



# 6th-8th Grade Lesson 1: EAT MORE NOT LESS

## Overview

In this lesson, students will learn how to use MyPlate as a guide to eating more, not less. The eat more, not less philosophy means using the template of MyPlate to eat more plants. We should fill  $\frac{1}{2}$  of our plate with fruits and vegetables and another  $\frac{1}{4}$  of our plate with grains (half of our grains should be whole). These are all plant foods which means  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our plate should contain plants. Plant foods like vegetables and fruit and whole grains provide our body with nutrients like vitamins and minerals, add flavor and texture, make meals more filling and add color to our diet. If there were no plants in the world, we would not have food to eat! Even foods that we don't think of as plants, like chicken meat and eggs, involve plants since chickens eat corn and grain. Chips and candy are also made from plants. Chips often come from corn or potatoes with added flavors and candies contain sugar from sugar cane plants or sugar beets. Students will practice the concept of choosing foods from each of the 5 food groups and eating more plants by designing their own snack plates. They will assess if their current diet meets MyPlate guidelines by using the MyPlate quiz.

## Behavior Change Objective:

As a result of this lesson, students will eat meals that emphasize plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

## Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify the 5 groups of MyPlate (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy) and interpret that all food groups are developed from plants (animals eat plants).
- Practice making a snack that has an emphasis on whole plant foods and contains all 5 food groups and assess if their current diet meets the MyPlate guidelines using the MyPlate Quiz.

## Keywords:

MyPlate, Nutrients, Vitamins, Minerals

## Educational Standards:

CCSS: SL.6.1, L.6.1, SL.7.1, L.7.1, SL.8.1, L.8.1, RST.7, 7.NS.2, 7.EE.3

## Before you Begin:

- Review the entire lesson and watch the lesson video - note appropriate places to pause the video and engage students.
- Review Classroom Management techniques (suggested tutorials below)
  - [How to Handle an Out-of-Control Middle-School Classroom](#) (start at 2:03)
  - [How to Make a Noisy Class Quiet](#) (start at 2:40)
- Gather materials including MyPlate visual (see materials section).
- Set up AV equipment and provide space for film viewing.
- Provide each student with computer access in order to complete the MyPlate Quiz.



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## Materials:

- [Video](#) & AV Equipment
  - Eat More Not Lesson - 7th Grade - 4:03
- Items needed for "Design Your Own MyPlate Snack", one or more items from each of the 5 food groups.
  - Ingredient recommendations:
    - Fruit Group: grapes, sliced apples, bananas, strawberries, raspberries, etc.
    - Vegetable Group: baby carrots, celery sticks, cucumber slices, etc.
    - Grains: whole wheat crackers, whole wheat pretzels.
    - Protein: hummus, rolled deli meat.
    - Dairy: sliced string cheese, other cheeses cubed.
  - Plates, spoons, forks, and knives for preparing and serving out ingredients.
    - A plain paper plate will work but if possible use MyPlate plastic/reusable or disposable plate to serve ingredients:
      - Plastic/reusable MyPlate: available [here](#) from Amazon
      - Disposable MyPlate: available [here](#)
- Student access to computers to fill out MyPlate quiz.

## Procedure:

- **Introduce MyPlate Graphic:**

Begin the lesson by displaying an image of MyPlate and/or the plate that will be used for the "Design Your Own MyPlate Snack" activity. Bring the student's attention to the five food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy) and mention that it is important to choose foods from each food group because each food group has different nutrients that our bodies need. When looking at MyPlate it might seem like it is telling us to eat less of some foods. However, MyPlate is actually showing us what foods we should be eating more of. Half of MyPlate is filled with the two groups of fruits and vegetables, and another quarter of the plate is filled with grains. These are all plant foods, let's learn more about how to eat more plant foods and eat more not less.

- **Show video titled: Video One: Eat More, Not Less**

This video will teach the students about the Eat More Not Less philosophy, how to use my Plate to place an emphasis on plant foods, how plants are involved in the production of all foods, and how to add more vegetables to common meals.



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### Procedure:

- **Have students complete the "Design Your Own MyPlate Snack" activity:**

Review the main concepts of the video including the 5 food groups of MyPlate, examples of each food group, and MyPlate's emphasis on plant foods. Split the classroom into groups of 4-6 students. Provide each group with a MyPlate (see sources above) and ingredients (one or more items per food group - see recommendations above). Have students work together to prepare and arrange each food item on the MyPlate and create a snack that has at least one food in each MyPlate group. Once their MyPlate is full students can eat and enjoy their snacks. Appropriate knife/peeler/grater skills may be incorporated by having students chop, slice, peel, or shred ingredients. Proper measurement techniques can also be covered if desired (e.g. measure 2 T of hummus into the protein food group, measure 1/4 cup of chopped carrots into the vegetable group).

- **Alternative/Additional activity: Have students complete the MyPlate Quiz**

Direct students to the MyPlate Quiz which is located [here](#). Have the students complete the quiz to assess how much their current eating habits match with MyPlate's guidelines to fill  $\frac{3}{4}$  of their plates with plants. Discuss with students individually or as a group how to increase their consumption of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains if appropriate. Use the resources listed below as needed.



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## Activities and Resources to Extend this Lesson:

- [Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables Poster](#)
- [Have Fun with Fruits and Vegetables Word Find with Goals Section](#)
- [Vary Your Veggies](#)
- [MyPlate Guide to School Lunch](#)
- [MyPlate Guide to School Breakfast](#)