

# GRAB AND GO LESSON

## Steps to Planning a Nutrition Education Activity

**Topic Area:** Education and Training  
**Subtopic Area:** Nutrition Education

**Objective:** Recall how to plan an effective nutrition education activity using six steps.

Introducing young children to a variety of foods at an early age is a great way to expose them to different foods, flavors, textures, and more. Most children benefit from learning about nutrition through fun and interactive activities. Although some curriculums feature a health or nutrition component, many may not provide specific nutrition-based lesson plans. You can create your own in a few key steps to meet the needs of the children in your care.

### Step 1: Why?

- Think about what the children should learn from the activity and answer the question, “Why are we doing this activity?”

### Step 2: What?

- Decide on an activity that will teach children about the chosen topic. Activities such as arts and crafts, music, games, cooking, or role-playing are often popular with children. You may use a variety of activities for one topic, perhaps finding five different activities on the same theme, one for each day of the week, such as the following:
  - o Day 1) Read a story about the topic
  - o Day 2) Do an arts and crafts project
  - o Day 3) Sing songs on the topic
  - o Day 4) Include math and science activities
  - o Day 5) Do a cooking activity



Many children like to participate rather than watch, so make lessons interactive and allow children to be hands-on.

### Step 3: How?

- Make a list of the things you will need. Thinking through each step of the activity will help to make sure that your list is complete. Before beginning the activity, gather your resources.

### Step 4: When?

- At least one week in advance, you should plan your activities. Plan to complete the activity when children are alert and eager to learn. Keep in mind that when children are hungry or tired, they will not pay attention well.

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### Step 5: Do the Activity

- Children like to know what to expect so be sure to explain what they will be doing during the activity. Begin by asking the children some questions to help find out how much they already know on the topic. Questions can also build children's interest and enthusiasm. Many children like to see as well as hear. Props can help them to see what you are telling them. Help children observe and talk about color, texture, size, and shape. Remember the activity should be fun for the children and you.

### Step 6: Follow up after the Activity

- To reinforce what was learned, plan ways to help the children remember what they learned. Repetition helps children to remember and use what they have learned. Presenting different activities each day on the same topic helps with reinforcement.

Nutrition education should be fun as well as educational! If your curriculum does not feature lessons plans for nutrition-related activities, follow the steps above to plan your next nutrition activity,

#### References:

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2011). *Tips and Ideas for Nutrition Related Activities. Mealtime memo for child care.*  
Retrieved from <https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/mealtime-memo/>

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service through an agreement with the Institute of Child Nutrition at the University of Mississippi. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.

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