



# 5 A Day

Format: This is a **Family-Centered Education (FCE)** lesson plan. FCE helps children and parents interact with each other. It promotes the parent as the first teacher of the child and helps get children ready for school- all while learning about nutrition!

Who this class is for

**Families with children of preschool age.** This will not work as well with younger children.

Why WIC is offering this class

Most people are not getting enough fruits and vegetables. A National Cancer Institute survey found that the average intake was only three servings a day. And the choices were not always good. One fourth of all vegetables eaten by elementary school age children are French fries.

Building on the knowledge parents already have, this lesson provides parents with reasons and strategies for eating more fruits and vegetables and helping their children to enjoy eating them.

Objectives

**By the end of this session, families will have:**

- shared their experiences of cooking with and eating various fruits and vegetables.
- used the Five A Day concept to count fruits and vegetables together.
- recognized that fruits and vegetables are healthy and can be fun to eat.



Time **30-45 minutes**

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Set-Up  
and  
Getting  
Ready

1. Make three mystery bags or boxes. Make mystery bags by choosing colorful gift bags. Fill the bags with tissue paper or shredded paper. Or to make a box, cover the opening of an oatmeal box with a sock that has been cut open or cut a hole in the end of a shoe box. Tape the sock to the box and decorate box with contact paper or fabric.

Then, place a different fruit or vegetable in each box or bag. Try to select two easily identifiable vegetables (such as a carrot, a banana or green beans) and one fruit or vegetable that is less easily identified (such as a root vegetable or cooking green).

2. Review the book *How Are You Peeling? (¿Vegetal Como Eres?)* Be thinking about how this book can be used to help families explore fruits and vegetables in a new way, as well as to encourage parents and children to identify and name feelings. See Book Sharing section of the lesson plan for ideas.
3. Copy parent and child handouts for your group (see Materials list).
4. Copy or print out meal signs.
5. Gather fruits and vegetables and put them in the grocery bag.
6. Put overview on large sheet of paper or flip chart.

### **Five a Day**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Mystery Box
- Book Sharing: How Are You Peeling?
- Family Activities: Meal Bowls
- Take Home Activities: Five a Day Count

7. Cue the music.

## General Materials

### Tape or CD Player

**Music:** Dole *Jammin' 5 a Day Songs* or José Luis Orozco's *Esta es mi tierra*

**Book:** *How Are You Peeling?* by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers (and/or *¿Vegetal Como Eres?*)

**3 Mystery Bags or Boxes** (see "Set-Up Getting Ready")

**Meal Signs:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Morning Snack, Afternoon Snack

**5 Bowls (or Plates)**

**Brown Grocery Bag**

**15 Fruits and Vegetables of different flavors**, shapes and textures. (For example: broccoli, orange, potato, banana, carrot, apple, cabbage, celery, pear, green pepper, Kiwi, onion, cucumber, lemon, green beans.)

### Handouts:

- **Children:** "Today, I Ate These Fruits and Vegetables" (5-10 copies for each family) in English and/or Spanish.
- **Parents:** "Tips for Parents" (in English and/or Spanish)

Lesson  
Overview  
(35 minutes)

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**1. Welcome and Introduction 5 minutes**

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- Opening music
- Welcome group
- Introduce yourself
- Ask families to introduce themselves in pairs

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**2. Warm Up Activity: Mystery Box/Bag 5 minutes**

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- Pass mystery box/bag around room
- Let each person feel object
- After everyone feels, ask for guesses
- Note that fruits and veggies have different textures, colors, shapes

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**3. Book Sharing: How Are You Peeling 10 minutes**

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- Read slowly, showing pictures
- Encourage participation from families
- Reinforce the value of reading together as family

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**4. Family Activity 10 minutes**

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**A. Meal Bowls**

- Place meal signs and bowls in a row
- Carry grocery bag around to the group, letting each person take out an item
- Ask them to share when they might eat that fruit/veggie. How might they prepare it?

**B. Five A Day Count**

- Display all the bowls of fruits/veggies
- Count to 5 with children, using fingers
- Ask one family to pick out items that they might eat today
- Ask another family to pick out five to eat tomorrow.
- Reinforce the concept that it is easy to eat five fruits and veggies each day, there are many interesting ways to prepare them.

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**5. Take Home the Learning 5 minutes**

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- Hand out stickers and paper to children
- Encourage them to make pictures
- Provide handouts to parents

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**6. Closing**

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- Thank the group for coming to the class
- Answer questions as needed

**1.****Welcome  
and  
Introduction  
5 minutes**

Play the song “5 A Day” from Dole *Jammin’ 5 a Day Songs* (or “Platanos y manzanas” from *Esta es mi tierra* by José Luis Orozco) to as families arrive. Turn off the music to start the session.

**Introduce yourself and ask parents and children to introduce themselves in pairs.**

*“Turn to the person next to you and talk about this:*

*What fruits and vegetables do the children in your family like to eat?”*

**Tell parents the purpose of the class is to explore ways to use fruits and vegetables every day to help keep our families healthy.**

**Explain that both parents and kids will be part of this class,** and that you will be doing some reading, sharing ideas, and parents and children will be doing some fun activities together.

**Post the overview on the wall for the class.**

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**2.****Warm Up  
Activity  
5 minutes**

Tell families you will start by playing a guessing game called **Mystery Bag (or Box)**.

**Pass around one of the mystery bags** and let three to six participants “feel” what is inside the box. Ask both parents and children to feel the mystery food in the box but don’t tell what it is.

**Next, ask parents and children to share their guesses out loud.** When all have shared their guesses, uncover the food.

**Pass around one or both other mystery boxes. Be sure the “hard” one gets a lot of adult participation.**

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**3.****Book  
Sharing  
10 minutes**

**Tell families that they will meet some other very interesting fruits and vegetables in the book *How Are You Peeling?***

Encourage children and parents to sit where they are able to see and hear the story.

### 3.

#### Book Sharing (continued) **10 minutes**

**Read the story – showing the pictures as you go. To engage families in the story ask questions as you go.**

**If there are no children present in your class, show the book.** Talk briefly with the adults about sharing books and telling stories. Note that sharing stories is a great way to help kids build skills –and it’s an enjoyable family activity. For example, it helps children learn about the world, allows them to try out ideas, and is a great time for snuggling.

#### **Questions you might ask:**

- *“How do you think the apple feels?”*
  - *“This kiwi is making quite a face. What do you think Mr. or Ms. Kiwi is feeling?”*
  - *“Can you make a face like our friend the orange?”*
  - *“How is the orange feeling?”*
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### 4.

#### Family Activity **(10 minutes)**

#### **A. Hands on Activity: Meal Bowls**

**Put the meal signs** (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Morning Snack and Afternoon Snack) on a table or the floor in front of you.

**Place a bowl in front of each category.**

Tell families that in the next few minutes they will be looking at some fruits and vegetables. They will be sharing when and how their families might eat these foods.

**Pick up your grocery bag, walk around the group, and let each family (a child, if possible) pick one.**

**Ask each family to put the veggie/fruit in the bowl for the meal when they would be most likely to eat it. Ask them to share how it is eaten or prepared in their family.**

## 4. Family Activity (continued)

*“What did you pick?”*

*“When would you be most likely to eat this: breakfast, lunch, dinner or as a snack?”*

*Ask child: “How do you eat this \_\_\_\_?”*

*Or ask parent “How do you prepare this \_\_\_\_?”*

**Wait for responses – then encourage other participants to join in,** exchange information or even recipes at this time. If there are no responses, suggest a way to cook or eat it.

Note: If the group brings up a lot of examples of fried methods, such as French fries or fried onion rings, mention other more healthy methods such as baking, steaming, broiling, or stir-frying.

As the families demonstrate how they use certain fruits and vegetables, you might ask them why they choose to eat fruits and vegetables. Some of the benefits might include:

- a great way to get lots of minerals and vitamins: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Iron, Folic acid, etc.
- usually low in fats, low calorie, low in sodium
- high fiber (help prevent constipation)
- make great snack foods
- some can lower our risk of cancer
- decreases risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes

### **B. Five A Day Count**

**Make sure you have at least 10 fruits and vegetables in the bowls.** If there are fewer than ten, add a few you like.

**Ask the children to hold up one hand and count their five fingers all together.**

**4.****Family  
Activity  
(continued)**

**Explain that five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day helps adults and children stay strong and healthy.**

**Invite one family to pick out “5” favorite fruits and vegetables they could eat in a day from the examples in the bowls.** Ask the other parents and children to name “5” they could eat tomorrow.

**Point out the huge variety available and the many delicious ways to prepare them, as shared in the group today.**

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**5.****Take  
Home  
Learning  
Activities**

**Invite children to choose some stickers to make a picture with their favorite fruits and vegetables.** Give out paper or index cards to use with the stickers. Suggest that they can put faces on their fruits and veggies (like in the story *How Are You Peeling?*) or make up their own story.

**Share and discuss the handouts for this class:**

- *Tips for Parents:* Highlight the books that they can check out from the library and other home activities that their families might enjoy.
  - *Today I Ate These Fruits and Vegetables:* Provides a place for children and families to draw or list fruits and vegetables eaten in a day (provide multiple copies for families).
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**6.****Closing**

**Thank parents and children for sharing** the many ways they can eat 5 A Day.

**Answer questions.**

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# Expanding and Adapting this Lesson

## 1. Use Other Books

*Button Soup* by Doris Orgel (illustrated by Pau Estrada) is a story that uses a young child's friendship with a homeless person to retell the story of Stone Soup. The neighbors bring various foods to add to the soup, and the community enjoys the soup together. For school-aged children, *Stone Soup* by Heather Forest also retells the Stone Soup story, with bold illustrations by Susan Gaber.

*Oliver's Fruit Salad* and *Oliver's Vegetables* by Vivian French describe a child's progress from not liking certain fruits or vegetables to discovering how much he likes them when they are in the fruit salad or grown from his grandfather's garden.

Check the library or bookstores for displays of books during different seasons. You can use a book appropriate to Fall, Winter, Spring or Summer fruits and vegetables.

See the "Tips for Parents" handout for additional books.

## 2. Do a Simple Cooking or Tasting Activity

On an ongoing basis, invite WIC families to share their favorite recipes. Choose one to prepare and share with the group.

## 3. Make Fruit and Vegetable Puppets

Make fruit and vegetable puppets and hand them out during story reading.

# Materials for this Lesson

The following materials are provided:

- Meal Signs: Breakfast, Lunch, Morning Snack, Afternoon Snack, Dinner,
- “Today I Ate These Fruits and Vegetables” Handout for Children
- “Tips for Parents “



Breakfast



Lunch



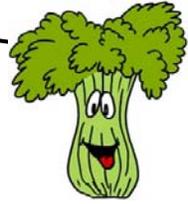
# Morning Snack



**Afternoon Snack**



Dinner



Today, I Ate These

# Fruits and Vegetables

1

2

3

4

5

**Bonus!**

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

### Five A Day — Fruits and Vegetables

Today, we talked about eating fruits and vegetables. We did a few activities to help your children learn about good nutrition and to help them get ready for school. This sheet will give you some more ideas.



### Today's Learning Activities:

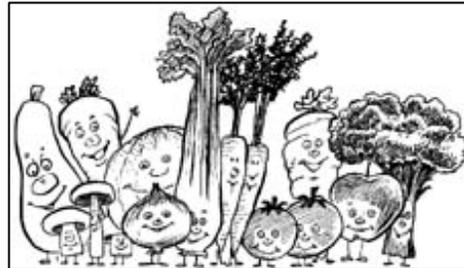
- Listened to a Five A day song about fruits and vegetables
- Read *How Are You Peeling?* by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers
- Talked about why fruits and vegetables are healthy
- Counted how many fruits and vegetables to eat every day
- Came up with ways to eat 5 a day

### How You Can Continue This Learning:

As a parent, you are your children's first teacher. You can help them learn more about fruits and vegetables by doing some of the same activities again that we did today. You can also do some new ones. Here are some ideas:

### Other Books You Might Read:

- *Eating the Alphabet* by Lois Ehlert
- *Oliver's Fruit Salad* by Vivian French
- *Stone Soup* by Heather Forest
- *Button Soup* by Doris Orgel
- *Ugly Vegetables* by Grace Lin
- *Handa's Surprise* by Eileen Browne



### Other Activities You Might Do Together:

- **Music:** Sing songs or play games with children about vegetables or fruits such as "one potato, two potato."
- **Art and Drama:** Cut out pictures from magazines of fruits and vegetables, or draw them with crayons; vegetable faces and people, make a book or place mat. Cut out pictures from magazines of different feelings and talk about together.
- **Cooking:** Make a fruit salad, veggie dip, fruit smoothie, soup or salad recipe.
- **Shopping:** Go to the store and pick out fruits and vegetables together, talk about color, taste, shape.
- **Science:** Look at the different parts of fruits and vegetables: stems, seeds, roots, and talk about what parts you eat.
- **Math:** Put out different fruits and vegetables and sort by color, size, shape.
- **Physical Activity:** Act out being strawberries floating in milk, watermelon rolling, corn being shucked, tomato sauce being spread on pizza, an apple hanging from a tree; play bean bag toss: fill clear bags with dried beans.