



## Understanding Nutrition Through The Food Pyramid

### Annotation

In this lesson students will learn further our understanding about the human body and its food needs for proper daily function by identifying the food categories used in the USDA food pyramid. This understanding will be shown by creating a poster describing the foods students have eaten during one day and describe how well they adhere to the food pyramid.

**Problem:** Can we further our understanding that the human body needs food to function properly by identifying the food categories used in the USDA food pyramid.

**Hypothesis:** Based on your research are the food in the USDA healthy? Are the foods in the food pyramid in their properly arranged groups or could the be arranged differently?

### Assessed GPS:

SCSh5. Students will be able to communicate scientific ideas and activities clearly.

### Background Research:

This may be done as background information a day before the class or the day of the class. Ask students to hold a class discussion about food and its importance to the human body. A good way to review this subject is to watch Discovery School's [The Food Pyramid](http://teacherstore.discovery.com) video, available at <http://teacherstore.discovery.com>.

### Time Duration

2 class periods

### Materials

Discovery School's [The Food Pyramid](http://teacherstore.discovery.com) video and VCR  
Paper and pencils  
Computer with Internet access (optional)

### Procedures

1. As a homework assignment, ask students to chart the foods they eat during one day, starting with the foods they have eaten on the day of the lesson. Ask students for examples of a typical breakfast, lunch, snack, and dinner. Demonstrate how to chart each meal. (For example, if a student ate cereal for breakfast, write the header "Breakfast" on the board; below it write "cereal," "milk," and anything they might put in the cereal, such as a banana.) Talk about serving sizes: If a student ate bread, how much did they eat? Write the amounts of each food eaten on the chart. Give students some time in class to chart the foods they have already eaten that day.

2. Returning to the lesson the following day, ask students to compare the foods they ate with those in the food pyramid. How many servings did they eat from the milk, yogurt, and cheese group? How many servings are recommended? How much bread and cereal did they eat? Does that meet the recommended amount? Students may use the food pyramid and the following Web sites to compare what they've eaten with the recommended intake:  
<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/py/pmap.htm>  
[http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/food/pyramid.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/pyramid.html)
3. Group students into pairs and have them discuss what they ate and how it compares the food pyramid. Ask students to volunteers what they've learned. How well did they meet the requirements of the food pyramid? How much food did they eat from the group at the top of pyramid? What can they do to make sure they eat more healthfully?
4. Have the pairs work together to create a healthful menu for one day that meets the guidelines in the food pyramid. They can include foods they eat as well as some foods they think would be healthful or fun to eat. Allow groups time to share their menu ideas.

**Time period:**

Over two class periods

**Conclusion**

Use review questions to further discuss:

1. Why is it important to eat a balanced diet?
2. Considering what you learned about the foods, why do you think foods are arranged in their existing order?