Lesson Overview

**Lesson Participants:** School Nutrition Assistants/Technicians, School Nutrition Managers, Child and Adult Care Food Program Staff, Teachers

**Type of Lesson:** Short, face-to-face training session

**Time Needed to Conduct the Lesson:** 20 minutes

**Lesson Description:** This lesson is designed to introduce the MyPlate icon. It will provide specific information about the MyPlate icon and a brief explanation of the significance of each part of the design. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed the MyPlate icon to remind people about healthy eating. This information is vital to the menu planning process and for providing nutrition and health education to help consumers adopt healthy eating habits consistent with DGA.

**Lesson Objectives:**
At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:
1. Identify MyPlate as a symbol for nutrition and health education.
2. Discuss the messages of MyPlate.

Get Ready to Train

**NOTE:** This lesson should be taught following the lesson on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010* and should serve as an introduction to the other lessons on MyPlate.

The format for the *No Time to Train* lessons includes an overview, preparation checklist, lesson at a glance with timeline for conducting the lesson, references, handouts, and an instructor’s script. The manager/instructor will use the script to present the lesson to the participants. The script gives directions to the manager/instructor—**DO, SAY, ASK, LISTEN, AND ACTIVITY**—to deliver the lesson.

No special audiovisual or electronic equipment is needed to conduct the lesson. The lesson can be presented in the cafeteria, media center, or classroom.

Teachers and others in the school or child care setting may wish to participate. This lesson could also be used to integrate nutrition education into the classroom. With some modifications, the lesson could be used with middle and secondary students.
Preparation Checklist

**Directions:** Use the Preparation Checklist to prepare for the training session. Track your progress by checking off tasks as they are completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Done</th>
<th>Lesson Tasks</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Gather Materials

**Materials Needed:**

- Instructor’s Script
- Handout 1: MyPlate (one for each participant)
- Handout 2: MyPlate Activity (one for each participant)
- Pencils (one for each participant)
- Flip chart easel with pad and markers
- Session Evaluation form (one for each participant)

### Prepare for Lesson

**Before the Training:**

- Make copies of Handout 1: MyPlate (one for each participant).
- Make copies of Handout 2: MyPlate Activity (one for each participant).
- Make copies of Session Evaluation form (one for each participant).

**On Training Day:**

- Place pencils on tables (one for each participant).
- Place flip chart easel with pad and markers in front of training room.

**On the Instructor’s Table:**

- Instructor’s Script
- Handout 1: MyPlate
- Handout 2: MyPlate Activity
- Session Evaluation forms
## Lesson at a Glance
(20 minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td>Introduction and Overview</td>
<td>Instructor introduces MyPlate.</td>
<td>Instructor’s Script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>Objective 1: Identify MyPlate as a</td>
<td>Instructor introduces and explains the MyPlate icon.</td>
<td>Handout 1: MyPlate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>symbol for nutrition and health</td>
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<td></td>
<td>education.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Objective 2: Discuss the messages of</td>
<td>Instructor provides a brief explanation of the significance of each part of the icon.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MyPlate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>Wrap up, Activity, and Review</td>
<td>Instructor leads a discussion on the activity completed using Handout 2.</td>
<td>Instructor’s Script</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Handout 2: MyPlate Activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Participants brainstorm ways they can introduce and reinforce MyPlate to students and faculty. Ideas are written on a flip chart. Instructor encourages participants to make suggestions and comments.</td>
<td>Flip chart, easel, pad, and markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>Session Evaluation</td>
<td>Conduct a short evaluation of the lesson.</td>
<td>Session Evaluation form</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Note to Instructor:
Answer questions to the best of your ability. If there are questions you can’t answer, tell the participants you will find out the answer and let them know later. If you need assistance in finding answers, please call the National Food Service Management Institute at 800-321-3054.

### References:

No Time To Train – Short Lessons for School Nutrition Assistants

MyPlate-The “New Generation” Food Icon
Instructor’s Script

**SAY:**
The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010* and MyPlate both serve as food guidance systems for nutrition education. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed MyPlate to serve as a “new generation” food icon to prompt consumers to think differently about their food choices. The symbol has been designed to be simple. Its purpose is to remind Americans to eat healthfully using the familiar mealtime visual of a place setting. The different parts of the symbol represent the five food groups and the proportion of our diet each group should make up.

Let me introduce to you MyPlate.

**DO:**
Distribute *Handout 1: MyPlate – The “New Generation” Food Icon*

**SAY:**
MyPlate is a colorful yet simple icon. It was developed to be a motivational tool to remind people to make healthy food choices and to serve as an aid in planning diets.

Notice that the plate and cup are shaded in five different colors. Each color represents a different food group. Orange represents the grains, green represents vegetables, red represents fruits, blue represents the dairy, and purple represents protein, such as meat or beans.

These groupings and colors illustrate the need for variety in our diets. We should eat from each of these food groups every day for good health.

You’ll notice that the sizes of the sections on the plate for the different groups vary in size. This symbolizes proportionality. These portions are a general guide and not exact, but they are a good illustration to remind us to eat more from some groups and less from others.

**ASK:**
What group or groups are we encouraged to eat more from?

**LISTEN:**
Pause for a moment to allow participants to think and respond.

**SAY:**
The largest sections are for vegetables and grains, indicating that we need more foods from these groups than from fruits, protein, and dairy.
With vegetables, it is important to consume a wide variety and be sure to include dark green vegetables, such as broccoli and spinach, as well as red and orange vegetables, such as carrots and sweet potatoes.

When we choose grains, it is important to make at least half of the grains we eat whole grains instead of refined grains because they contain more fiber and other nutrients. This would mean selecting brown rice, whole-grain pastas or cereals, and whole-wheat bread, instead of white rice, pasta, and bread.

On the back side of Handout 1, it discusses these concepts, as well as several other nutrition tips. This tip sheet and a variety of other nutrition resources are available at http://www.choosemyplate.gov.

The main messages from MyPlate are to balance calories by avoiding oversized portions; increase your intake of fruits and vegetables, and fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

**ACTIVITY:**
**Handout 2: MyPlate Activity**

**DO:**
Ask participants to look at **Handout 2: MyPlate Activity**.

**SAY:**
Think about everything you ate or drank in the past 24 hours. Then draw the proportions of the five food groups you consumed using the blank MyPlate template below. Take about two or three minutes to draw your plate and then we will discuss the results.

**ASK:**
How close did you get to the recommended amounts? What foods should you have eaten more or less of to get closer to the recommended amounts?

**LISTEN:**
Pause for a moment to allow participants to think and respond.

**SAY:**
This activity would be a good way to introduce MyPlate to students and help remind them to make healthy food choices. Now, let’s think for just a moment about other ways we can make our customers aware of MyPlate and what types of things we can do to encourage them to make wise food selections. Let’s make a list of ways we can introduce MyPlate to our students and faculty.

No Time To Train – Short Lessons for School Nutrition Assistants
*MyPlate-The “New Generation” Food Icon*
DO:
Guide the discussion of comments as needed and write responses down on the flip chart. One suggestion might be to place the colorful poster in the dining area where customers can see it. Ask participants to locate a very visible area in the dining room to display the MyPlate poster. The poster is available at http://www.choosemyplate.gov.

ASK:
Are there any other comments or questions about MyPlate?

LISTEN:
Listen to individual responses. Answer questions to the best of your ability. If there are questions you can’t answer, tell the participants you will find out the answer and let them know later. If you need assistance in finding answers, please call the National Food Service Management Institute at 800-321-3054.

SAY:
The USDA developed MyPlate to serve as a “new generation” food icon to prompt consumers to think differently about their food choices. The symbol has been designed to be simple. Its purpose is to remind Americans to eat healthfully using the familiar mealtime visual of a place setting.

DO:
Distribute the Session Evaluation form.

SAY:
Thank you for participating in the lesson today. Please take a few minutes to complete the Session Evaluation form. Thank you for your input.
Handout 1: MyPlate

ChooseMyPlate.gov

Fruits
Grains
Vegetables
Protein
Dairy

No Time To Train – Short Lessons for School Nutrition Assistants

MyPlate-The “New Generation” Food Icon

Handout 2: MyPlate Activity

Instructions: Think about everything you ate or drank in the past 24 hours. Then draw the proportions of the five food groups you consumed using the blank MyPlate template below. How close did you get to the recommended amounts? What foods should you have eaten more or less of to get closer to the recommended amounts?

Session Evaluation

Instructions:
Completely fill in the circle of your answer. Use a #2 pencil.
Please select only one response for each statement. Do not fold or crease this sheet.

Title of Meeting:__________________________________________________________  Trainer's Code:________
Session Topic:______________________________________________________________
Date: ___________ Time Slot:_________ Location:___________________________  Length of Event (hrs/min): ___________

Attendee Status:
☒ District director  ☒ State agency staff  ☒ Major city director  ☐ Site-level manager  ☐ Private consultant/trainer  ☒ Foodservice assistant
☒ Educator  ☐ Other (please list):___________________________________________

Reaction to this Session

Please read the following statements related to the session. Rate your level of agreement by using the scale 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree).

1. The session objectives were clearly presented.  5  4  3  2  1
2. The session objectives were achieved.  5  4  3  2  1
3. I can apply what I learned in this session to my job.  5  4  3  2  1
4. Attending the session increased my skill on the topic.  5  4  3  2  1
5. Attending the session increased my knowledge on the topic.  5  4  3  2  1
6. I would recommend this session to others.  5  4  3  2  1
7. Overall, the session met or exceeded my expectations.  5  4  3  2  1

Comments about this Session

The information I found MOST useful was:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please share any additional comments:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

No Time To Train –Short Lessons for School Nutrition Assistants
MyPlate—The Anatomy