



# My Plate

## Goals

Students become familiar with “My Plate,” the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s nutrition program and teaching tool. Through an exploration of whole foods, they develop an understanding of good nutrition, food groups, and well-balanced meals. They will be able to identify healthy foods and will be empowered to make good food choices.

## Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at [www.growing-minds.org](http://www.growing-minds.org).

## Materials

- Food group chart poster
- Food Groups: Compare and Contrast info sheet
- Blank “My Plate” poster
- Pictures of fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy products
- Blank “My Plate” coloring pages (one for each student)
- Colored pencils

\*\*To order or access additional printed materials about “My Plate” visit <http://choosemyplate.gov>

## Preparation

You will need to make a food group chart poster and a blank “My Plate” poster for this lesson. The food group chart poster is a larger version of the included “Food Groups: Compare and Contrast” info sheet– a table listing each food group with columns for examples and important information about each one. The blank “My Plate” poster is a larger version of the “My Plate” handout to post the included pictures.

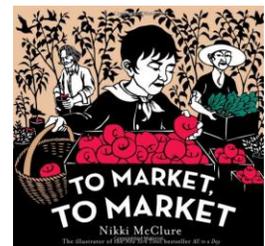
## Vocabulary

Food group: any group of foods organized by nutritional properties

## Activities

### Introduce the Lesson

Show students the empty food group chart poster. Explain that all foods are classified into the following food groups: fruit, vegetable, grain, protein, dairy, oils, and fats. Ask students to help you fill in the chart, using the



### Book to Read

To Market, to Market  
by Nikki McClure



# My Plate

“Compare and Contrast: Food Groups” document to help. What are examples of each food group? What fruits and vegetables grow in your area? Did the students forget anything? Add any information to the chart at the end and explain to the students why you are including it.

## **Build a Plate**

Show students your large “blank plate” poster. Ask them which section of the plate is the biggest? How do the different sized sections compare to each other? Which foods should they eat the most of? Explain to students that you are going to work together as a class to build a plate. Start with the vegetables. Show the students the pictures of vegetables you have. Choose students one by one and ask them which vegetable to add to the plate until that section is full. Glue the pictures to the poster. Continue through the food groups and the students until your class plate is full.

## **Read a Book**

Read To Market, To Market. Who is the author and illustrator of the book? For kindergarten: What letters can the students identify in the title? For first grade: How many syllables are in each word in the title? As you read the book, ask students to identify foods on each page and classify them into a food group.

## **Students Make Their Lunch Plate**

Give each student a blank plate coloring page and a set of colored pencils or markers. Explain that the large circle represents their lunch plate and the small circle represents their drink. Ask them to fill in their plate with drawings of foods that represent each food group (vegetable, fruit, grain, protein, dairy) to design their ideal, healthy lunch. Students can refer to the class Build a Plate Poster for ideas.

## **Extension (Optional)**

Brainstorm some favorite foods with your class. How does the food fit into the different food groups? Breakdown the foods into parts: What vegetables or fruits are in the foods? (Examples: pizza contains tomatoes; peanut butter comes from peanuts; jelly comes from different fruits; bread is made from wheat.)