Acknowledgments

Project Coordinator and Writer
Diane Mincher, Nutrition and Food Specialist, University of Vermont Extension

Writers
Laurie W. DeMarco, Ph.D., Horticulture and Education Consultant, Salem, Virginia
Carol D. Hanley, Ed.D., Director of Education and Communications, Tracy Farmer Center for the Environment, Cooperative Extension Service, 4-H Youth Development, University of Kentucky

National 4-H Curriculum Liaison
Connie Miller, Youth and Family Issue Leader, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Reviewers
Carolyn Washburn, Washington County, Utah State University Extension
Martha Arterburn, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
Ed Maxa, Ph.D., North Carolina Cooperative Extension
Marilyn Rasmussen, Ph.D., University of Minnesota Extension Service

Editor
Meg Ashman, Burlington, Vermont

Spanish Translators
Mario Magana, Oregon State University Extension
Pedro Salas, Starksboro, Vermont

Design and Production
Northern Design Group, White Bear Lake, Minnesota

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Crook County, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service
Fort Campbell Army Base, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
Hocking County, Ohio State University Extension
Meeker County, University of Minnesota Extension
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Food, Culture, and Reading is a nutrition education program targeted to youth in grades four to six in the classroom, after school programs, 4-H clubs, home schools, school-enrichment programs, camps, and other youth groups. It uses literature to learn about food, nutrition, healthy living, and different cultures. Through a wide variety of experiential activities, youth will be able to recognize a variety of healthful foods within each MyPyramid food group, taste new foods from other cultures, explore the similarities of foods, and develop an understanding and appreciation of cultures that are different from their own.

Project Goals
Food, Culture, and Reading includes the following:
• An introduction to MyPyramid
• Literature-based look at cultures and foods found around the world
• Cooking activities to better understand MyPyramid, healthy living, and other cultures
• Physical activities to augment healthy living
• Take-home activities
• Appendix including a glossary

The objectives of Food, Culture, and Reading are to give young people the opportunity to:
• Learn basic facts about healthy living and eating a healthy diet
• Gain knowledge about different cultures through reading and exploring international foods
• Stimulate an interest in improving their daily food choices
• Relate to other youth in the world

Scheduling and Planning
When planning your sessions, please keep in mind the following:
• Each unit will take a few sessions to complete. You will be able to combine a few activities, depending on your group and size (for example: reading with physical activity; nutrition with cooking).
• If your group meets immediately after school, provide a snack by using a recipe found in the project online.
• If your program has a routine schedule, adjust Food, Culture, and Reading to meet your regular time sequence—such as including physical activity after a snack and then completing reading, culture, and other activities.
• Order books and MyPyramid supplies before you start the program.

Project Online
Food, Culture, and Reading Project Online is an exciting addition to the National 4-H Afterschool curriculum. Look for the online logo shown throughout the series as a reminder to go to the site for supporting activities, additional recipes, worksheets, handouts, additional literature, other interesting sites, Take-home activities in Spanish, and much more.
Acknowledgments ........................................ Inside Front Cover
Introduction .................................................. 1
Using this Guide .............................................. 4
Country Profiles .............................................. 9
Educational Standards and Success Indicators ...... 10

Unit 1: United States and MyPyramid

Visiting Our Small World
Create a book of foods from around the world ........................................... 14

Get Healthy
Make a MyPyramid ........................................ 16

Top It!
Cook multicultural pizzas ........................................... 18

Get Moving!
Run a MyPyramid relay ........................................ 20

Traveling Foods
Map the origins of different foods ........................................... 22

Take-home Activity—Reproducible
Explore MyPyramid at Home ........................................... 24

Unit 2: Mexico and Grains

Tamale Turmoil
Put together a holiday recipe box ........................................... 26

Finding Whole Grains
Investigate Nutrition Facts Labels ........................................... 28

Cooking in Mexico
Make corn tortillas ........................................... 30

Fun in Mexico! Balero!
Construct and play with a Mexican Balero ........................................... 32

May I Take Your Order?
Create a worldly sandwich ........................................... 34

Take-home Activity—Reproducible
Explore the Grains Group at Home ........................................... 36
Unit 3: Russia and Vegetables

Tales of a Magic Frying Pan
Write and tell tales using puppets .......................... 38

Vegetable Rumba
Make a vegetable poster and grow a vegetable garden .................. 40

Luscious Latkes
Cook potato and sweet potato latkes .......................... 42

Mystery Bag
Play vegetable and gardening games .......................... 44

Amazing Colored Russian Eggs
Dye eggs using natural dyes .......................... 46

Take-home Activity—Reproducible
Explore the Vegetables Group at Home .......................... 48

Unit 4: Kenya and Fruits

The Disappearing Fruit Mystery
Create fruit riddles ........................................... 50

Rainbow of Fruits
Make a color wheel of fruits ........................................... 52

Shake It Up
Blend fruit ‘n’ juice shakes ........................................... 54

Walk the Walk
Scavenger hunt for fruits ........................................... 56

Map It!
Find fruits from around the world ........................................... 58

Take-home Activity—Reproducible
Explore the Fruits Group at Home ........................................... 60

Unit 5: Greece and Milk

Pitch It!
Advertise feta cheese ........................................... 62

Drink It Up
Take a milk taste test ........................................... 64

Greek Delights
Make yogurt dishes ........................................... 66

Carry the Weight
Compete in a Greek Olympics ........................................... 68

Milking the Facts
Play Milk Group challenge ........................................... 70

Take-home Activity—Reproducible
Explore the Milk Group at Home ........................................... 72

Unit 6: Japan and Meat & Beans

Haiku Festival
Write a haiku ........................................... 74

What’s to Eat?
Plan menus for healthy eating ........................................... 76

Sukiyaki Special
Make sukiyaki ........................................... 78

Having Fun in Japan
Play Japanese “hackysack” ........................................... 80

Eating the Chopstick Way
Learn to use chopsticks ........................................... 82

Take-home Activity—Reproducible
Explore the Meat & Beans Group at Home ........................................... 84

Glossary .................................................. 87
Appendix .................................................. 90
Using this Guide

The MyPyramid designed by the United States Department of Agriculture is a graphic representation to help Americans make healthy food choices and to be physically active every day. It is an excellent guide for youth to follow when developing healthy habits.

Each unit is divided into six activities based on a single culture, a featured book, and a food group from MyPyramid. Each unit includes the following activities:

- **Reading**: An activity based on a book related to a specific culture and the food they eat
- **Nutrition**: An activity based on the identified culture and a specific food group from MyPyramid
- **Cooking**: An activity focused on making a recipe from the identified culture and using foods from the specified food group
- **Physical Activity**: A physical activity enjoyed by youth from the identified culture
- **Cultural Experience**: An activity focused on learning more about the identified culture and the foods they eat
- **Take-home Activity**: An informational letter to parents or guardians describing the specific food group and including health information, a recipe to share with their youth, and an activity for them to do at home. The Project Online includes the Take-home Activity in Spanish.

In each activity you will find:

- **Life Skill**: The 4-H Life Skill that corresponds with the learning in the activity
- **Project Skill**: The goal of the activity
- **Education Standards**: The Education Standards that correspond with the learning in the activity
- **Success Indicator**: What the youth will learn in the activity
- **Time Required**: The time required for the activity
- **Suggested Group Size**: The optimum group size for the activity
- **Supplies Needed**: Supplies needed for the activity

### The Activity

The experiential activity providing youth with an opportunity to learn about a new culture through reading, nutrition, physical activity, and cooking

**Talk it Over**: Questions to ask youth after completing the activity to help them process what they have learned

**Bites of Knowledge**: Additional information supporting the activity

**Spice It Up**: Additional activities to do with the group to support or augment the main activity

**Did You Know?**: Fun facts about the subject covered in an activity

**Words to Know**: Vocabulary words used in the activity and defined in the glossary

In addition, this curriculum provides a glossary for words highlighted in the activities and an appendix of reproducible activity sheets used in various activities.

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**Example Activity**: "Pita Pizza"

**Ingredients (serves 2)**
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 8 olives
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tomato (sliced)
- 1/4 cup spinach
- 1 red/green pepper
- Variety of toppings (serves 2)

**Tools**
- Pizza pans/parchment paper
- Oven or microwave

**Recipes**

**Top It!**

Using the MyPyramid as a guide. Try to use ingredients from all stripes. Place a variety of toppings on your pizza. How about a Brazilian Pizza? Try some salsas, quesadillas, and delicious salsas. A stroll through the Mexican cultures. Let's create one of those scrumptious recipes today!

Using a cookbook and imagination, make pizzas. The MyPyramid designed by the United States Department of Agriculture is a graphic representation to help Americans make healthy food choices and to be physically active every day. It is an excellent guide for youth to follow when developing healthy habits.

**Cook It!**

1. Wash hands and tie back long hair.
2. Find all the ingredients. Using the MyPyramid as a guide, try to use ingredients from all stripes. Place a variety of toppings on your pizza.
3. How did MyPyramid help you decide on toppings for your multicultural pizzas?
4. How did you decide what type of pizza to make today?
5. What did you learn about a new culture today?
6. How can you share the directions for making your multicultural pizza with your friends?
7. How can you share the directions to enhance your daily diet?
8. Why is it important to follow a recipe step-by-step?
9. What other multicultural activities do you enjoy?
10. Share your multicultural pizza with your friends.

**Clean Up**

- Wash dishes, and supplies.
- Throw away foods that fall on the floor.
- Don’t sneeze or cough near the food.
- Always wash your hands before preparing or eating food.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Keep cold foods in the refrigerator until preparation time. Never store cold foods at room temperature.
- If you are cooking in a microwave, make sure the food will be peeled or cooked.
- Keep a list of ingredients that have been washed. Use a mixture of 1 teaspoon bleach and 3 cups water for food that has been washed. Use this solution on raw foods that have been washed.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds. Be sure to wash between fingers and under nails.
- Remind youth to chew foods thoroughly.
- Remind youth to never swallow food whole.
- Remind youth to always wash fresh fruits or vegetables, even if they have been peeled.
- Remind youth to never swallow food whole before it is chewed. Sticky food, such as caramel, might be dry food, such as popcorn, might be swallowed whole before it is chewed.
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4-H Life Skills

Life skills are defined as abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and behavior that must be learned for success and happiness. Life skills enable people to adapt to and master their life situations. Through development of life skills, youth learn to live comfortably with others, express their own feelings safely, love life, and welcome new experiences. Some skills are more important than others at different ages.

Throughout each lesson, the following life skills are addressed through the many activities:

- Learning to Learn—Draws upon experience and prior knowledge
- Learning to Learn—Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences
- Making Decisions—Applies rules and principles to a situation
- Managing Self—Actively seeks self-improvement opportunities
- Healthy Living Choices—Understands the benefits of keeping fit
- Healthy Living Choices—Shares the benefits of staying fit with others

Featured Books

Locate or order the featured books for each unit prior to starting the Food, Culture, and Reading program.

If you can not find the featured book, please use the alternate book that is suggested. To supplement activities or to encourage extra reading, additional resource books are listed at the Project Online website.

Unit 1: United States and MyPyramid

ISBN: 0794508073

This book includes more than forty simple, delicious recipes from around the world with great photos.

ISBN: 0805073221

Colorful photographs detail the lives of five youngsters from around the world: their homes, families, traditions, and typical foods. Each section also explores a special day in one child’s life and the role of food in it: a wedding in South Africa, a fiesta in Mexico, a day out with Dad in Thailand, and a birthday in India.


This cookbook is organized by continents. Each recipe includes information on kitchen tools needed, ingredients, directions for food preparation, an interesting food fact as well as a cultural fact, and an activity related to the continent.

Unit 2: Mexico and Grains


Maria tries on her mother’s wedding ring while helping make tamales for a Christmas family get-together. Panic ensues when, hours later, she realizes the ring is missing.

ISBN: 0152016988

This book describes how corn is harvested and made into tortillas.
Unit 3: Russia and Vegetables


This appealing tale is about a girl who does a kind deed for an old woman, who gives her a magic pan that will fry up latkes.

ISBN: 0590422650

A poor family struggles to make ends meet when an enormous snow storm keeps them from getting supplies. When they realize they will have no potatoes for latkes at Hanukkah, they come across a cat and a dog. Despite the fact that they can’t feed themselves, they take the pets in. In this spirit of sharing, the pets have a surprise of their own.

Unit 4: Kenya and Fruits

ISBN 0-7636-0863-7

Handa carries seven delicious fruits to her friend Akeyo as a surprise. But thanks to some hungry animals she meets along the way, it’s Handa who’s in for a surprise!

ISBN: 1905236646

Mama Panya and her son, Adika, are going to the market to buy ingredients to make pancakes for dinner. A recipe, map, details about daily life, and facts about Kiswahili and Kenya are included.

Unit 5: Greece and Milk


Long ago in ancient Greece, people created stories—myths—to explain the mysteries of life. These myths told of gods and goddesses, fearful monsters, brave heroes, and mysterious beauties. The awesome Olympians of Greek mythology come to life as Aliki skillfully weaves many of the tales that have fascinated children for generations.

ISBN: 0517588374

The most complete collection of Greek and Roman myths specially arranged to be read aloud.

Unit 6: Japan and Meats & Beans

ISBN-10: 0395442354

Friedman has created a delightful, original, and very funny book that goes far beyond simple table manners. Realistic yet slightly stylized illustrations are done in muted watercolors that catch the nuances of Japanese culture. The book is wonderfully thought-provoking in its portrayal of the subtle similarities and differences among cultures.

ISBN: 0823415260

When Kuai cannot get enough to eat, he begins using sticks to grab food too hot for his hands.
Activity Supplies
Order or download these supplies prior to starting this project book.

MyPyramid for Kids:
- Click on “MyPyramid Plan” to get a quick estimate of what and how much food a child should eat from different food groups by entering their age, gender, and activity level. www.MyPyramid.gov

Food models:
- At http://mypyramid.gov, go inside the pyramid to each group color section to download and print pictures from picture gallery. It would be best to print on a color printer and laminate.
- Or, purchase a set of educators full-color, serving-sized cardboard photos of 200 food models with nutritional information on the back of each (item # 0012N) from your regional Dairy and Food Council office or from the National Dairy Council, 10255 West Higgins Road, Suite 900. Rosemont, IL 60018-5616, or call 1-800-426-8271.
- Or, instead of purchasing food models or downloading, substitute food pictures cut out from magazines, grocery ads, seed catalogs, etc., or color food shapes from coloring books or clip-art programs.

World map:
- www.eduplace.com/ss/maps/world.html (Need Adobe Reader to access map)
  Click on World: Continents
- http://worldatlas.com/aatlas/worldout.htm
  Print from this page
The Experiential Model

The activities in Food, Culture, and Reading were developed using the Experiential Learning Model. Activities strive to involve youth in activities that require them to experience, share, process, generalize, and apply what they have learned to other parts of their lives. The activity comes first; the “learning” comes from the “discovery” of new knowledge and skills as a result of the experience. This is the “learn-by-doing” process.

Hands-on involvement is the most effective method for learning this material. It helps youth learn personal initiative, hard work, patience, and deferred gratification. If youth need assistance completing a task, you should guide them, but not by doing the work for them. This may rob youth of learning by trial and error, practicing skills, and becoming competent and capable.

Throughout the lessons, step-by-step information is provided for you, the youth educator. Use the questions listed in the Talk It Over section of each activity to encourage the young person to think about what he or she has learned from the experience. Most of the questions do not have an exact answer. In providing an opportunity for feedback, the purpose of the questions is to promote analysis of the experience and the subsequent acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

Youth Educator’s Role

At the center of this experiential process is the youth educator. For youth to gain the most from this learning experience, the youth educator should:

- Help the youth focus on the activity.
- Provide support for the learning as it is taking place. Serve as a resource person to help connect the young person with the community, resource materials, and others knowledgeable about other cultures, nutrition, and healthy living.
- Provide feedback as the youth moves through the activity process. Help the young person to think about what he or she is experiencing and learning through active listening and open-ended questioning.
- Debrief the youth to determine what was done well, what could have been done differently, and where to go from here.
### Unit 1 - United States of America

The United States is located in the continent of North America and is bordered by Canada and Mexico.

**Full name:** United States of America  
**Population:** 300 million (US Census Bureau estimate, 2006)  
**Capital:** Washington DC  
**Largest city:** New York City  
**Area:** 9.8 million sq km (3.8 million sq miles)  
**Major language:** English  
**Major religion:** Christianity  
**Life expectancy:** 75 years (men), 80 years (women) (UN)  
**Monetary unit:** 1 US dollar = 100 cents  
**Main exports:** Computers and electrical machinery, vehicles, chemical products, food and live animals, military equipment and aircraft

### Unit 2 - Mexico

This country is located southwest of the United States. Mexico is a nation where affluence, poverty, natural splendor and urban blight rub shoulders.

**Full name:** United Mexican States  
**Population:** 106.4 million (UN, 2005)  
**Capital:** Mexico City  
**Area:** 1.96 million sq km (758,449 sq miles)  
**Major language:** Spanish  
**Major religion:** Christianity  
**Life expectancy:** 72 years (men), 77 years (women) (UN)  
**Monetary unit:** 1 peso = 100 centavos  
**Main exports:** Machinery and transport equipment, mineral fuels and lubricants, food and live animals

### Unit 3 - Russia

Russia is a very large country that is almost one-sixth of the earth’s surface and stretches over two continents, from the Siberian tundra to the marshes of St. Petersburg.

**Full name:** Russian Federation  
**Population:** 143.8 million (UN, 2006)  
**Capital:** Moscow  
**Area:** 17 million sq km (6.6 million sq miles)  
**Major language:** Russian  
**Major religions:** Christianity, Islam  
**Life expectancy:** 59 years (men), 72 years (women) (UN)  
**Monetary unit:** 1 rouble = 100 kopecks  
**Main exports:** Oil and oil products, natural gas, wood and wood products, metals, chemicals, weapons and military equipment

### Unit 4 - Kenya

Situated on the equator on Africa’s east coast, Kenya has been described as “the cradle of humanity.”

**Full name:** The Republic of Kenya  
**Population:** 34.3 million (UN, 2005)  
**Capital:** Nairobi  
**Area:** 582,646 sq km (224,961 sq miles)  
**Major languages:** Swahili, English  
**Major religion:** Christianity  
**Life expectancy:** 48 years (men), 46 years (women) (UN)  
**Monetary unit:** 1 Kenya shilling = 100 cents  
**Main exports:** Tea, coffee, horticultural products, petroleum products

### Unit 5 - Greece

Situated in the far south of the Balkan peninsula, Greece combines the towering mountains of the mainland with over 1400 islands, the largest of which is Crete.

**Full name:** The Hellenic Republic  
**Population:** 11 million (UN, 2005)  
**Capital:** Athens  
**Area:** 131,957 sq km (50,949 sq miles)  
**Major language:** Greek  
**Major religion:** Christianity  
**Life expectancy:** 76 years (men), 81 years (women) (UN)  
**Monetary unit:** 1 euro = 100 cents  
**Main exports:** Textiles and clothing, food, oil products

### Unit 6 - Japan

Japan is made up of four separate islands located off the coast of eastern Asia.

**Full name:** Japan  
**Population:** 127.7 million (UN, 2006)  
**Capital:** Tokyo  
**Area:** 377,864 sq km (145,894 sq miles)  
**Major language:** Japanese  
**Major religions:** Shintoism, Buddhism  
**Life expectancy:** 78 years (men), 85 years (women) (UN)  
**Monetary unit:** yen  
**Main exports:** Vehicles, computer parts, chemicals, scientific instruments and watches
# Educational Standards and Success Indicators

## Unit 1: United States and MyPyramid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit and Activity</th>
<th>Life Skill</th>
<th>Project Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Visiting Our Small World</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Discovering and identifying foods from around the world</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition: Get Healthy</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Understanding the purpose of MyPyramid and identifying a variety of foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking: Top It!</td>
<td>Making Decisions – Applies rules and principles to a situation</td>
<td>Creating new recipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Activity: Get Moving!</td>
<td>Healthy Living Choices – Understanding the benefits of keeping fit</td>
<td>Recognizing the importance of physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture: Traveling Foods</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Recognizing the origin of foods</td>
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## Unit 2: Mexico and Grains

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit and Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Tamale Turmoil</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Making a recipe box to illustrate the relationship between holiday celebrations and food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition: Finding Whole Grains</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Identifying the Grains Group of MyPyramid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooking: Cooking in Mexico</td>
<td>Making Decisions – Applies rules and principles to a situation</td>
<td>Creating new recipes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Activity: Fun in Mexico! Balero!</td>
<td>Healthy Living Choices – Understanding the benefits of keeping fit</td>
<td>Recognizing the importance of physical activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture: May I Take Your Order?</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Identifying the grains that are used to make sandwiches</td>
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## Unit 3: Russia and Vegetables

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<td>Reading: Tales of a Magic Frying Pan</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Communicating in different ways about food</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition: Vegetable Rumba</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Accessing health information from the Vegetables Group of MyPyramid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking: Luscious Latkes</td>
<td>Making Decisions – Applies rules and principles to a situation</td>
<td>Following a healthy recipe containing vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Activity: Mystery Bag</td>
<td>Healthy Living Choices – Understanding the benefits of keeping fit</td>
<td>Recognizing the importance of physical activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture: Amazing Colored Russian Eggs</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Analyzing the origins of the foods we eat</td>
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<td>Educational Standard</td>
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<td>Analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health</td>
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<td>Geography Standard 4: Knows the physical and human characteristics of places.</td>
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<td>Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services</td>
<td>Describes the purpose of MyPyramid and identifies a variety of healthy foods from MyPyramid from around the world.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks</td>
<td>Creates a healthy snack using different ingredients</td>
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<td>Plays and recognizes daily physical activity is part of healthy living</td>
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<td>Demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services</td>
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<td>Analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geography Standard 4: Knows the physical and human characteristics of places.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Unit 4: Kenya and Fruit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit and Activity</th>
<th>Life Skill</th>
<th>Project Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> The Disappearing Fruit Mystery</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Draws upon experiences and prior knowledge</td>
<td>Communicating through wordplay and riddles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition:</strong> Rainbow of Fruit</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences Managing Self – Actively seeks self-improvement opportunities</td>
<td>Accessing health information from the Fruits Group of MyPyramid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooking:</strong> Shake It Up</td>
<td>Making Decisions – Applies rules and principles to a situation</td>
<td>Following a healthy recipe containing fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Activity:</strong> Walk the Walk</td>
<td>Healthy Living Choices – Understanding the benefits of keeping fit</td>
<td>Recognizing the importance of physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture:</strong> Map It!</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Analizing the origin of fruits, how they are transported and the cultures in which they are grown and eaten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit 5: Greece and Milk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit and Activity</th>
<th>Life Skill</th>
<th>Project Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Pitch It!</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Draws upon experiences and prior knowledge</td>
<td>Designing and writing nutrition-related advertisements based on the Milk Group from MyPyramid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition:</strong> Drink It UP</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences Managing Self – Actively seeks self-improvement opportunities</td>
<td>Accessing health information from the Milk Group of MyPyramid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooking:</strong> Greek Delights</td>
<td>Making Decisions – Applies rules and principles to a situation</td>
<td>Following a healthy recipe containing milk products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Activity:</strong> Carry the Weight</td>
<td>Healthy Living Choices – Understanding the benefits of keeping fit</td>
<td>Recognizing the importance of physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture:</strong> Milking the Facts</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Draws upon experiences and prior knowledge; interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Designing a game to learn about Greek culture and the Milk Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit 6: Japan and Meat & Beans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit and Activity</th>
<th>Life Skill</th>
<th>Project Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading:</strong> Haiku Festival</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Draws upon experiences and prior knowledge</td>
<td>Writing haikus to show the influence of culture on diets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nutrition:</strong> What’s to Eat?</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences Managing Self – Actively seeks self-improvement opportunities</td>
<td>Accessing health information from the Meat and Beans Group of MyPyramid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cooking:</strong> Sukiyaki Special</td>
<td>Making Decisions – Applies rules and principles to a situation</td>
<td>Following a healthy recipe containing meats and beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Activity:</strong> Having Fun in Japan</td>
<td>Healthy Living Choices – Understanding the benefits of keeping fit</td>
<td>Recognizing the importance of physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture:</strong> Eating the Chopstick Way</td>
<td>Learning to Learn – Draws upon experiences and prior knowledge; interprets and applies new knowledge and experiences</td>
<td>Learning about different cultures through the use of chopsticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Standard</td>
<td>Success Indicator</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors of health behaviors – identify the influence of culture on health practices and behaviors. Geography Standard 6: Knows how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.</td>
<td>Communicates through riddles about fruits from around the world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention. Demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.</td>
<td>Accesses information from MyPyramid to understand that a variety of fruits are necessary for a healthy diet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.</td>
<td>Follows a recipe to make a healthy fruit drink.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.</td>
<td>Plays and recognizes daily physical activity is part of healthy living.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health. Geography Standard 4: Knows the physical and human characteristics of places. Geography Standard 6: Knows how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.</td>
<td>Explains the origins of fruits, the cultures where they are eaten and how transportation and processing add to the cost of fruit products.</td>
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<td>Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors of health behaviors – identify the influence of culture on health practices and behaviors. Geography Standard 6: Knows how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.</td>
<td>Writes advertisements for cheese products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention. Demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.</td>
<td>Compares the fat content in milk products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.</td>
<td>Follows a recipe to make a healthy Greek dish with milk products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.</td>
<td>Plays and recognizes daily physical activity is part of healthy living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health. Geography Standard 4: Knows the physical and human characteristics of places. Geography Standard 6: Knows how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.</td>
<td>Designs and plays a game to learn about the Milk Group and Greek culture.</td>
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<td>Writes a haiku to show the influence of culture on diets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention. Demonstrate the ability to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.</td>
<td>Accesses information from the Meat and Beans Group of MyPyramid to design a meal plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.</td>
<td>Follows a recipe to make a healthy Japanese dish with meats and beans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.</td>
<td>Plays and recognizes daily physical activity is part of healthy living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze the influence of culture, media, technology, and other factors on health. Geography Standard 6: Knows how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.</td>
<td>Learns about the Japanese culture by using chopsticks to eat.</td>
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</table>
The story of the United States is the story of the lives and courage of immigrants. Over the years, people from all around the world have come to the U.S., bringing with them their culture, religion, stories, celebrations, and heritage. The richness of this mix of cultures is reflected in the foods we eat. A drive down Main Street, USA reveals our immigrant heritage in the selection of restaurants lining the street. Americans enjoy dishes in restaurants serving cuisine from such places as Mexico, Germany, Italy, Thailand, China, the Caribbean, France, and Japan.

The Activity

Another place where American diversity is found is along the aisles of a supermarket. Exploring the variety of foods available in the supermarket gives us a glimpse into the cultural diversity found in the United States.

1. The Usborne Little Round the World Cookbook by Angela Wilkes and Fiona Watt identifies a variety of foods from around the world that are often found in local supermarkets and enjoyed by families in the United States. Allow the youth time to browse through the book to become familiar with its contents. Youth will make his or her own version of a book, entitled My Little Round the World Food Favorites. Ask each youth to do the following:

2. Make a list of six foods commonly served in your home. Using The Usborne Little Round the World Cookbook, the Internet, a cookbook, the library, or other resources, find out where these foods originated or are traditional dishes, and include this information on the list.

3. Using the list, organize and construct a book entitled My Little Round the World Food Favorites following these steps:
   a. Fold a stack of four sheets of construction paper in half.
   b. Punch six to eight holes along the folded edge of the stack using a hole-punch.
   c. Thread a two-foot piece of yarn through the holes to sew the paper together into a book. Knot the yarn to hold the pages in place.
   d. Cut photos of the foods from the list out of magazines or grocery store advertisements. Use the Internet to find and print pictures of these foods.
   e. Starting with the second page, glue the photos into the book—one food photo per page. Label the foods and include their country of origin or where they are a traditional dish. Write a sentence describing the food’s taste, texture, shape, or other distinguishing feature.
   f. Decorate the cover of the book with photos or drawings of food. Include the title of the book and your name.
   g. Share the book with the group.
The diversity of foods found in the United States is a reflection of the diversity of people making up our communities. A look at the variety of foods we eat is a good place to start a discussion about good nutrition and healthy living. Everything we eat is not necessarily good for us; thus, an important component of healthy living is making well-informed food choices. With so many tasty foods springing from our diverse culture, we want to become informed consumers of nutritional, healthy foods.

What is “healthy eating”? The United States Department of Agriculture developed a series of messages that define healthy eating, as demonstrated by the graphic, MyPyramid. We will be exploring these in subsequent activities, but to eat a healthy diet you should:

- Make half your grains whole
- Vary your veggies
- Focus on fruits
- Get your calcium-rich foods
- Go lean with protein
- Fats and sugars—know your limits

Talk it Over

Share
- What foods does your family enjoy at home?
- Which of those foods did you put on your book?
- What are some foods your family buys?
- From what countries do these foods originate?

Process
- Compare your books to the books of others in your group. What were the differences and similarities?
- How does your family heritage affect the foods you eat?
- Why is it important to know your family food heritage?
- How are the foods you eat affected by people from other countries?

Generalize
- Why is the United States often referred to as a “melting pot” of cultures?
- Why might it be easier for an American to try different foods than someone from another country?
- What do you learn about other countries by eating food?

Apply
- What are some other ways to learn about other countries?
- How can you expand your family’s list of foods from other countries?
- How does knowing where food heritages come from help learn about diversity?

Bites of Knowledge

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Spice it up

- Foods found in a supermarket come from all around the world. Using a world map, ask each youth to locate their home state. Put a sticker on this location. Put a sticker on the different countries represented by the different foods found in their book, My Little Round the World Food Favorites. Let them share their book and map with the group.
- Have youth ask a family member about their family’s history and heritage. Then have them write a story about their family and how they came to America, including a paragraph about the foods they like to eat.

Did You Know?

Although many people shop at supermarkets, there are many other places foods can be purchased or obtained. People may shop at open-air markets, farmer’s markets, and natural food stores. They can also use home-delivery services, or grocery shop on the Internet. Some people grow most of their fresh vegetables and fruits in their own home garden. Some folks even raise their own poultry for meat and eggs, tend to cows or goats for meat and milk products, and bring up other animals for various foods and delicacies.

Project Online

Food, Culture, & Reading

www.4-H.org/curriculum/fcr

Other Activities

Books