



# “NUTRITION TALK”

Spring 2000

University of Rhode Island  
Department of Food Science and Nutrition

## Lesson Plan #1

**Target Audience:** Participants in Providence Public Library Literacy Class

### Objectives:

- To learn about the USDA Food Guide Pyramid (FGP) and the foods which belong to each category
- To plan, write and verbally identify a daily menu using the Food Guide Pyramid
- To read “Plan Your Meals” section of *Change is Good* brochure

**Time Allotted:** 90 minutes

**Preassessment:** Ask students about the Food Guide Pyramid, its purpose relative to food selection and health. Introduce vocabulary words (see list at right). Ask what kinds or groups of food keep you healthy and should be eaten every day. List those foods on board and begin to categorize into Food Guide Pyramid groupings: grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat, fats and sweets.

### Content and Sequence:

**L** 1. Introduction and Background Information: Present the food guide pyramid and explain that the FGP helps you choose what, and how much, to eat from each food group shown in the three lower sections of the pyramid. For good health we need a variety of foods from all the food groups, choosing more from the bottom groups and less from the groups at the top.

- The largest portion of your diet should come from the grains group: 6-11 servings per day. Women and some older adults need fewer servings; teenage boys and active men need the most. Grains provide energy, or fuel for the body to function. They also supply a variety of nutrients and are low in fat.
- Fruits and vegetables supply many important nutrients and help the body fight off sickness. Combined servings of fruits and vegetables should equal 5-9 servings per day.
- Milk, cheese, yogurt, and foods from the meat group are sources of nutrients that promote growth. Two to 3 servings from both the dairy and meat groups are recommended.
- Foods at the very top of the pyramid—Fats and Sweets—often have few nutrients, are usually high in fat and calories, and should be eaten less often than other foods in the bottom three levels of the pyramid.

(Also refer to Food Guide Pyramid poster and “Food Guide Pyramid: A Guide to Daily Food Choices” for background information.)



### WORDS TO KNOW

food  
pyramid  
nutrients\*  
serving\*\*  
variety  
grains  
(bread,  
cereal,  
rice,  
pasta)  
fruit  
vegetables  
milk  
yogurt  
cheese  
meat  
fish  
chicken  
dried beans  
eggs  
nuts

**L = Listening**  
**S = Speaking**  
**W = Writing**  
**R = Reading**

RS

2. Hand out “Food Guide Pyramid: A Guide to Daily Food Choices.” The teacher and/or student will read the worksheet and name the foods on the pyramid. The teacher will also ask questions like:

“What are the foods we need to eat the most of?” (cereal, bread, rice, pasta)

“What are the foods we need to eat the least of?” (fats, oils, sweets)



S

3. As a group, discuss and list on board what a typical daily menu might consist of—breakfast, lunch and dinner. (For example, cereal, milk and fruit for breakfast; salad, sandwich and fruit for lunch, etc.) Discuss number of FGP recommended servings for the different food groups (e.g., 6 grains, 2 fruits, 3 vegetables, 2 dairy, 2 meat), and add any foods needed to meet minimum requirements.

SW

4. Break class into small groups; distribute packets of food models and corresponding word cards. Have students match and speak corresponding food model pictures and word cards. Based on the Food Guide Pyramid, have group plan a daily menu, including breakfast, lunch and dinner, using food model pictures. Discuss food selections and check for accuracy according to minimum number of FGP servings. (Note: Combination foods like pizza belong to several food groups—grains for the crust, vegetables for the sauce, and dairy for the cheese. Macaroni and cheese is another example of a combination food, i.e. grains and dairy.) Hand out blank FGP and ask participants to write each food item of their daily menu into the appropriate area on the FGP.

R

5. Using *Change is Good* brochure, have participants read section 1, “Plan Your Meals,” and summarize lesson.

**Learning Activities:** Group discussion of healthy foods

Matching food model pictures to word cards

Planning a daily menu according to the Food Guide Pyramid

Writing and verbally identifying food choices on Food Guide Pyramid sheet

Reading section 1, “Plan Your Meals“ of *Change is Good* brochure



**Materials:** Poster of Food Guide Pyramid

Food Guide Pyramid: A Guide to Daily Food Choices

Blank Food Guide Pyramid Handouts

Food Model Pictures and Word Cards

*Change is Good* brochure



**Evaluation:** The menu planned by each group of participants

Discussions with individuals during their follow-up classes

**Definitions:** \*nutrients: chemical substances found in food that are used by the body for growth and health

\*\* serving: the amount of food you eat at one time