

### Key Message:

**Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Read the food label to make choices that are lower in solid fats, added sugars, and sodium (salt).**

### Subject Connections:

Science, Health, English Language Arts

### Learning Objectives:

#### Students will be able to...

- Summarize a variety of nutritious food choices in the Fruit and Vegetable Food Groups.
- Identify foods that are higher and lower in sodium, added sugars, and solid fats.
- Summarize the benefits of limiting the consumption of solid fats, sodium, and added sugars.
- Differentiate between fruit drinks and 100% fruit juice.

### Supplies:

- 1 large mixing bowl, serving spoon, 8-oz plastic cups, spoons, napkins (per student)
- Access to sink with warm, running water and soap
- **Garden Journals**
- Student handouts (pp. 87-89):
  1. **The Power of Choice**
  2. **Fruit Imposters**
- **Dig In!** posters – All six of them

### Featured Fruits and Vegetables:

#### Cantaloupe

Provide enough samples for tasting as required by recipe in sidebar on p. 59.

### Additional Foods:

The recipe on p. 59 serves 12; adjust as needed: chopped melon, cucumber, green bell pepper, cilantro or fresh mint, lemon or lime juice. Optional: jalapeño pepper, whole-wheat pita chips. Provide water (and cups) for students to drink as they taste the foods.

# Lesson 9: Making Healthy Choices

**TOTAL TIME REQUIRED:** 150 minutes / 3 sessions

**Session 1: Getting Started** 10 min;  
**Activity I “The Power of Choice”**  
40 min (Health/Science)

**Session 2: Activity II “Fruit Imposters”**  
20 min (Health/Science);  
**Activity III “Melon Fruit Salsa”**  
40 min (Health)

**Session 3: Reflect** 40 min (English Language Arts)

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

In this lesson, students discover how solid fats, sugars, and sodium can be added to fruits and vegetables during processing and how to make informed and healthy choices. Students will prepare a Melon Salsa that tastes sweet without having any sugar added to it.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:** *How can I make a healthy choice? Which fruits and vegetables should I eat more of? How can I inspire others to make healthy choices too?*

### TEACHING PROCEDURE:

#### GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to think about what makes certain foods healthier choices than others. Are there certain food choices within the **Fruit** and **Vegetable Groups** that people should eat more often than others? (For example, an apple versus an apple pie, carrot sticks versus onion rings fried in solid fat.)
2. Encourage students to consider what may happen to fruits and vegetables as they are processed. (Refresh from Lesson 8.) What sort of ingredients might be added to foods during this step? Let students hypothesize and suggest answers. The following activity will explore this further.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

#### Activity I. The Power of Choice (40 minutes, Health/Science)

1. Ask if anyone has heard of the term “**calories**.” Explain that calories are a measure of the amount of energy that the body gets from foods, just as grams and pounds are a measure of weight. Ask students if they can think of any ways the body uses the energy from food. (*The body needs energy for processes like keeping your heart beating and digesting food. It also uses energy to fuel physical activity like running and jumping. Kids use energy for growth.*) Explain that the body needs the energy it gets from foods and drinks to be healthy. But, when the body takes in too many calories (energy), it stores the calories as fat. Foods high in solid fats and added sugars are often higher in calories. Balancing the energy the body gets from food with the energy used in physical activity is important for keeping a healthy body weight.

- Explain that every food group contains foods you should eat more of than others. Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in calories, **added sugars**, and **solid fats** – which makes them healthy choices. However, **sugar** and **solid fat** is sometimes added to fruit and vegetable foods during processing or preparation. This can make these foods higher in extra calories that the body does not need.
- Sugar is sometimes added to canned and frozen fruits and to fruit drinks. Ask students if they can think of any examples. (For example, sweetened applesauce, fruits canned in heavy syrup, or raisins with a candy coating.) You can find added sugars by looking at the ingredients list on the food package. Some other names for added sugars are: **high-fructose corn syrup, sugar, sucrose, dextrose, fructose, lactose, maltose, honey, anhydrous dextrose, brown sugar, confectioner’s powdered sugar, and corn syrup**. If one of those is listed among the first three ingredients, you can be sure that added sugar is a major ingredient. For canned fruits, look for fruits that are canned in 100% juice or water and not syrups.
- Solid fats**, such as **butter, lard, and shortening**, are sometimes added when vegetables are prepared (*such as frozen vegetables with sauces or cheese, or vegetables that are fried in solid fat like some French fries*). Eating too much solid fat is not good for your heart.
- Sodium**, also known as **salt**, is often added to foods during processing. While the body needs some salt, almost everyone eats more salt than the body needs. Too much salt plays a role in high blood pressure, which makes it harder for the heart to do its job. Ask students if they can think of any processed vegetable foods that can be high in salt. (For example, soups, French fries, olives, canned vegetables, tomato juice.) When choosing canned vegetables, it helps to look for foods labeled “**low sodium**,” “**reduced sodium**,” or “**no salt added**.”
- Now that students know why it’s important to eat fruits and vegetables that are lower in solid fats, sodium, and added sugars, ask if they have any ideas on how they can make better choices. Accept all answers. If no one suggests reading the food packaging ingredients list or **Nutrition Facts label**, ask students if anyone has ever noticed and looked at one before (or if they recall it from previous lessons). Hold up a container of packaged food (for example, a can of soup), and point to the **Nutrition Facts label** and ingredients list.

- Next, distribute the handout **The Power of Choice** (pp. 87-88) and divide the class into pairs. Direct the class to look at the first label (*Applesauce With Sugar*). Invite students to share what information they notice and explain what they think it means. Can students identify any of the following from the label?

**Serving Size:** Ask for students to look for the words “**Serving Size**” on the label. In this example, the serving size is 1/2 cup. How many servings would it be if they were to eat everything in the package? The information on the label is based on one serving. Explain that if they were to eat more, they would need to multiply the nutrient information by the number of servings they ate.

**Nutrition Facts**  
 Serving Size 1 cup (228g)  
 Servings Per Container about 7

Amount Per Serving  
**Calories 250**      Calories from Fat 110

	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Proteins</b> 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	• Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 20%	• Iron 4%

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories: 2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g	375g
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g



## IMPORTANT FOOD SAFETY STEPS!



Please see p. 4 for a reproducible handout to post in a visible location in your classroom. It is important that you follow these steps to keep yourself, your students, and any parents or volunteers safe and healthy.

### Hand Washing:

All persons participating in the food preparation activity (teachers, students, volunteers, parents) should wash hands before and after preparing, handling, or sampling foods.

## EXTENSIONS

### Lunch Line Promotions

Work with the cafeteria food service staff to add images and signs in the food line highlighting different fruits and vegetables.



### Garden Ads

Create posters to display around the school promoting what's growing in the garden, to inspire the rest of the school to try more fruits and vegetables. Include facts, colorful images or photographs of fruits and vegetables, and some favorite ways to eat them. It's also a great way to spread the word about the garden to get support, and volunteers! (p. 100)

### Community Action

Visit other schools to allow for your students to peer-teach other students how to garden and how to eat more fruits and vegetables. Support your community by hosting a food drive focusing on fruits and vegetables to donate to a local food pantry or homeless shelter. Check to see if the pantry will accept donated produce from your garden.

**Calories:** Next, have students find the number of calories in a single serving of the sweetened applesauce and the unsweetened applesauce. **Calories** are a measure of the amount of energy the food provides. The sweetened applesauce has more calories than the unsweetened applesauce, because it contains **added sugars**, which add calories to the food. Ask students to look for sugars in the ingredient list. **Note:** *Added sugars are not noted on the Nutrition Facts label, but can be found in the ingredients list. "Sugars" on the Nutrition Facts label reflects a combination of both added sweeteners, such as table sugar, as well as naturally occurring sugars in the fruit or vegetable.*


**Solid Fats:** Students can tell the amount of solid fats in the food by looking at the grams of **saturated fat** and **trans fat** on the label. These are two types of solid fats. For *trans* fat, look for foods that have 0g of *trans* fat. For saturated fat, the label also provides the **percent daily value (%DV)**. The %DV is a number that tells you if there is a lot or a little of something in a serving of the food. A %DV of 5% or less is low; 20% or more is high. Choose foods that are low in saturated fat.

**Sodium:** Have students find the %DV for sodium. Which foods are lower in sodium?

## Activity II. Fruit Imposters (20 minutes, Health/Science)

1. Ask students to share foods they eat that are fruits or that they think contain fruit. Explain that not all foods with fruity names or pictures of fruit on their packaging actually contain real fruit. Some may have none or only a small amount of fruit. Such products may contain fruit flavorings that make them taste like a fruit, but they do not belong to the **Fruit Food Group**. These foods also tend to be high in added sugars. Ask students how they can spot these imposters. Allow students to share their ideas.
2. Explain that they can look at the ingredients list to see if fruit is the first ingredient. If it is, that means the product contains more fruit than any other ingredient. The food label on beverages should note what percentage of the drink is actual fruit juice. Look for products that are 100% juice.
3. Remind students that if a food has a sugar as one of the first three ingredients, it is high in added sugars. These foods provide extra calories but few nutrients. One should limit eating such foods to every now and then; not every day.
4. Distribute the handout **Fruit Imposters** (p. 89). Have students work in pairs to identify the fruit imposters. They will need to study the labels and ingredients list.
5. Ask students to share their findings. *Which snack has the real fruit? (Option 2) Which snack has the most added sugar? (Option 1) Which snack has the most calories per serving? (Option 1)*

## Activity III. Melon Fruit Salsa (40 minutes, Health)

 **\*Allergy Alert!** See p. 2 for more information on food safety and allergies before starting this food preparation activity.

**Prepare:** Collect, wash, and chop ingredients for Melon Fruit Salsa recipe (see sidebar). Adapt amounts to suit class size (serves 12). Provide ingredients in separate bowls, but have a large bowl (enough to accommodate at least 3 cups) to mix the salsa in, along with a large spoon. Serve recipe to students in small plastic cups with spoons and with whole-wheat pita chips.

1. Tell students that they will get to prepare and taste a simple recipe featuring cantaloupe (or any other melon growing in the garden).
2. First, have **Garden Teams** assist you in collecting melons or ripe fruit from the garden, along with any herbs, that are ready for harvest. (🍃 p. 105)
3. Next, have students wash their hands following proper procedures (see p. 5). Offer a few pieces of melon for students to taste and invite them to write their observations in their **Garden Journals**. Prepare the melon recipe by chopping up and deseeding the melon and other ingredients in advance and then ask for student volunteers to combine the ingredients following the recipe (see sidebar).
4. Scoop  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the melon salsa into individual cups for each student to enjoy. Ask students to comment on the flavors of the herbs and other ingredients and how they enhance one another without the need for added salt or sugar.

## REFLECT (40 minutes, English Language Arts)

1. Have students revisit the **Fuel Up With Veggies ... and Zoom to the Finish** (p. 76, Lesson 4) and re-track their eating habits for 2 days. Ask students to reflect in their **Garden Journals** on their journey with fruits and vegetables. Ask: *Have your habits changed? Do you eat more fruits and vegetables at meals? What were your biggest obstacles in trying new vegetables or fruit? How did you overcome them?*
2. In what other ways can students continue to inspire healthy change and plant good ideas throughout their school? What tips can they share with their friends, family, and community? Have students write their ideas then share them with the rest of the class.



## GARDEN HARVEST

The best part about planting fruits and vegetables is harvesting and eating them! Have your **Garden Teams** check the fruit and vegetables growing in the garden to see if any of them are ready to harvest. (🍃 pp. 104-105) Use them in the melon tasting activity.



## DIG DEEPER!

**Study the packaging** for a fruit-flavored drink or snack. Ask students to reflect and report back about any imagery or text on the package that may mislead someone to think the product contains fruit or 100% fruit juice. Remind students to look at the ingredients list and Nutrition Facts label to see what a product actually contains and how healthful it is.

**Look for food advertising at school.** How do your students think the ads influence food choices? How can fruits and veggies be promoted at school?

## Recipe

### Melon Fruit Salsa

**Serves:** 12 as a snack

**Serving Size:**  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup



**Note:** Check p. 2 for Important Food Safety Steps and Allergy Reminders.

**Preparation Time:** 15 minutes

**Serves:** 12

**Serving Size:**  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

**Supplies:**

- 2 baking pans
- spatula

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups honeydew, cantaloupe, or watermelon, seeded, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cucumber, peeled, seeded, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup green bell pepper, seeded, chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro or mint, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup lemon or lime juice
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded, finely chopped (optional, as it adds spice)
- 3 cups whole-wheat pita chips (optional)

#### Directions:

1. In a medium-size bowl, stir together all ingredients.
2. Taste and season with lemon or lime juice.
3. Serve alone or with whole-wheat pita chips.