

# Food Choices— The Pyramid Way



**LEVEL:** 8th Grade

**Core Content Area:** Practical Living/Vocational Studies, Reading, Writing

**LEARNING GOAL:** (3) Students shall develop their abilities to become self-sufficient individuals. (6) Students shall develop their abilities to connect and integrate experiences and new knowledge from all subject matter fields with that they have previously learned and build on past learning experiences to acquire new information through vari-

## MATERIALS

MyPyramid, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, available online at <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2005/2005DGP/PolicyDocument.pdf>, “What Did I Eat?” Worksheet, “What Did I Eat?” Answer sheet, One Day Food Record and “Is This a Good Diet?” Worksheets

## VOCABULARY

MyPyramid, variety, moderation, proportion, fitness, dietary intake, nutrient

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The MyPyramid provides a visualization of the three most essential recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans: **variety**, **proportion**, and **moderation**. **Variety** emphasizes the importance of eating a selection of different foods from each of the major food groups every day. **Proportion** relates to the amount of food to choose from each major food group. **Moderation** is eating fats, oils, and sugars sparingly.

## PROCEDURE

1. Prior to introducing the MyPyramid, have students record food intake for one day using the “One Day Food Record”. This record will provide the students with data to evaluate their nutritional intake.
2. After students have made their one-day food intake recording, introduce the MyPyramid.
3. Distribute copies of the MyPyramid and the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Divide students into small groups to conduct a brainstorming activity. Discuss with the students what messages they get from the MyPyramid graphic. As a class, develop a list of possible messages. Some messages would be:
  - food can be divided into distinct groups;
  - there are five major food groups;
  - some food from each category should be eaten daily;

- no one food group is more important than another;
- different groups have different numbers of servings recommended daily depending on whether you are a child or adult;
- some foods or food groups should be eaten more often than other food groups;
- for a 2000 calorie diet, what are the minimum requirements from each food group, needed daily?

Students probably will not be able to identify all of the above messages. However, you will be able to use the results of their brainstorming session to expand the class discussion to include these messages.

4. Distribute the “Is This a Good Diet?” worksheet. Have students determine the food group(s) represented in the given menu item and calculate the number of servings consumed for each food group. Next, have them compare the number of servings consumed to the number recommended. Discuss with the students the concept of a serving size. In many instances they may be unaware that they consume more than one serving in the portion size they would normally eat. Also, ask students to look for “hidden” fat and sugar in this food record (**sugar**— frosted flakes, cola, candy bar, iced tea; **fats**— french fries, salad dressing, mayonnaise on hamburger, candy bar). Note: the smallest division on the MyPyramid is fats, sugars and salts reference: yellow tear drop on the back of MyPyramid.

5. Using your “One Day Food Record” compare this to “Is This a Good Diet?” Include in your answer how your diet compares to the recommended requirements to MyPyramid. List your strengths and weaknesses of your diet. How can you improve to become a healthier individual.

## MEETS KY CORE CONTENT 4.1 ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

### Practical Living/Vocational Studies

PL-08-1.2.2  
PL-08-4.2.1  
PL-08-4.2.2

### Reading

RD-08-5.0.8  
RD-08-5.0.9

### Writing

WR-08-1.1.3  
WR-08-1.2.3  
WR-08-2.4.3  
WR-08-3.5.3

## OBJECTIVES

The student will:

- analyze personal food intake based on the food guide pyramid.
- develop skills in making nutritionally-sound food choices.
- understand the relationship of nutrition to personal health and fitness.

## CONCEPTUAL AREA

Agricultural base— people use plants and animals in a wide variety of ways to obtain food, fiber, shelter, and other products.

Images and Attitudes— people’s images, attitudes and behaviors create the issues and trends affecting agriculture and the environment.

-Questions for exploration-

-American Farmers are the most productive in the world. Today each U.S. Farmer raises enough food and fiber for 143 people in the United States and abroad. In 1940 the number was only 19. What has development in agriculture have allowed this change to happen? (Technology)

- How many gallons of milk does a average person consume in a year? (21)
- How many pounds of cheese are consumed by the average person in a year? (31.25)
- How many eggs does the average person consume in a year? (242)
- How many pounds of poultry does the average person consume in a year? (84.5)
- How many pounds of rice is consumed a year by the average person? (20.7)
- How many pounds of red meat does a person on average consume in a year? (118)
- How many pounds of fresh fruits are consumed in a Year by the average person? (127.1)
- How many pounds of fruits and vegetables are consumed a year by the average person? (204.6)
- How many pounds of flour and cereal products are consumed in a year by the average person? (191.5)

**RESOURCES**

“Food & Nutrition News”, September/October 1992, National Cattlemen’s Association formerly known as the National Livestock and Meat Board, [www.mypyramid.com](http://www.mypyramid.com), “Farm Facts”, American Farm Bureau Federation.

**EVALUATION**

Students demonstrate their ability to use the MyPyramid to evaluate their own dietary intake. Understanding of the concepts can be verified by having students complete the nutritional analysis for the personal food choices recorded on the “One Day Food Record”. Having students develop some recommendations to improve their diets by considering information from the MyPyramid and *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

