomatoes, pepper, onions, and cilantro
- Open cans of black beans and corn and rinse and drain
- Print 20 copies of Salsa School Garden photo cards (in Materials Appendix)

## School Garden Salsa

Makes 20 portions

### Ingredients

1 can unsalted whole-kernel corn, drained  
1 can black beans, rinsed and drained  
4 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped  
½ bell pepper, seeded and chopped  
½ medium red onion  
1/3 cup minced fresh cilantro  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
Baked tortilla chips

### Directions

1. Combine the first 7 ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Serve with baked tortilla chips.

### Estimated Time:

- \* Completing prep-work: 20 minutes
- \* Completing lesson: 45 minutes
- \* Completing reinforcement activity: 30 minutes

# Garden Songs

The Garden Song - Sung to "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Dig, dig, dig your garden  
Make it smooth and neat  
Push, push, push that shovel,  
Push it with your feet.

Plant, plant, plant your seeds  
Push them down an inch  
Cover your seeds with some soil  
Cover with a pinch.

Water, water, water your seed  
This will help them sprout,  
Sprinkle lightly and let's not pour  
And don't let them dry out.

Sun, sun, sunshine  
It will turn them green,  
Carrots and radishes and peppers, too  
Tomatoes and some beans.

Watch, watch, watch them grow  
See them grow so tall  
Put a scarecrow in the ground  
to protect them all.

Pull, pull, pull the weeds  
Keep your garden clear  
to make them grow up and out  
And stretch out here and there.

Pick, pick, pick your feast  
Cook some veggie soup  
You'll have lots and lots to eat,  
Enough to feed the group.





**Black Beans**



**Plum Tomatoes**



**Bell Pepper**



**Red Onion**



**Corn**

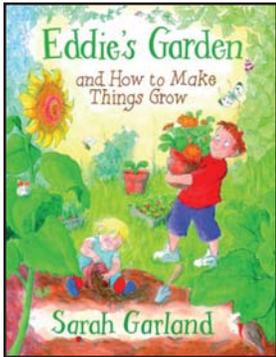


**Cilantro**





# READ FOR HEALTH



## Healthy Gardens

In class this week we read the book "Eddie's Garden and How to Make Things Grow". Your child learned that it is fun to grow and eat fresh fruits and vegetables from a garden. We then prepared fresh vegetables to make gardens on our plates!

## Did You Know?

School and community gardens are a great place for your child to spend time outdoors, where they may grow and taste fruits and vegetables. Students benefit in many ways from gardening, such as:

- Improved team-building skills
- Higher achievement test scores
- Improved focus and patience
- Increased self-confidence
- Increased sense of pride
- Increased physical activity
- Increased chance for tasting more fruits and vegetables
- Increased opportunity to learn ways to prepare foods grown in the garden



## Bring Gardening Home

You can start a small container garden using items that you may already have at home.



Children's wading pools, sand boxes, buckets, coffee cans, and storage bins can be re-used for container gardens.

When choosing containers, think of what you want to grow. In containers that are 3-6 inches deep, you can plant lettuce, spinach, kale, collards, mustard greens, snap bush beans or radishes. In a deeper container, 8- 12 inches deep, plant beets, broccoli, baby cabbage, peas, carrots or onions.

- To prepare the container for planting, make several small holes in the bottom of the container to allow for drainage
- Fill container with potting soil and plant seeds according to the package directions plant seedlings

## Take Action!

Support gardening in your community and your child's school

- Contact your school to find out if there is a school garden and how you can get involved
- Work with school administrators and teachers to raise funds and donations for school gardens
- Encourage community members to support a gardening project
- Visit [extension.umd.edu/growit](http://extension.umd.edu/growit) for more information about growing gardens
- Visit <http://www.communitygarden.org/> to find a community garden near you





## Materials Needed

- Plain white note cards/ envelopes
- Slips of paper printed with “This Card Hand Made by”
- Paper clips, one per child
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils
- Drawings of fruit or vegetables (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)

## What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

## Garden Scene Note Cards

Have the children draw and color fruit or vegetable images on note cards.

### Activity Length: 15 minutes

#### The Activity

This example uses spinach as the featured vegetable.

- Have each child seated at the table(s) with supplies.
- Show a picture of a spinach leaf to the children.
  - ▶ Talk with the children about what spinach looks like.
  - ▶ Review the shape (round at one end, coming to a point) and color of spinach (green).
- Have each child take a plain note card. Explain that they are going to decorate it with drawings of spinach.
- Make sure the children know to leave the inside of the card blank.
- Ask them to draw one large leaf or more on their card. Instruct them to color the leaf like a spinach leaf.
- After cards are made, help each child write his/her name on the line on the slip of paper. Attach the slip to the child's card(s) and envelope(s) with a paperclip.
- When finished, have children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

#### Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While tasting the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the Note Cards just created.

- Some ideas include:
  - ▶ Give to a parent to write a favorite recipe on the card;
  - ▶ Give to a family member as a gift;
  - ▶ Use to write a thank-you note or letter; and
  - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.



## Painted Pots

The children paint and/or color images of fruits or vegetables on clay pots.

### Activity Length: 20-30 minutes

#### The Activity

This example uses peaches as the featured fruit.

- Have each child seated at a table(s).
- Show a picture of a peach to the children and keep it on display.
- Review with the children the shape (round) and color of peach (light yellow to orange).
- Give a pot to each child.
- Using a pencil, help each child draw a peach or peach tree design on the pot with a pencil.

**Note:** Oil pastels are permanent so it is best to draw the image with a pencil first.

- Help the children to use the oil pastels to color their peach or peach tree on their pot.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

#### Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While tasting the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the pots they just created.

- Some ideas include:
  - ▶ Use it at the center or preschool for a container garden;
  - ▶ Give it to a family member filled with peach-scented potpourri;
  - ▶ Use it at home; or
  - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

#### Materials Needed

- Clean, dry, 6-inch-high terra-cotta pots, one for each child, or do a large pot as a group project for a container garden
- Pencils
- Oil pastels (available at art supply stores)
- Drawings of fruit or vegetable (see the Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- Acrylic paint and brushes, optional for painting pots ahead of time
- Smocks or large bibs to protect the children's clothing, if desired

#### What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials.
- Paint the pots with acrylic paint for a bright base, if desired.
- Arrange for adult volunteers to help the children paint.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., pages 48-49).



## Learning Module Six: Mealtime Behavior & Fun with Food

### Objectives of Module Six Lessons:

#### Children will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a healthy mealtime routine.
2. Describe how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Practice following directions for a recipe.
4. Explore being a member of a family meal.

### Lesson 3: Cooking Activities

#### Children will:

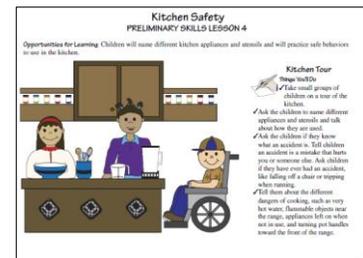
1. Name different kitchen appliances and utensils and will practice safe behaviors to use in the kitchen.
2. Children will explore the ideas of more and less.
3. Children will follow a picture recipe and make individual bowls of fruit salad.

#### Teacher:

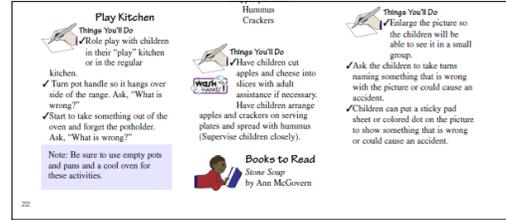
1. Tell the children that today we are going to be talking about cooking and how to cook in the kitchen. Ask the children a couple of questions to begin the lesson.
  - a) Raise your hand if you have ever helped someone cook.
  - b) What kinds of food do you help your parents or family members cook?
  - c) What foods would you like to learn how to prepare or make?
2. There are 2 different options to open this lesson. Follow option “a” below if there is a kitchen at the child care center. Follow option “b” below if there is no actual kitchen, utilizing a “play kitchen.”
  - a. Follow the “Kitchen Tour: Things You’ll Do” activity on page 21-22 of the “Kitchen Safety: Preliminary Skills Lesson 4” from *More than Mudpies*.

### Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.



- b. Follow the “Play Kitchen: Things You’ll Do” activity on page 22 of the “Kitchen Safety: Preliminary Skills Lesson 4” from *More than Mudpies*.

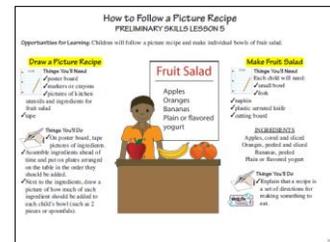


3. Tell the children in order to be a good cook, you need to know how much of something to put in a recipe. Sometimes you can add too much or too little of a food and the meal doesn't turn out as it should. In order to get the amounts right, we MEASURE each item listed in a recipe. Ask children, “Have you ever measured a food or drink before?”

4. Follow “Measuring Manipulation: Preliminary Lesson 3” on page 19 in *More than Mudpies*.

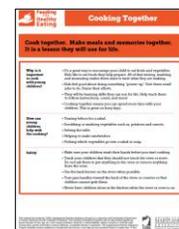


5. Follow the “Draw a Picture Recipe” and “Make Fruit Salad” sections of “How to Follow a Picture Recipe: Preliminary Skills Lesson 5,” pages 25- 26 from *More than Mudpies*.



6. Send parent handouts home with each child:

- a. “Parent Tips: Getting Kids in the Kitchen”  
 b. “Feeding for Healthy Eating: Cooking Together”



**Supplies Needed:**

1. Supplies for “Measuring Manipulation: Preliminary Lesson Three” from *More than Mudpies* on pg. 19.
- a. Large bowls (2 for each table or group of students)
  - b. Enough water to fill one bowl on each table about ¾ full
  - c. Enough dry (uncooked) rice or beans to fill one bowl on each table at least ½ full

- d. Dry measuring cup set for each table/group



- e. Dry measuring spoon set for each table/group



- f. Liquid measuring cup for each table/group



- g. Spatula or spoon to transfer water and rice or beans into measuring tools for each table/group

2. Supplies for the “Draw a Picture Recipe” and “Make Fruit Salad” from “How to Follow a Picture Recipe: Preliminary Skills Lesson 5” from *More than Mud Pies* on pg. 25.

- a. Poster board

- b. Markers or crayons

- c. 1 copy for each child of the pictures of kitchen utensils and foods for Fruit Salad recipe (provided in folder, pictured here →)



- d. Tape

- e. Supplies & ingredients for fruit salad needed for each child:

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) small bowl             | 6) apples (cored & sliced)   |
| 2) fork                   | 7) oranges (peeled & sliced) |
| 3) napkin                 | 8) bananas (peeled)          |
| 4) plastic serrated knife | 9) plain or flavored yogurt  |
| 5) cutting board          |                              |

3. Copies of Parent Handouts:

- a. “Parent Tips: Getting Kids in the Kitchen”  
b. “Feeding for Healthy Eating: Cooking Together”

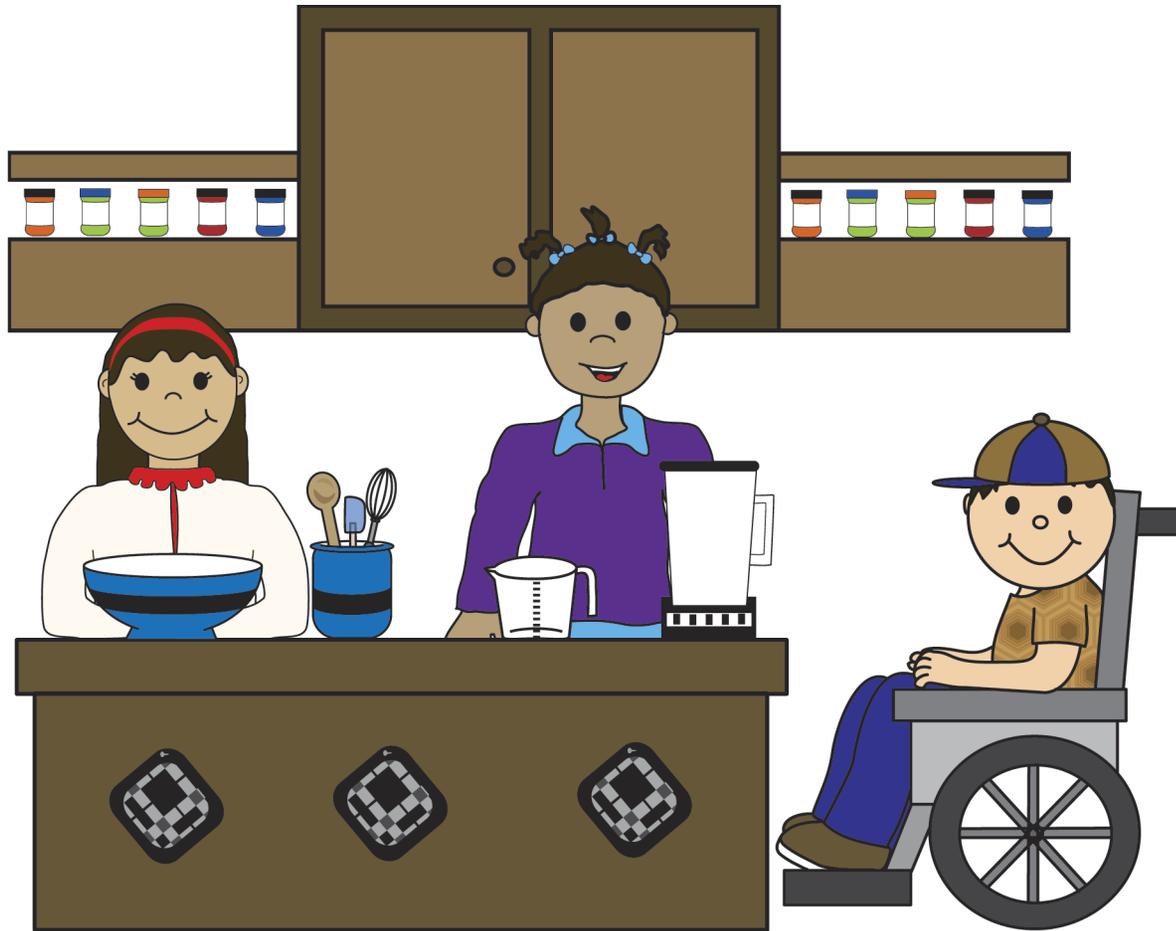
**Resources:**

1. NFSMI. More Than Mudpies, A Nutrition Curriculum Guide for Preschool Children: Mealtime Routines for Health and Manners.  
<http://nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20090120023846.pdf>
2. University of Maryland Extension Services. Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program Feeding for Healthy Eating. <http://eatsmart.umd.edu/educators/curricula/feeding-healthy-eating>
3. US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Team Nutrition. Grow It, Try It, Like It. 2013 edition. FNS-406:  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit\\_book1.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit_book1.pdf)
4. US Department of Health and Human Services: We Can! Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition, We Can!: Parent Tips, Getting Kids in the Kitchen.  
<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/eat-right/index.htm>

# Kitchen Safety

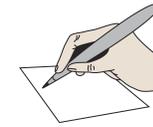
## PRELIMINARY SKILLS LESSON 4

**Opportunities for Learning:** Children will name different kitchen appliances and utensils and will practice safe behaviors to use in the kitchen.



### Kitchen Tour

#### Things You'll Do



- ✓ Take small groups of children on a tour of the kitchen.
- ✓ Ask the children to name different appliances and utensils and talk about how they are used.
- ✓ Ask the children if they know what an accident is. Tell children an accident is a mistake that hurts you or someone else. Ask children if they have ever had an accident, like falling off a chair or tripping when running.
- ✓ Tell them about the different dangers of cooking, such as very hot water, flammable objects near the range, appliances left on when not in use, and turning pot handles toward the front of the range.

- ✓ Discuss the use of potholders.
- ✓ Check for frayed cords and broken plugs on electrical equipment.
- ✓ Make sure that children are aware of where the electric cords are so they will not trip over them. Never drape a cord where children walk or play.
- ✓ Place electrical equipment on a table against the wall where the cord is plugged in for greater safety.

## Play Kitchen



### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Role play with children in their “play” kitchen or in the regular kitchen.
- ✓ Turn pot handle so it hangs over side of the range. Ask, “What is wrong?”
- ✓ Start to take something out of the oven and forget the potholder. Ask, “What is wrong?”

Note: Be sure to use empty pots and pans and a cool oven for these activities.

## Work With Utensils

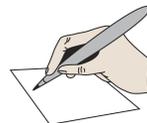


### Things You'll Need

- ✓ hand washing sink with soap, running water, and paper towels
- ✓ plastic serrated knives
- ✓ cutting boards
- ✓ serving plates

### INGREDIENTS

Cheese  
1 Apple per child  
Hummus  
Crackers



### Things You'll Do



- ✓ Have children cut apples and cheese into slices with adult assistance if necessary. Have children arrange apples and crackers on serving plates and spread with hummus (Supervise children closely).



## Books to Read

*Stone Soup*  
by Ann McGovern



## Songs to Sing

*Jack and Jill*

## Picture This!



### Things You'll Need

- ✓ small sticky pad or colored dots for children to put on the picture
- ✓ enlarged copy of the picture



### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Enlarge the picture so the children will be able to see it in a small group.
- ✓ Ask the children to take turns naming something that is wrong with the picture or could cause an accident.
- ✓ Children can put a sticky pad sheet or colored dot on the picture to show something that is wrong or could cause an accident.

# Measuring Manipulation

## PRELIMINARY SKILLS LESSON 3

*Opportunities for Learning:* Children will explore the ideas of more and less.

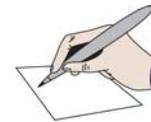


### Measure



#### Things You'll Need

- ✓water
- ✓rice
- ✓beans
- ✓flour
- ✓spatula
- ✓several plastic bowls
- ✓dry measuring cups
- ✓liquid measuring cups
- ✓measuring spoons



#### Things You'll Do

- ✓Fill bowls with water, rice, beans, and/or flour (at least one liquid and one dry ingredient).
- ✓Let the children fill liquid measuring cups with water and discuss which cup has more or less water than another.
- ✓Demonstrate how to fill measuring spoons with flour and level them off with a spatula. Show 1 tablespoon is larger than the 1 teaspoon measure.
- ✓Weigh 1 cup of each of the different ingredients so children can see that 1 cup of one ingredient weighs less or more than another.
- ✓Have children experiment on their own and practice different measurements, focusing on which measure is more or less.



Utensil Pictures for "How to Follow a Picture Recipe: Preliminary Skills Lesson 5"





Food Pictures for “How to Follow a Picture Recipe: Preliminary Skills Lesson 5”





# How to Follow a Picture Recipe

## PRELIMINARY SKILLS LESSON 5

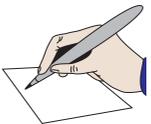
**Opportunities for Learning:** Children will follow a picture recipe and make individual bowls of fruit salad.

### Draw a Picture Recipe



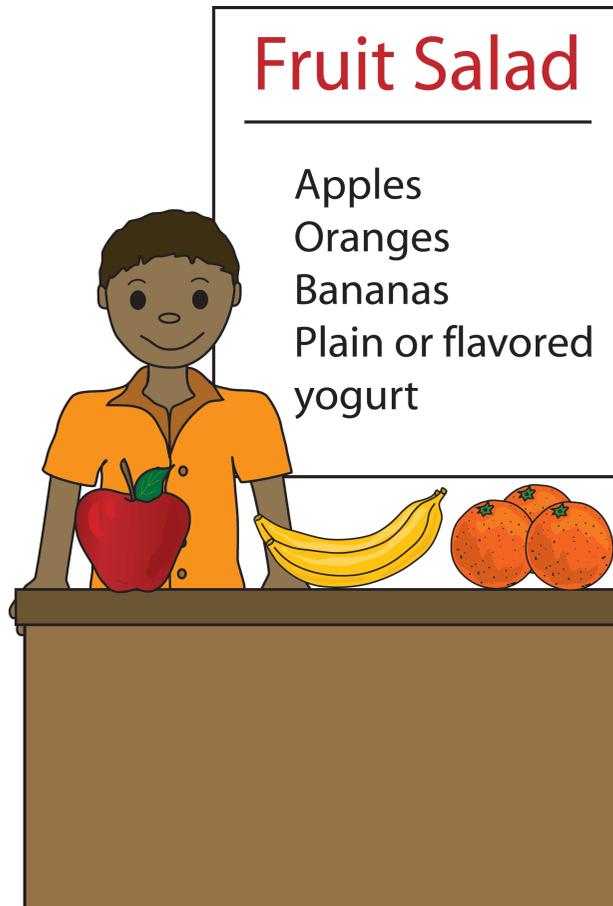
#### Things You'll Need

- ✓ poster board
- ✓ markers or crayons
- ✓ pictures of kitchen utensils and ingredients for fruit salad
- ✓ tape



#### Things You'll Do

- ✓ On poster board, tape pictures of ingredients.
- ✓ Assemble ingredients ahead of time and put on plates arranged on the table in the order they should be added.
- ✓ Next to the ingredients, draw a picture of how much of each ingredient should be added to each child's bowl (such as 2 pieces or spoonfuls).



### Make Fruit Salad



#### Things You'll Need

- Each child will need:
- ✓ small bowl
  - ✓ fork
  - ✓ napkin
  - ✓ plastic serrated knife
  - ✓ cutting board

#### INGREDIENTS

Apples, cored and sliced  
Oranges, peeled and sliced  
Bananas, peeled  
Plain or flavored yogurt



#### Things You'll Do

- ✓ Explain that a recipe is a set of directions for making something to eat.



Each child should “read” the picture recipe and

- ✓Dice 4 pieces of apple and put in the bowl.
- ✓Cut 2 slices of banana and add to the bowl.
- ✓Add 1 piece of orange to the bowl.
- ✓Top with 2 teaspoons of yogurt and mix.
- ✓Clean up.
- ✓Talk about the different colors, sizes, and shapes of the salad ingredients.
- ✓Talk about the importance of fruit for energy and to help prevent colds and heal cuts.
- ✓Enjoy the fruit salad as part of a meal or snack.



### Books to Read

*Feast for 10*  
by Cathryn Falwell

*Cook-A-Doodle-Do*  
by Janet Stevens and  
Susan Stevens  
Crummel



### Songs to Sing

*There Was an Old  
Woman Who Lived in  
a Shoe*



### What Families Can Do

Discuss with families that the children are learning about picture recipes. Encourage families to let their child help follow a recipe at home.

### My Great Recipes

Include recipes the children will enjoy making.

# parent tips

## Getting Kids in the Kitchen

Cooking with your kids is a good way to help them build healthy eating habits.



### Get them interested

Most kids enjoy helping in the kitchen. While they help you cook, you can talk to them about healthy foods. Children like to eat food they make. This is a good way to get them to try new healthy foods.

### Let them help

You can show your kids how to help you prepare meals. Here are ways that young kids can help in the kitchen:

#### 2-year-olds can:

- Wipe tabletops
- Wash fruits and vegetables
- Tear lettuce or greens
- Break cauliflower or broccoli into pieces
- Carry ingredients from one place to another

#### 3-year-olds can:

- Knead and shape dough
- Mix or pour ingredients
- Shake liquids in a covered container to mix them
- Apply soft spreads
- Put things in the trash

#### 4-year-olds can:

- Peel oranges or hard-boiled eggs
- Mash bananas or cooked beans with a fork
- Cut parsley and green onions with kid-safe scissors
- Set the table

#### 5 to 6-year-olds can:

- Measure ingredients
- Use an egg beater

Be sure to have kids wash their hands before and after helping in the kitchen. Be patient with spills and mistakes. Remember that the goal is to help your kids learn about healthy eating.

### Let them be creative

Set out three or four healthy foods, and let your kids make a new snack or sandwich from them. Use foods your children can eat without choking.

#### Start with:

- A new kind of bread (whole grain or rye)
- Whole grain crackers or graham crackers
- Mini rice cakes or popcorn cakes
- Small bagels
- Small pieces of whole-wheat pita bread

#### Spreads could include:

- Fat-free or low-fat cream cheese or cheese spread
- Fat-free or low-fat peanut butter
- Bean dip
- Jelly with no sugar added

#### Toppings could include:

- Slices of apple or banana
- Raisins or other dried fruit
- Strawberries
- Slices of cucumber or squash
- Cherry tomatoes cut in small pieces

As you help your kids make the new snack or sandwich talk about why it is healthy. Point out each food group in the snack or sandwich. Explain that eating a mix of foods is good for you. Ask why the snack or sandwich tastes good. Is it sweet, juicy, chewy, or crunchy?

*We Can!* is a program from the National Institutes of Health that offers resources for parents, caregivers and communities to help children 8-13 years old stay at a healthy weight through eating right, increasing physical activity, and reducing screen time.

To learn more, go to <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call 1-866-35-WECAN.

*We Can!* Ways to Enhance Children's Activity & Nutrition, *We Can!*, and the *We Can!* logos are registered trademarks of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS).



**Cook together. Make meals and memories together.  
It is a lesson they will use for life.**

**Why is it  
important  
to cook  
with young  
children?**

- It's a great way to encourage your child to eat fruits and vegetables. Kids like to eat foods they help prepare. All of that mixing, mashing, and measuring makes them want to taste what they are making.
- Kids feel good about doing something "grown-up." Give them small jobs to do. Praise their efforts.
- They will be learning skills they can use for life. Help teach them to follow instructions, count, and more!
- Cooking together means you can spend more time with your children. This is great on busy days.

**How can  
young  
children  
help with  
the cooking?**

- Tearing lettuce for a salad.
- Scrubbing or washing vegetables such as, potatoes and carrots.
- Setting the table.
- Helping to make sandwiches.
- Picking which vegetables go into a salad or soup.

**Safety**

- Make sure your children wash their hands before you start cooking.
- Teach your children that they should not touch the oven or stove. Do not ask them to put anything in the oven or remove anything from the oven.
- Use the back burner on the stove when possible.
- Turn pan handles toward the back of the stove or counter so that children cannot grab them.
- Never leave children alone in the kitchen when the stove or oven is on.

Let young children help prepare healthy meals and they will be more likely to eat healthy foods.

Your young child can:

- Tear lettuce
- Spread peanut butter and jelly
- Decide which vegetable to put in a salad
- Set the table

## Crunchy Vegetable Wrap

Try this recipe for a family meal!

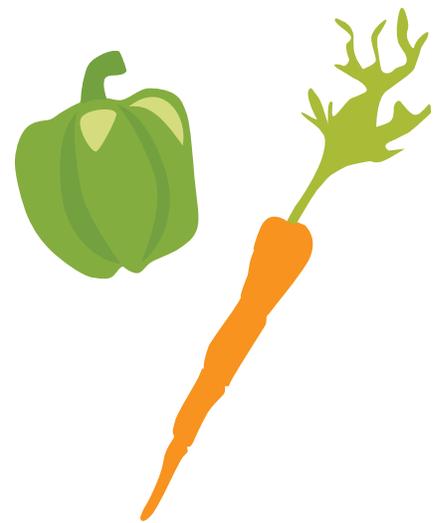
### Ingredients

- 4 Tablespoons low-fat cream cheese
- ½ teaspoon ranch seasoning mix
- 2 flour tortillas
- ½ head of broccoli, washed and chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 zucchini, washed and cut into small strips
- 1 summer squash, washed and cut into small strips
- ½ tomato, diced
- ¼ green bell pepper, seeded and diced

### Directions

1. In a small bowl, stir ranch seasoning into cream cheese, chill.
2. Wash and chop vegetables.
3. Spread cream cheese onto flour tortilla, staying one inch from edge. Sprinkle vegetables over cheese. Roll tortilla tightly. With a sharp knife slice cream into circles and serve.

Serves: 4



### Nutritional Information per Serving

Calories: 130

Total Fat: 4g

Saturated Fat: 2g

## Goal Setting

**What is one meal that your young child can help prepare next week?  
What can your child do to help prepare this meal?**

## **Learning Module Six: Mealtime Behavior & Fun with Food**

### **Objectives of Module Six Lessons:**

#### **Children will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate a healthy mealtime routine.
2. Describe how to plant and care for a garden.
3. Practice following directions for a recipe.
4. Explore being a member of a family meal.

### **Lesson 4: Taking Nutrition Home**

#### **Children will:**

1. Discuss the importance of eating together.
2. Explore how they can be a part of the family meal.
1. Make a healthy meal together which includes a variety of fruits or vegetables.

#### **Teacher:**

1. Follow “Lesson 4: Family Meals” from Read for Health, labeled pages 35 – 36.
2. Ask children to think about meals that they usually eat with people. Ask the children the following questions.
  - a. Read *Family Meals* by Diane Warren. Use the questions on page 35 to have a discussion about the book.

### **Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:**

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.

Lesson 4 • Family Meals

**Recommended Book**  
"Family Meals" by Diane Warren

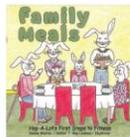
**Book Summary:** The bunny in this story, "Hop-A-Lot," describes all the things he enjoys about eating with his family. He discusses the importance of eating healthy and being a good role model.

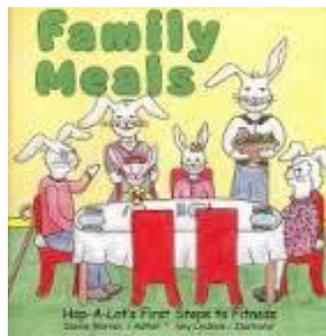
**Lesson Objectives**  
Children will:

1. Discuss the importance of eating together.
2. Explore how they can be a part of the family meal.
3. Make a healthy meal together which includes a variety of fruits or vegetables.

**Food Demonstration**  
Students will work together to create a meal to share. They will identify fruits or vegetables by color as they add them to a tasty and colorful salad. See reverse for materials, prep-work, and "Rainbow Salad" directions.

Lesson Format

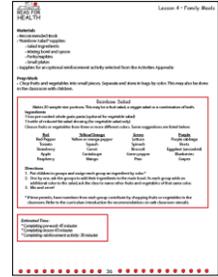




- b. Make the “Rainbow Salad,” following the directions on pages 35- 36.

➤ Ask the children to talk at their table about what they can tell their families about some or all of the following:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole Grains
- Healthy Eating
- Mealtime Manners
- What made them happy today



3. Send home copies of parent/caregiver handouts:

- a. “Family Meals” from *Read for Health*.
- b. “Eating Together” from *Feeding for Healthy Eating*.



**Supplies Needed:**

- 1. Book: *Family Meals* by Diane Warren
- 2. Supplies and ingredients for the “Rainbow Salad” on page 36.
  - a. large mixing bowl and spoon for each table or group of children
  - b. for each child: forks and napkins and small plates
  - c. Pre-wash and cut something from each of these color groups for the salad:

Red	Yellow/Orange	Green	Purple
Red pepper	Yellow or orange pepper	Lettuce	Purple cabbage
Tomato	Squash	Spinach	Beets
Strawberry	Carrot	Broccoli	Eggplant (uncooked)
Apple (red skin)	Cantaloupe	Green pepper	Blueberries
Raspberry	Mango	Pear (green skin)	Grapes (red/purple)

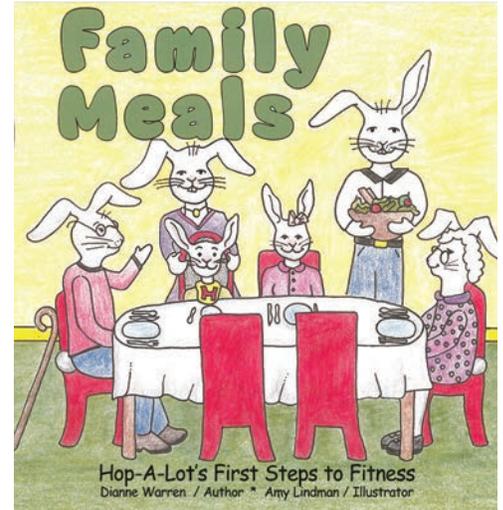
**Resources:**

- 1. University of Maryland Extension Services. Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program Feeding for Healthy Eating. <https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/feeding-healthy-eating>
- 2. University of Maryland Extension Services. Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program. Read for Health: <https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/read-for-health>
- 3. Warren, Dianne. *Family Meals*. Oasis Publications 2007. ASIN: B0010A5HN4.

**Recommended Book**

“Family Meals” by Diane Warren

**Book Summary:** The bunny in this story, “Hop-A-Lot,” describes all the things he enjoys about eating with his family. He discusses the importance of eating healthy and being a good role model.



**Lesson Objectives**

Children will:

1. Discuss the importance of eating together.
2. Explore how they can be a part of the family meal.
3. Make a healthy meal together which includes a variety of fruits or vegetables.

**Food Demo Summary**

Students will work together to create a meal to share. They will identify fruits or vegetables by color as they add them to a tasty and colorful salad. See reverse for materials, prep-work, and “Rainbow Salad” directions.

**Lesson Format**

1. Ask children to think about meals they usually eat with other people. What makes mealtime with friends and family special?
2. Read book aloud to children. Stop during the story when appropriate or wait until reading is finished to ask the following questions:
  - a. What is your favorite thing about eating with your family?
  - b. What are your favorite fruits and vegetables that are served during meals?
  - c. What could you talk about while eating with your family?
  - d. What are some ideas about how you can help with food preparation or clean up at mealtime? Examples may include setting and clearing the table, selecting foods, mixing, pouring, washing fruits and vegetables, etc.
3. Make a “Rainbow Salad” following the directions on the back of this page.
4. Focus on how each person has a role in preparing the salad.
5. As each group adds an additional color to the salad, ask the class to name other fruits and vegetables of that same color.
6. Once the “Rainbow Salad” is made, have children sit and eat together like they would for a family meal. Encourage discussion about things they like to do and what makes them happy.
7. Remember to involve the children in clean up.

### Materials

- Recommended Book
- “Rainbow Salad” supplies:
  - Salad ingredients
  - Mixing bowl and spoon
  - Forks/napkins
  - Small plates
- Supplies for an optional reinforcement activity selected from the Activities Appendix

### Prep-Work

- Chop fruits and vegetables into small pieces. Separate and store in bags by color. This may also be done in the classroom with children.

## Rainbow Salad

Makes 20 sample-size portions. This may be a fruit salad, a veggie salad or a combination of both.

### Ingredients

1 box pre-cooked whole grain pasta (optional for vegetable salad)

1 bottle of reduced-fat salad dressing (for vegetable salad only)

Choose fruits or vegetables from three or more different colors. Some suggestions are listed below:

<b>Red</b>	<b>Yellow/Orange</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Purple</b>
Red Pepper	Yellow or orange pepper	Lettuce	Purple cabbage
Tomato	Squash	Spinach	Beets
Strawberry	Carrot	Broccoli	Eggplant (uncooked)
Apple	Cantaloupe	Green pepper	Blueberries
Raspberry	Mango	Pear	Grapes

### Directions

1. Put children in groups and assign each group an ingredient by color.\*
2. One by one, ask the groups to add their ingredients to the main bowl. As each group adds an additional color to the salad, ask the class to name other fruits and vegetables of that same color.
3. Mix and serve!

\* If time permits, have members from each group contribute by chopping fruits or vegetables in the classroom. Refer to the curriculum introduction for recommendations on safe classroom utensils.

### Estimated Time:

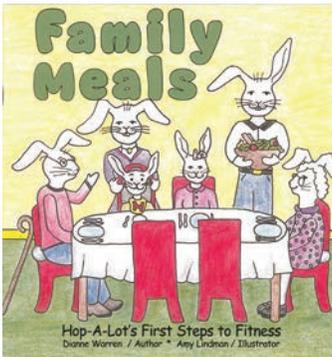
\* Completing pre-work: 45 minutes

\* Completing lesson: 45 minutes

\* Completing reinforcement activity: 30 minutes



# READ FOR HEALTH



**Hop to the Table for a Family Meal**  
Your child learned the importance of eating together as a family, when we read about all the things “Hop-A-Lot” enjoys about his family meals. We learned some ways we could help with family meals at home and then worked together to make a healthy salad!

## Goals for Family Meals

**Be your child’s best role model.**  
When they see you eat fruits and veggies, your children will too! Try to include at least one fruit or veggie at each meal.

**Involve family members in planning and preparing the meals.**  
Children will be more likely to try new foods if they help choose and prepare it.

**Eat meals at or around a table.**  
Enjoy each other’s company.

**Enjoy talking with one another.**  
Turn off the television, video games, phone and computer. Instead, learn about what happened in your child’s day. Talk about their hopes and dreams.

**Make mealtime a fun time.** Plan a time to use games and activities along with the family meal. This gives children something special to look forward to.

## Did You Know...

- Any meal can be a family meal including breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks.

## Children who eat together with their family:

- Have a healthier diet, and eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Are at a lower risk for overweight and obesity.
- Do better in school.
- Develop good self-esteem and social skills.
- Are less likely to smoke and use drugs or alcohol.



Children discussed what they liked about family meals. Ask them to share their stories over a meal together.

## Take Action! Make Family Meals Fun!

Include your child in mealtime. Try one of these ideas this week:

- Let your child choose and help prepare a fruit or veggie for the meal.
- Allow your child to help cook. They can mix, add ingredients, and wash produce.
- Ask your child to choose a theme or topic to discuss at mealtime.





# Eating Together

**Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time.**

## **Eating with your children can be fun and gives you a chance to role model healthy eating behaviors.**

- Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young. This way, it becomes a habit.
- Decide when you will eat together as a family. Write it on your calendar. Plan other events around family meals.
- Try to have family meals at least four times a week.
- It does not have to be dinner. If it is easier for your family, have breakfast or lunch together.
- Gently encourage your child to try new foods.
- Turn off the television. Take phone calls later.
- Talk about fun and happy things. Try to make meals a stress-free time.
- Cook dinner fast on busy nights. Try stir-fried meat and vegetables, quick soups, or sandwiches.
- Do some tasks the day before. Wash and cut vegetables or make a fruit salad. Cook lean ground beef or turkey for burritos or chili. Store everything in the fridge until ready to use.
- Create family routines at meals that everyone enjoys.

This information is adapted from the USDA website, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/default.html>

## Family Meal Tips

- Turn off the TV.
- Talk with your children about their day.
- Make sure everyone washes their hands before you start eating.
- When possible, avoid rushing to the next activity.
- Enjoy the meal and being together!
- Have everyone answer the same questions each night at dinner. Some fun questions:
  - What was the highlight of your day?
  - What did you learn today?
  - What are you looking forward to doing tomorrow?

### Quick Minestrone Soup

Try this soup for your next family meal!

#### Ingredients

- ½ cup whole-wheat pasta, uncooked
- 1 16-oz. package frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 15 ½ oz. can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 16-oz. can low-sodium tomatoes
- 2 Tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

#### Directions

1. Cook pasta in boiling water for 10 minutes.
2. Drain.
3. At the same time, cook vegetables in broth for 15 minutes or until tender.
4. Add beans, tomatoes, seasonings, and pasta.
5. Cook until hot.

Serves: 8

#### Nutritional Information per Serving:

Calories: 120  
Total Fat: 0g  
Saturated Fat: 0g

**Be creative!** Try different beans and vegetables. Ask your children which beans and vegetables they want to add to the soup.

## Goal Setting

**What are three meals that you will share with your family during the next week?  
When will you eat the meals? Who will be present?**