Eat the Rainbow

Adapted from: LifeLab “Feeling Fine with Fresh Food” from The Growing Classroom

Overview: Students will go on a garden scavenger hunt to locate fruits and vegetables of every color of the rainbow. They will discuss how each color of fruits and vegetables specifically helps their bodies. Then, the students will plan to fill in their rainbow with at least one fruit or vegetable of each color, which they like to eat.

Subject area: Nutrition

Grade level: 1st

Oregon Health Education Standards
Strand – PROMOTION OF HEALTHY EATING

English Language Acquisition Common Core Standards:

- **1.W.8** ELA. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- **SL.1.1** ELA. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.1.2** ELA. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- **SL.1.3** ELA. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
- **1.L.5** ELA. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- **1.L.5.c** ELA. Identify real-life connections between words and their use.

Objectives: Students will be able to locate and identify differently colored fruits and vegetables growing in the school garden. Students will then distinguish between the colors of produce and their impact on the various organs/functions of a healthy body.

Background Information for Teacher: All fruits and vegetables have different combinations of vitamins and minerals. In addition, fruits and vegetables contain phytonutrients, which give fruits and vegetables their colors and play a wide range of roles in keeping our bodies healthy. Because differently colored fruits and vegetables have unique concentrations of nutrients, eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables directly supports our good health.

How does each color of fruits and vegetables help our bodies?

- **Red**: Promotes heart health, increases memory function (strawberries, tomatoes, bell pepper, cherries, beets, radishes, raspberries, apples, red cabbage, red onion, watermelon)
- **Orange/Yellow**: Helps vision, strengthens immune system (oranges, sweet potato, pumpkin/squash, carrots, corn, squash, bell pepper, mango, lemon, apples, cantaloupe)

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• **Green:** Strengthens bones and teeth, helps vision, and keeps the digestive system healthy (cucumber, kale, lettuce, spinach, collards, chard, broccoli, asparagus, bok choy, cabbage, green beans, green peppers, honeydew, kale, peas, spinach)

• **Brown/White/Tan:** Promotes heart health, strengthens immune system (cauliflower, potatoes, turnips, onions, garlic, bananas, white corn).

• **Blue/Purple:** Promotes healthy aging, increases memory function (blueberries, eggplant, red cabbage)

**Prep time:** 30 minutes

**Lesson time:** 40 minutes

**Materials needed:**
- Plants in the garden of various colors
- Rainbow Color Cards (one set per group; included below)
- Colored Pencils
- Rainbow Worksheets (one per child; included below)

**Space needed:** School Garden

**Staff needed:** 1

**Preparation steps:**
Make copies of all necessary documents and locate supplies. If necessary, recruit extra volunteers to lead small groups.

**Presentation steps:**
1. Ask the students: What are all of the colors of the rainbow? What are some fruits and vegetables that you eat which represent each of those different colors? *With lesson in Spanish, it may be helpful to draw a rainbow on the board and have students call out the colors.*

2. Let students know that just as each color of the rainbow is beautiful in different ways, each color of a fruit or vegetable supplies the body with different nutrients in order to keep it healthy in different ways.

3. Split class into 4-5 groups (depending on number of adult volunteers). Explain that today we will be exploring the garden looking for fruits and vegetables of each color of the rainbow. Eating a rainbow of fresh produce keeps us healthy!

4. Give each group a Rainbow Color Card, which identifies the specific ways that each color of fruit or vegetable helps to maintain a healthy body. When each group finds a plant that they think is edible and is the color on their card, they should point it out to the instructor/volunteer. The instructor should help out with identification, especially with smaller, less obvious plants. The students should pause and read the description with each card to learn how each color helps a specific body part.

5. Once groups have identified all or most of the vegetables of a certain color in the garden, hand the group a new Rainbow Color Card and search for a new color.

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6. When students have had time to identify the fruits and vegetables, bring the class back together. Ask students for specific examples of fruits and vegetables of each color that were found in the garden. How do they benefit their bodies?

7. Explain that in the classroom, the teacher will give students time to draw one or two examples of fruits or vegetables of each color of the rainbow. They will color them onto their rainbow worksheet to remind them to eat the rainbow.

**Conclusion:** Discuss ideas for eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables: How many colors could they fit into a sandwich? A salad or fruit salad? What fruit could turn their oatmeal purple? What are some ideas for a colorful dinner?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Orange and Yellow</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helps your heart and your memory.</td>
<td>Helps your heart, eyes, and your immune system.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Blue and Purple</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helps your bones, teeth, eyes, and your digestive system.</td>
<td>Helps your memory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brown, White & Tan
Helps your immune system and your heart.
Eat the Rainbow!

Draw and color in your favorite fruits and vegetables.