

# LEARNING TIME

## I Spy Food by Raising Literacy Australia and Fiona Bowden

Peer through the magnifying glass with your child to identify the five food groups as they grow, ripen, graze, forage and are harvested with our food friends Penny Pear, Casper Carrot, Annie Apple, Eric Egg, Chester Cheese and Betty Bread.

Use this book to talk with children about where food comes from. For example, apples and pears grow on trees, carrots and potatoes grow under-ground, while milk comes from certain animals. A fun way to explore your world together.



### Key Message for Parents | Good nutrition, health and exercise are critical

Parents and families are looking for information on ways to support their child's development. You can share information such as:

- Developing a healthy lifestyle and making healthy choices begins at birth
- Early interactions between adults and children in the early years has an amazing impact on the developing brain
- Good nutrition, health and exercise are necessary for a baby's brain to function

### Early Years Learning Framework | Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

Families and educators can work together to adopt a positive attitude to their child's health and wellbeing. When Educators use books that help introduce a wide range of foods, this can:

- support children to engage in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition
- model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children,
- draw on family and community experiences and expertise to include in familiar games, role play and physical activities in play.

### Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their children.

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

### Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

#### Good Morning

*Good morning to you*

*Good morning to you*

*Good morning everybody*

*and welcome to you!*



#### Song – \_\_\_\_\_

*Everybody picking, picking, picking (reach up and pretend to grasp an apple)*

*Everybody picking, apples like me.*

*Everybody munching, munching, munching (pretend bite and chew)*

*Everybody munching, toast like me.*

*Everybody wriggling, wriggling, wriggling (wriggle on the spot)*

*Everybody wriggling, noodles like me.*

*Everybody peeling, peeling, peeling (pretend peel a banana)*

*Everybody peeling, banana like me!*

Feel free to add your own actions/words to suit. You may like to link it to the food items you've selected for the activities in this Story Time.



***Welcome everyone! – You are going to love today's story, it is I Spy Food***

### Before Reading

I Spy Food is a great book to share with toddlers and older children. You may want to start with asking the children what does 'SPY' mean? Discuss some of the children's ideas and suggestions. Explain that it means to look very carefully and find information. Depending on your group you may want to explain that today's book is not a made-up story – instead it's all true and will have lots of facts. Today's book is all about FOOD, so we will be looking very closely at lots of food and where it comes from. You may also want to explain that while many of us get our food from the supermarket, this book looks at where it comes from BEFORE it gets to the supermarket or the farmers market.

You might like to ask all the children to use their hands to make their own binoculars to spy for foods they know in the book. This is a good fine motor and co-ordination activity, however some children may struggle, so assist if necessary. Invite the children to curl their fingers over to touch their thumb. Put their fingers together and then put their hands up to their eyes to look through like glasses. You could say to the children “Now look really closely at things that interest you, and you want to know more about!”



Alternatively, if you have a range of child safe magnifying glasses, you could share these with the children. If you feel these will distract too much during story time then save for afterwards.

### During Reading

Take time to look at each page and talk about what you can see. Spend as long or as little time on each page as needed to hold the children’s interest. As you read and describe food items, invite children to:

- point out food or items they recognize such as vegetables and fruits.
- what is their favourite? What does it taste (or smell, or feel) like? Which don’t they like and why?
- make the sounds they make when eating different foods (slurp, chew and gulp)

You may need to be prepared for questions asking where is the chocolate, ice-cream, lollies or other food! This is also the perfect moment to spend some time talking about making healthy choices, and sometimes foods like party food. Or, if a ‘meal’ is mentioned then this can also be a great opportunity to talk about all the ingredients that we find in a recipe, for example spaghetti bolognese, stir fry, or salad.

### After Reading

Have individual food items printed out on large pieces of paper, and try to use images that just display one item at a time, such as an apple, a strawberry, a beetroot, a potato, a bowl of rice, a piece of cheese, eggs, and bread. If you know your group well enough you may know some of their favourite foods and could include those too. Spread the images out on the floor and ask the children to stand next to their favourite. They might like to use their binocular hands to look at each one and spy their favourite to stand near. Talk about the shape, colours and textures with the children. Talk about how some people might like the same flavour things, and other people have different favourite flavours and tastes. It’s okay for friends to like different flavours and foods. We all have different tastes and likes.

Continue to talk with the children about the foods they have seen in the book and what they have seen in real life. Discuss where the foods come from and whether anyone has a garden, or chickens, or fruit trees or other items to grow or make their own food. What do they grow in their garden? Does anyone live on a farm? Who spends time helping to shop for or cooking foods that they enjoy. Pause often and allow them to use the book and pictures to refer back to the items they know and want to tell a story about.



If you have a range of child safe magnifying glasses then now is a great time share them out allowing children some time to have a closer look at all the different foods in the book. What can they see? Ask about colours, shapes and textures and any surprising or interesting details.

### Song – Hot potato, hot potato

*Hot potato, hot potato (hot potato, hot potato)*  
*Hot potato, hot potato (hot potato, hot potato)*  
*Hot potato, hot potato (potato), potato (potato)*  
*Potato, potato, potato*

*Cold spaghetti, cold spaghetti (cold spaghetti, cold spaghetti)*  
*Cold spaghetti, cold spaghetti (cold spaghetti, cold spaghetti)*  
*Cold spaghetti, cold spaghetti (spaghetti), spaghetti (spaghetti)*  
*spaghetti, spaghetti, spaghetti*

*Whooo, wiggly wiggly wiggly*  
*Whooo, wiggly wiggly wiggly*  
*Gimme that, gimme that, gimme that, hoo*

*Whooo, wiggly wiggly wiggly*  
*Whooo, wiggly wiggly wiggly*  
*Gimme that, gimme that*

*Mashed banana, mashed banana (mashed banana, mashed banana)*  
*Mashed banana, mashed banana (mashed banana, mashed banana)*  
*Mashed banana, mashed banana (banana), banana (banana)*  
*Banana, banana, banana*

*Whooo,...*

### Extension Activities:

#### Activity Time | I Spy!

The children may enjoy playing a simplified version of the popular game I Spy! To keep it simple you can use a few of the large printed pictures from before, or to make it a little more difficult for older kids just open the book to a page that the children enjoyed and choose from the many items. Use a description that includes shape, colour, etc so you could say “I Spy with my little eye something on this page (or on these posters) that is ... purple, round, it grows underground and has some long green leaves growing out the top.” Children can point or tell you their guess. If they guess incorrectly then you can either turn over the large picture or cover that picture in the book saying “No, it’s not the strawberry.” If they guess correctly then say “Yes, its beetroot! I love purple beetroot! Do you?” Share with families that this is a good game for learning the names of various foods, building a vocabulary of describing words, and just having fun together!

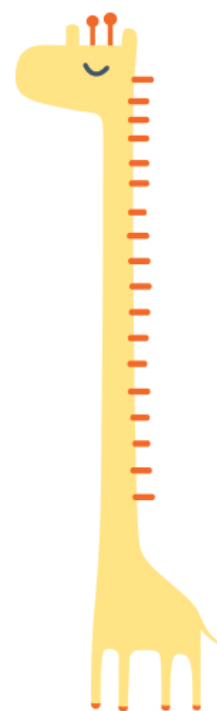
### Other activities:

- If you have access to resources you could put out some toy food sets, such as plastic or fabric food to have a tea party, picnic or pretend to visit the shops or restaurant.
- Create a pretend shop or supermarket and take turns pretending to buy various foods. You could have some paper and pencils/crayons for children to draw or write their shopping list, or make their own food items and even money if they want.
- Explore some more non-fiction books showing farms and farm machinery, or simple cooking books to find recipes using favourite ingredients
- Consider a walk to a nearby fruit and veg shop, or a walk to a Community Garden, to look at real food.
- Challenge the children to try to eat foods from all the colours of the rainbow. Discuss how eating a wide range is important to keep our bodies healthy and to help our brains grow too.

### STEM FOCUS

Food is a fantastic way to bring STEM concepts into every day activities, and to help build an understanding of making healthy choices from an early age. Depending on your focus or the children's interest consider providing activities including:

- Plant some seeds in little pots or cut off milk cartons so children can grow a selection of herbs or vegetables. You could try parsley, mint or radishes and beans. Planting, watering and caring for plants is a fascinating activity for many young children, especially when they get to eat the results!
- Prepare and/or cook a simple meal using ingredients that children have become familiar with. This could be as simple as making a salad sandwich or wrap, or more complex such as scrambled eggs on toast, or a vegetable soup. There is lots of rich STEM vocabulary to learn including measure, pour, whisk and heat.
- Encourage parents/carers to talk with children and add an extra fruit or vegetable to their meals where possible. It's even better if children can choose and prepare it, such as cut up banana to add to their porridge or cereal, or add a new vegetable to try on their dinner plate. You may also explain to parents/carers that it's okay if children don't like it, but it is important that children try it. Parents can also try again another time. If parents are very concerned about their child's diet and eating then they must seek advice from their GP or Paediatrician. While most children will eat a wide and nutritious diet, it can take many exposures to foods before becoming comfortable with trying, tasting and liking various flavours.



## Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. The Little Big Book Club suggests the following books to support learning in this area. If your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session.

For some more stories to share, we recommend the following titles:

- **Food, Me and ABC** by Raising Literacy Australia and Fiona Bowden
- **The Very Hungry Caterpillar** by Eric Carle
- **I'm A Hungry Dinosaur** by Janeen Brian and Ann James
- **Maisy Makes Gingerbread** by Lucy Cousins
- **Can We Lick the Spoon Now?** by Carol Goess and Tamsin Ainslie

## Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (*Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*) or your choice.

## Goodbye

*This is the way we say goodbye (wave) say goodbye, say goodbye*

*This is the way we say goodbye to all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!*