

VBM: Variety, Balance, Moderation

WIN Kids Curriculum for 5th and 6th grade

Designed for classrooms, community youth groups, and other educational settings



Lesson Objectives

- Know the food groups in MyPyramid.
- Apply the principles of variety, balance and moderation in food choices.
- Understand the concept that all foods can fit in a daily eating plan.



Wellness IN (WIN) the Rockies Principles

- Follow MyPyramid.
- Take pleasure in eating.
- Honor the gift of food.



Health Standards

Content Area - Nutrition and Dietary Behavior

National Health Standards 1 (concepts), 3 (behaviors) and 7 (advocacy)

Wyoming Health Content and Performance Standards 1, 3 and 7

Montana Health Enhancement Content Standards 1 and 7

Idaho Grade 5 Health Performance Standards 941 and 942

Idaho Grade 6 Health Performance Standards 951 and 952

Note: Suggested standards can be met depending upon lesson components selected and assessed. Potential assessment tools are designated with a ✓.



Approximate Length

- Two class sessions, 30 minutes each
 - First session: Overview & V is for Variety
 - Second session: B is for Balance & M is for Moderation



Materials and Preparation

Handouts (1 per student):

Pyramid Cut-Out

WIN the Home: Pleasure of a Kiss

WIN the Community: VBM for Life

Silly Syllable Scramble (2-sided)

MyPyramid for Kids Posters (see Sources and Materials)

Slips of paper - approximately 2" x 4" (25 for each team of 4 to 6 students)

Color markers

Paper sack, lunch size (7 for each team of 4 to 6 students)

Chocolate Kisses (for allergies or dislikes - mint, orange segment, pretzel) (1 per student)



"We must eat to live
and live to eat."
Henry Fielding 1707-1754



Background for Educator

MyPyramid is the daily food guidance system developed by U.S. Department of Agriculture and supported by the Department of Health and Human Services. It is based on research into what foods Americans eat, which nutrients are in these foods, and how to make healthy choices. It is not a rigid prescription, but a general guide.

The pyramid supports eating a **variety** of foods so that people can get the nutrients their bodies need. Variety refers to a variety among the food groups as well as within the groups. For example; fruits are a great source of vitamins and minerals, yet eating a variety of fruits is needed to get the optimal intake of vitamins and minerals.

A **balance** over several days is more important than a strict balance at each meal. Some days we eat more or less than others, and that is normal eating. Normal eating is regulated by hunger and fullness and usually includes three meals per day, plus one or two snacks. It does not include fasting, binge eating, dieting or routinely skipping meals. Within MyPyramid, **balance** also refers to the proportionality of the food groups.

Moderation is key to making all foods fit. A high-calorie, low-nutrient food can be part of healthful eating when consumed in moderation. However, many people eat these foods too often and in amounts that are too large. At the same time, they eat too few nutrient-dense, low-calorie foods like fruits, whole-grains, and vegetables. One way to enjoy food in moderation is to take time to savor it. This can increase satisfaction with smaller amounts.

Banning or restricting foods can lead to feelings of deprivation, cravings and binge eating. There is no such thing as good or bad food. A healthy eating plan includes variety, balance, and moderation as guided by the MyPyramid. And it includes the foods a person likes. Food is more than fuel; it is one of life's greatest pleasures, and this is a gift to honor.

Lesson Script: Session One



MyPyramid Overview

1. The MyPyramid is a guide for learning the types and amounts of foods to eat each day. (*Refer to MyPyramid for Kids poster as needed.*) The pyramid promotes eating a variety of foods from all the food groups to make sure our bodies get the nutrients and energy they need. The goal is for you to eat enough food to grow and be healthy while not eating more than your body needs. (*Distribute **MyPyramid Cut-out.***)
2. As you cut and tape the pyramid, let's review the food groups. (*Discuss food groups and the some types of foods in each group.*)
3. On the inside of your pyramid, write the word "variety" inside the triangle with the pictures of food, the word "balance" inside the triangle with food group names, and the word "moderation" inside the triangle with number of servings. (*Review each concept.*)
4. (*Divide into teams of 4 to 6.*) Select a team name that is the name of a food and an adjective describing that food (*Fabulous Figs, Amazing Apples*).

V is for Variety

1. What does variety mean? (*Discuss. Distribute 20 - 25 slips of paper, markers and seven brown sacks to each team.*)
2. As a team, choose foods for a day including breakfast, lunch, dinner and one snack. Try to be realistic about the foods and amounts you would eat. Write each food item on one slip of paper. For example; toast with margarine, cereal and milk would be **four** slips of paper – toast, margarine, cereal, milk. For combination foods, make several slips. For example, cake fits into the grain group and the fats and sweets group so make one slip for the grain ingredients and one for fats and sweets. A piece of pizza would need several slips. Select a variety of foods. Don't forget beverages, ketchup, salad dressings, and other extras.
3. Place all the slips in a brown sack labeled with your team name.
4. Label five sacks with each food group. One for meats, dairy, grains, vegetables, and fruits. Label the sixth sack fats and sweets.



Lesson Script: Session Two

B is for Balance

1. (*Review activities from Session One. If space is limited for this session, a gym, hallway or outside area may provide more room.*) Time for a relay! Place your food group bags at one side of the area. This is where your team starts. The team bag with the slips of paper goes to the other side of the area.
2. Each team member goes to the other side, selects 2 slips of paper from the bag, and returns. The team decides which food group the items belong in and places the slips in those bags. After that is done, the next team member goes to get 2 more slips and so on.
3. To reinforce the idea of balance, hop on your right foot while going to the team bag and hop on your left foot to return. Carry one slip in each hand.
4. Once complete, empty the food group bags and report to the class. ✓
 - How many food items were in each food group?
 - Was your day's menu balanced? Why or why not?
 - If the menu was not balanced, what foods could be changed to make it better?

M is for Moderation

1. What does moderation mean? (*Discuss while distributing chocolate kisses. Instruct students not to touch the kiss yet.*)
2. Sometimes we eat foods that we think are “bad.” (*Give examples from the team menus – chips, candy, cookies.*) These foods are not bad. All foods can be part of healthful eating. Moderation is the key! If we eat lots of these foods and don’t eat a variety of other foods, we don’t get the nutrients our bodies need, and we may eat too many calories.
3. How do we eat smaller amounts of the food we really love? Try these steps to learn how to enjoy the pleasure of one chocolate kiss:
 - * Look at the shape and color of the wrapped kiss.
 - * Think about how the kiss will taste. Is your mouth watering?
 - * Slowly unwrap and smell the chocolate.
 - * Place in your mouth on your tongue.
 - * DO NOT BITE!
 - * Let the candy slowly melt and enjoy the flavor and changing texture. Notice how the sweet taste fills your mouth
4. What would happen if you ate all foods this way?



WIN the Home: Pleasure of a Kiss

Have students take the *Pleasure of a Kiss* handout home and conduct the activity with family members. Have them interview family members and record their responses. ✓

Please note: pilot testing of lessons has determined that WIN the Home activities are most successful when students have time over a weekend to complete them, when a follow-up is conducted in class, and when students receive credit for completion.



WIN the Community: VBM for Life

Make table tents with key messages about variety, balance and moderation. ✓ Copy template on to heavy weight paper, cut on solid lines, and fold on dotted lines. Place in the school lunch room, senior center, restaurants, homes, etc. Have kids label with first name, grade, and name of school or organization.



Additional Ideas

➤ **Day’s Menu** – Assign students to develop a day’s menu. ✓ Encourage variety, balance and moderation. (*Variation: Plan a menu for a camp out or other special event.*)

➤ **LANGUAGE Option** – Have students complete the **Silly Syllable Scramble**. Then, have them include as many of the words as possible in a story ✓ which begins:

“On a bright sunny day, I went for a long walk.”



Sources and Materials

Holmes, Betty. *Pleasure of a Kiss*. Activity Instructions. University of Wyoming, Wellness IN the Rockies. <www.uwyo.edu/winwyoming>.

United States. Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services. *MyPyramid*. Accessed 14 December 2005. <www.mypyramid.gov>.

To print MyPyramid for Kids Posters, go to the USDA web site at www.mypyramid.gov and click on “For Kids.”

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