



Eat Right – What Does That Mean? (🌈 A Physical Health Story)
(5th Grade – 10-11 yrs.)
Physical Activity: Traffic Light Food Guide



STORY CONNECTION – SLIDE 4 (Approx Time: 25-30 mins)

Scientists tell us that we need to eat food to give us energy, but the problem is that there are LOTS of foods that give us energy. In fact, ALL foods give us energy. Some of those foods let you use energy right away, but some of those foods have too much energy and so your brain needs to store it. Storing energy can be a good and a bad thing. The best way to eat would be to keep enough energy in our bodies to let us do what we need to do when we need to do it. So, you would eat – do something – eat – do something. You would eat just enough to be able to do what you needed to do. The problem is most of us cannot eat all the time and most of us do not know how much we need to eat to do certain behaviors. The key is to choose foods that will not only give our body energy but, but also other nutrients it needs. Some foods need to be consumed in moderation.

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Food picture cards (included below- optional)

Preparation needed:

- Write GREEN, YELLOW, and RED on pieces of paper and hang them in three different areas of the room.
- Determine if you will print or digitally display the food picture cards.

Instructions:

1. In this activity, student(s) will be presented with a food item and will have to determine what type of food they think it is based on the following criteria:
 - Green food means they can eat it practically anytime - a lot of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, etc.
 - Yellow food means they can eat it sometimes – some nutrients, vitamins, minerals, etc.
 - Red food means they can eat it occasionally and only in moderation – little nutrients, vitamins, minerals, etc. These foods might also be processed and have a lot of added sugar and fat.
2. Begin by asking student(s) what they know about traffic lights.
 - They will probably say things like “green means go,” “yellow means use caution,” and “red means to stop.”
3. Direct their attention to the GREEN, YELLOW, and RED labels in the room.
4. Explain to the student(s) that they will see a picture of the food (or hear its name). They will decide how often the food should be consumed to eat right/maintain a healthy diet, not necessarily how they personally

feel about the food. They will then move to the area designated as GREEN, YELLOW, or RED. Review the meaning of each color from Step 1 with the student(s).

5. Ask student(s) if they have any questions or need any clarification. Clear up any misunderstandings.
6. Show the first picture of food.
7. Once all the student(s) have had a chance to move:
 - ask the student(s) to share within that color group why they made that choice.
 - Encourage student(s) to be as specific as possible when telling why they chose the color they did.
 - For example, if they moved to green for strawberries instead of just accepting “healthy” promote things like “vitamins, fiber, antioxidants, no sodium, no cholesterol, etc.” Some student(s) might not know this information, but some might and can share their insights with the group.
 - have one of the student(s) share out why they chose the color they did.
 - If student(s) moved to multiple colors, have a student from each color tell why they chose the color they did.
 - Again, reiterate that they are moving based on the nutritional value of the food, not their opinion of the food.
8. OPTIONAL: As an extension, ask student(s) how to take the food presented from its current color (nutritional level) to a different one.
 - For example, broccoli in the picture would be a green food. However, if it is covered in cheese sauce, it would be red. Plain oatmeal would be a green food, but with added sugar and whole milk it would be more of a yellow/red food.
 - Student(s) could also share alternative options or substitutes for these foods. For example, instead of drinking a soda, maybe try sparkling water. Or instead of fries, maybe they have sweet potato fries.
9. Once each food is discussed, have them move back to the center of the room before showing the next food.
10. Continue until all foods are discussed.
11. In closing, remind student(s) that ALL food will give them energy. Some of those foods let them use energy right away, but some of those foods have too much energy and so their brain needs to store it. Storing energy can be a good and a bad thing. Storing too much of this energy does not do their body good. In a perfect world, they would eat enough to complete a task, eat again to complete the next task, and so on. However, this is not a realistic way to eat. Eating foods that provide energy and other necessary vitamins, minerals, and nutrients will keep their body and brains happy and healthy.

Activity Idea Credit: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/>



Broccoli



Orange
Juice



Soda



Asparagus



Eggs



Banana
Split



Tomato



Popcorn



Pizza



Apple



Avocado



Chips



**Whole
Wheat
Bread**



Cashews



Fries

Broccoli image credit: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQJ17pOadFyN M4nut4wnhiFeK36POA1z_iS01jstDyDS66OXcZF&s

Orange juice image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQMtMR49nixhIVgNVKpggT7K5aCIT6h9swba2GaOLgebCZNaqA&s>

Soda image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRb6OnKI8b7cKKiuyANRyKCPs8D9rz-u-VsV9IQ1cEc7zxEUIDO&s>

Asparagus image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQrxA7rfsyhs51rQGenMNITCXOwzHnYqSNdvuOqArWml-8YE8A&s>

Eggs image credit: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcR0FSkMrlbFl5gRk2PUdMb_nulUNp_OZYu7KvDXJentpF764Oo&s

Banana split image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQQxUkS2VaeT6JbaTt1YZGCx9vxryWOPdOHdUnOdFORC5oJA-Mc&s>

Tomato image credit: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcT-ti3obkujrn_bzWBHu0ukKSvtXdbWnYMaegHejbqXadBuRL9n&s

Popcorn image credit: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTey2mFmIx9Jd_GDpZbFErMZZJQt6kkM7Hr-FMD19wkGk3AtnX_&s

Pizza image credit: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSmFxyfDUZc_yuhLSuxvjnBAS_vqVuMC12rmlvUPCmUirS0-T-&s

Apple image credit: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSX43BMpEKdcJYCw09495_SclM75OWI-7McTlwit543AyGxn0r6&s

Avocado image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRpiei-6ghlu56dtGfHC13EFHmiPWSjz6GgYPnYPhMqEfG7yM&s>

Chips image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQDyrrAqOJwor1YNueD7SMh9aTbyLp8HYH5IqULa0pZHM-ppKMs&s>

Whole wheat bread image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRZKsi9f-ji0KHXGRNwnBD0IK8jiNUzfixNO1unla4wzsnly12g&s>

Cashews image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTWnlqYVLF1CYX9VXPmAFKcyM-MIL69FTwK4IxiWyPAtoTuJg&s>

Fries image credit: <https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQIUSdZ3EbGZKxjM0WB2HE9fvlOrdZm6To5Ts-Z0IIFzffufI&s>