

Developmental Approaches to Nutrition, PreK-6th Grade

Below is a brief description of how I approach the topic of nutrition at different developmental levels. A significant amount of time is devoted to nutrition in our curriculum, so this is just a snapshot of approaches I use at different levels to expose students to healthy foods and deepen their understanding of nutrition.

Grade Levels	Methods	Developmental Characteristics	Evidence Provided (links on portfolio page)
Preschool and Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MyPlate “character cards” to identify food categories• Plastic Foods for grouping and healthy food identification• Books such as “Gregory, the Terrible Eater”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoy pretend play and using characters• Learn through repetition• Hands-on learners• Pre-readers, enjoy being read to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MyPlate character cards
1st and 2nd grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taste tests• Rainbow Challenge (tracking food & veggie consumption)• Food crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn through experimentation• Competitive• Interested in art• Increased fine motor skills allows for more complex (and satisfying) projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photo of Rainbow Challenge
3rd and 4th grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pair work sorting food flash cards• Reading box labels/measuring sugar amounts• MyPlate Blast Off online nutrition game	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoy working with peers/cooperative work• Can connect manipulatives to broader concepts (i.e. measuring sugar tells us something about total intake)• Beginning mastery of computers• Industrious/become engrossed in activities of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hidden Sugars Lesson Plan (from my work at Health Connections)

5th and 6th grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research projects about foods (use of Food-A-Pedia) • Food reflections • Videos about nutrition (Ted Ed.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy organizing and classifying food information • Increased focus • Enjoy group work • Increased capacity for abstract thought • Enjoy working with technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Nutrients Project Description for Students
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Note that while there is some variation by year, Bethel generally clusters grades into Pre-K and K, 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6. Although there are certainly developmental differences among 5th and 6th graders, for example, I see both ages at once and need to design lessons accordingly. Given the reality that some classes are more mature than others, I make adjustments to content and rigor depending on what best suits the students' needs.