The Food Pyramid
4th Grade
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References:

- 2003-04 Columbus Public Schools Science SLC Guide

Benchmarks:

SLC 19: Analyze and/or evaluate various nutritional plans for humans.

Objectives:

Students will plan nutritional meals by using the USDA’s Food Guide Pyramid and will analyze food labels to aid in this planning.

Materials:

- Butcher paper
- Pictures of food types
- Picture of the USDA food pyramid of lies

Initial Demonstration:

Show a picture of the USDA pyramid and tell the students that scientists have determined a way to organize food and have determined how much of each kind of food we should have.

Do not show the diagram very long and make sure that the details are hard to see. This way the students are not biased when they start to organize their own groupings.

Target Observations:

- Foods are organized into different groups.

Target Model:

- Because different kinds of food provide different kinds of nutrition, they can be organized into different groups and should be eaten in different amounts.

Procedure:

Pass out the packets of food types. Have the students put the food into groups based upon nutritional reasons, not cosmetic reasons.
Discuss the groupings that the students have developed. Compare and contrast the groupings that they students have created to the 6 food groups of the USDA. Have the students [by show of hands] rank the importance of each food group. Compare the students ranking with the USDA food pyramids serving suggestion guide.

Have the students make dichotomous keys on the butcher paper separating their foods into their groups. Make sure that they have a nutritional reason for each separation. Separating by color is not particularly useful when trying to organize/sort food for dietary planning.

Compare and contrast the keys made by each of the groups. Did any of the groups come up with different groupings than they did initially? Do any of the groups still have groups that are different from the USDA? If they do, ask why [this may not be a bad thing!! The USDA pyramid is not perfect (or even all that good!)]

**Target Observations:**

- Foods can be grouped by how they look.
- Foods can be grouped alphabetically.
- Foods can be grouped by the nutrients they contain.

**Target Revised Model:**

- There are different ways to organize food groups and different ways to classify foods.
- You can use a dichotomous key to organize food into groups to make it easier to sort foods which in turn can make it easier to plan a healthy diet.

**Summary:**

Foods are grouped in many different ways. For us to have a healthy diet, we can group foods by the nutrients they contain. That way we make sure to have enough nutrients to be healthy.