

Pick a Better Snack

Eat Fruits and Veggies

Nutrition Educator Training
October 2025



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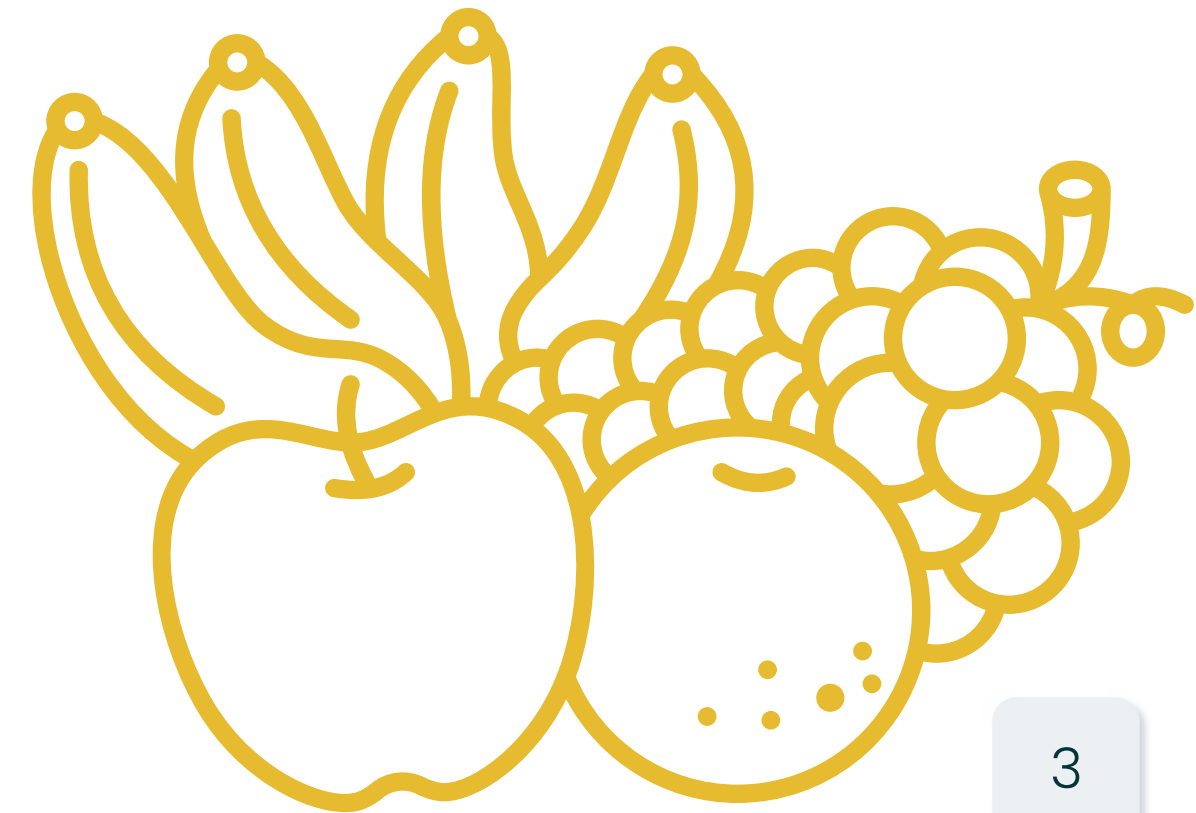


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Welcome!

We're glad to have you join the dedicated group of nutrition educators who teach Pick a Better Snack (PABS) lessons. We hope these slides help prepare you for your new role.



PABS Educator Training Objectives

This training will help you:



Understand the goals of the PABS lessons.



Implement the PABS program with fidelity.



Select which set of PABS lessons to use.



Become familiar with the different sections of the lessons.



Learn strategies for classroom management.



Practice proper food safety practices.

Goals

Pick a Better Snack is an evidence-based program created by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The program goals for youth:

- Increase fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Promote one hour or more of daily physical activity.

Target audience:

- Elementary students in grades K-3
- Their parents and caregivers



Implementation Partners

The Pick a Better Snack Program can be used in a variety of programs and settings, such as:

- School classrooms (Supports [science](#) and [health education standards](#)!)
 - Schools may wish to partner with a local agency to deliver the program if capacity is limited, such as county Extension, county public health or a community action agency.
- After-school programs
- Summer youth programs
- 4-H or other youth education
- Local food promotion and education
- Other health promotion and prevention programs



Check-In Question

**Who is the PABS
audience?**

Answer

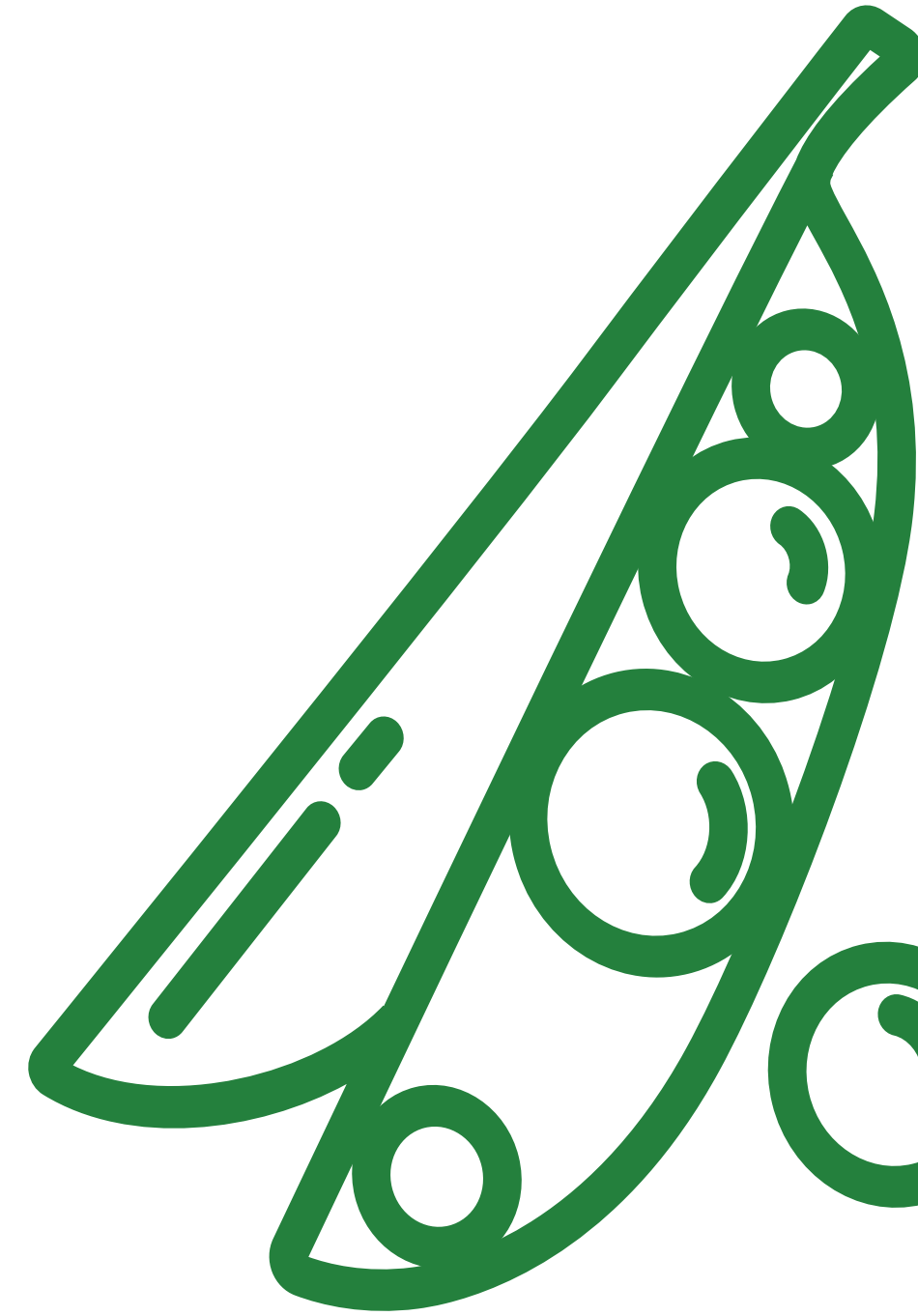
**PABS focuses on students
(grades K-3) and their
parents or caregivers.**

Evidence-based: Wave II

The Pick a Better Snack Program was part of a USDA study called [SNAP Education and Evaluation Study \(Wave II\)](#) in 2011-2012. Parents and caregivers of 3rd grade students who received Pick a Better Snack completed a survey before and after the program. The study compared two intervention groups – one that received only the PABS program and one that received the PABS program plus social marketing – to a control group. (At the time of the study, the PABS Program was called BASICS.) The results showed significant impact on several outcomes compared to the control group.

Compared to the control group:

- Students who received the PABS program only increased consumption of fruits and vegetables combined.
- Students who received the PABS program only increased fruit consumption.
- Students who received the PABS program plus the social marketing reported even greater improvements in consumption of fruits and vegetables combined, consumption of fruit and consumption of vegetables.



Evidence-based: Parent Surveys

The PABS program was recently evaluated during school year 2022-2023 to determine its effectiveness. Parents of 2nd and 3rd grade students participating in the program were surveyed to determine changes in their child's eating and physical activity behaviors. Parents completed surveys before and after their child participated in PABS. Some of the key statistically significant findings are noted below.

Nutrition

- 45% of children ate more fruits and vegetables each day.
- 32% of children increased their willingness to try new fruits and vegetables.
- 40% of children increased the variety of fruit they ate and 43% of children increased their variety of vegetables.
- Approximately 40% of children increased the number of days that they ate fruits or vegetables at snack time or for dinner or dessert.

Physical Activity

- 77% of children increased the number of days they were active for 60 minutes or more in the past week and in a typical week.
- 35% of parents increased the frequency they took their child to places to be active.
- Over 40% of parents increased their confidence for making sure their child was active, even when they were tired, busy or the weather was bad.

Evidence-based: Student Surveys

The PABS program was evaluated again in 2024-2025. Over 6,000 students in 2nd and 3rd grade completed a paper survey in the fall and spring, before the start and after the end of the program. This evaluation was a pilot for future youth evaluation in PABS.

The survey consisted of 12 questions asking students about:

- Frequency of eating fruits and vegetables
- Preference for fruits and vegetables and willingness to try new ones
- Asking family for fruits and vegetables
- Attitude and behavior related to physical activity

Students improved in several outcomes related to produce consumption and physical activity. Outcomes varied by school district, but statistical significance was reported overall for the following measures:

- Increased fruit consumption
- Increased preference for fruit
- Increased frequency of physical activity
- Increased reporting that physical activity is fun
- Increased reporting that physical activity is good for them

Check-In Question

**Why is PABS considered
an evidence-based
program?**

Answer

Rigorous research has reported positive statistically significant findings for the Pick a Better Snack Program.

Program Components

The Pick a Better Snack program consists of three essential and two optional components. Follow the instructions below to maintain program fidelity and achieve optimal outcomes.

Essential:

- Nutrition Lesson
 - Teach 7-9 monthly lessons, 30 minutes each, with a food tasting and physical activity. Lessons should not take place during PE class, recess or lunch.
- Family Newsletters
 - Send home (print or electronically) the family newsletter with children after each lesson. Acknowledge or reward students who complete a bingo.
- Stickers
 - Send home the fruit or vegetable sticker for the lesson to prompt discussion with parents or caregivers.

Optional:

- Coloring Pages
 - Send home coloring pages or use them with the lesson.
- Fact Sheets
 - Post fact sheets in the classroom or refer to them in the lesson.

All program materials are available at:
<https://hhs.iowa.gov/pick-a-better-snack/materials>

About the PABS Lessons

PABS lessons are:

- Evidence-based
 - The lessons were part of multiple program evaluations where statistically significant positive outcomes resulted.
- Student-centered
 - They build upon students' lived experiences and prior knowledge.
 - Lessons create a culture of total participation.
 - Lessons include opportunities for learner voice and choice.
- Based on an effective education model
 - The 5E Model of Instruction (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) was adapted.
 - Lessons are broken into 3 sections: Engage, Explore, Reflect (Evaluate).
- Supportive of Iowa's Academic Standards for [health education](#) and [science](#).



PABS Lesson Series

There are three sets of Pick a Better Snack lessons: Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3. Each set has 9 monthly lessons, and each month has a lesson for kindergarten through 1st grade (K-1) and 2nd through 3rd grade (2-3).

The Year 1 and Year 2 lessons alternate between a fruit or vegetable each month. The Year 3 lessons, however, were created to allow the fruits and vegetables to be sourced locally for all 9 months. As a result, there are more vegetables featured. Nutrition educators may start with any of the three sets of lessons and move through them as desired.

The Year 1 and Year 2 lessons have a featured fruit or vegetable and an alternate produce item(s). The nutrition educator may choose to taste the alternate item if it is difficult to source the featured fruit or vegetable or if the alternate item is better suited for the audience. In this case, follow the lesson as much as possible, adapting it to the alternate item. The Fact Sheets may be helpful in providing more information about the alternate fruit and vegetable.

The Year 3 lessons feature a category of fruits and vegetables, like local spring crops or local fall fruit. These lessons generally offer two or three different fruits or vegetables that can be used for the tasting. The nutrition educator may pick one of the options to taste within the featured category.

The next page provides an overview of the featured fruits and vegetables.

PABS Lessons Schedule

Month	Featured Food		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
September	Cantaloupe	Zucchini	Tomato, Cucumber, Eggplant
October	Jicama	Pear	Apple, Pear, Melon
November	Cranberry	Sweet Potato	Cabbage, Kohlrabi, Brussels Sprouts
December	Broccoli/Cauliflower	Kiwi	Carrot, Potato, Beet
January	Mango	Chickpeas	Winter Squash
February	Bell Peppers	Pineapple	Preserved Produce
March	Oranges/Clementines	Sugar Snap Peas	Corn, Dried Beans
April	Asparagus	Peach	Microgreens, Leafy Greens
May	Strawberry	Spinach	Radish, Turnip

A Closer Look at PABS Lessons

Refer to a September or October lesson from one of the sets of lessons. Notice the different sections. Use the lesson as we talk about the different sections on the next several slides.

The first page includes the goals for all the lessons. See the next page for a list of the goals.

Pick a Better Snack Lesson

Pears

Month: October
Time Required: 30 minutes
Alternative Tastings: Apple

GRADE
K-1

Lesson Goals

- ☐ Students will increase their knowledge of fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ Students will learn to try new fruits and vegetables and increase their preference for them.
- ☐ Students will learn that their peers like to eat fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ Students will learn how to ask their parents/caregivers for the fruits and vegetables tasted in class.

Lesson Objectives

- ☐ Students will be able to identify pears as fruit.
- ☐ Students will be able to explain the function of our five senses.

Materials

- ☐ Assortment of materials for sensory exploratory activity (ex: stuffed animal, whistle, book, herbs, pear/apple)
- ☐ Opaque box or paper bag for mystery, sensory exploration
- ☐ Plastic knives (optional)
- ☐ Paper plates or napkins
- ☐ Fresh pears or apples – This is a good month to source local! Consider slicing in class with a pear/apple slicer.

Preparation

- ☐ Gather an assortment of materials for the sensory, exploratory activity.
- ☐ Optional: Use a "5 Senses" body part poster for a print or digital visual aid in discussing senses. See a resource for free poster downloads in the References and Resources section on the last page.

Recommended Books

"Too Many Pears" by Jackie French
"Are We Pears Yet" by Miranda Paul
"Apple Picking Time" by Michele Benoit Slawson
"Farming" by Gail Gibbons
"Food From Farms (World of Farming)" by Nancy Dickman
"From Seed to Plant" by Gail Gibbons

Standards Connection

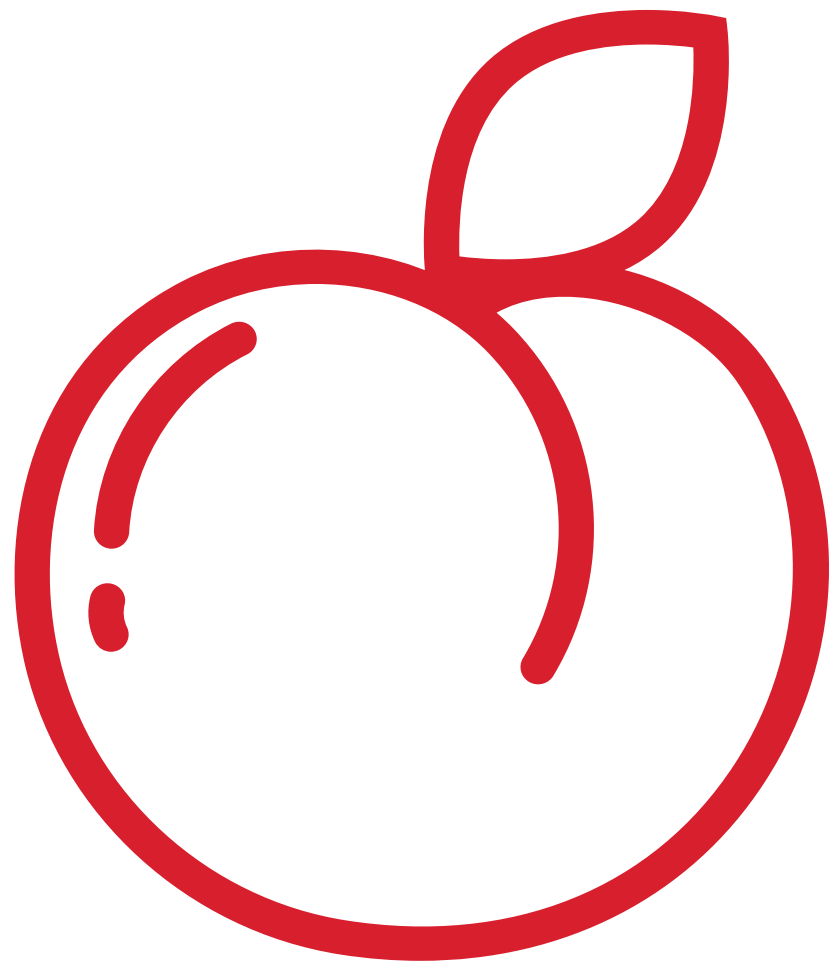
This lesson supports the following Iowa Core standards.

Health Education
[Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8](#)

Science
Kindergarten - [K-LS1-1](#). Patterns
First grade - [1-LS1-1](#). LS1.A: Structure and function

Lesson Checklist

- ☐ Physical Activity
- ☐ Tasting
- ☐ Voting
- ☐ "Asking" Discussion
- ☐ Newsletters, Stickers
- ☐ Lesson Objectives
- ☐ Science Connection: Making Observations



Lesson Goals

While each lesson focuses on a different fruit or vegetable, all lessons have the same overarching goals for students:


- Increase their knowledge about fruits and vegetables.
- Taste a fruit or vegetable, including ones that are new to them.
- Increase their preference for fruits or vegetables; students like what they taste.
- Learn that their peers like to eat fruits and vegetables.
- Learn how to ask their parent or caregiver for the fruit or vegetable tasted in class.

Lesson: Page 1

Look at the lesson. Notice that the first page explains the focus of the lesson, everything you need for the lesson and what you need to do to prepare.

Is the lesson for kindergarten/1st grade or 2nd grade/3rd grade? The answer is in the top right corner.

Recommended books are listed on this page and may be incorporated into the lesson as you like or may be left out entirely. Reading to the students supports literacy, while introducing the topic of the lesson.



Pick a Better Snack Lesson

Pears

Month: October
Time Required: 30 minutes
Alternative Tastings: Apple

GRADE K-1

Lesson Goals

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Standards Connection


This lesson supports the following Iowa Core standards.

Health Education
[Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8](#)

Science
Kindergarten - [K-LS1-1](#). Patterns
First grade - [1-LS1-1](#). LS1.A: Structure and function

Lesson Checklist

- ☐ Physical Activity
- ☐ Tasting
- ☐ Voting
- ☐ "Asking" Discussion
- ☐ Newsletters, Stickers
- ☐ Lesson Objectives
- ☐ Science Connection: Making Observations



When teaching PABS, follow the lesson as closely as possible. You may find that you need to make changes due to the needs and abilities of the class and the resources you have available.

Small changes can be made if needed, but make sure you hit all the key elements, which are listed in the lesson checklist on the first page.

Some of the things you may change include using a different physical activity or using the alternate tasting item.



Lesson Checklist

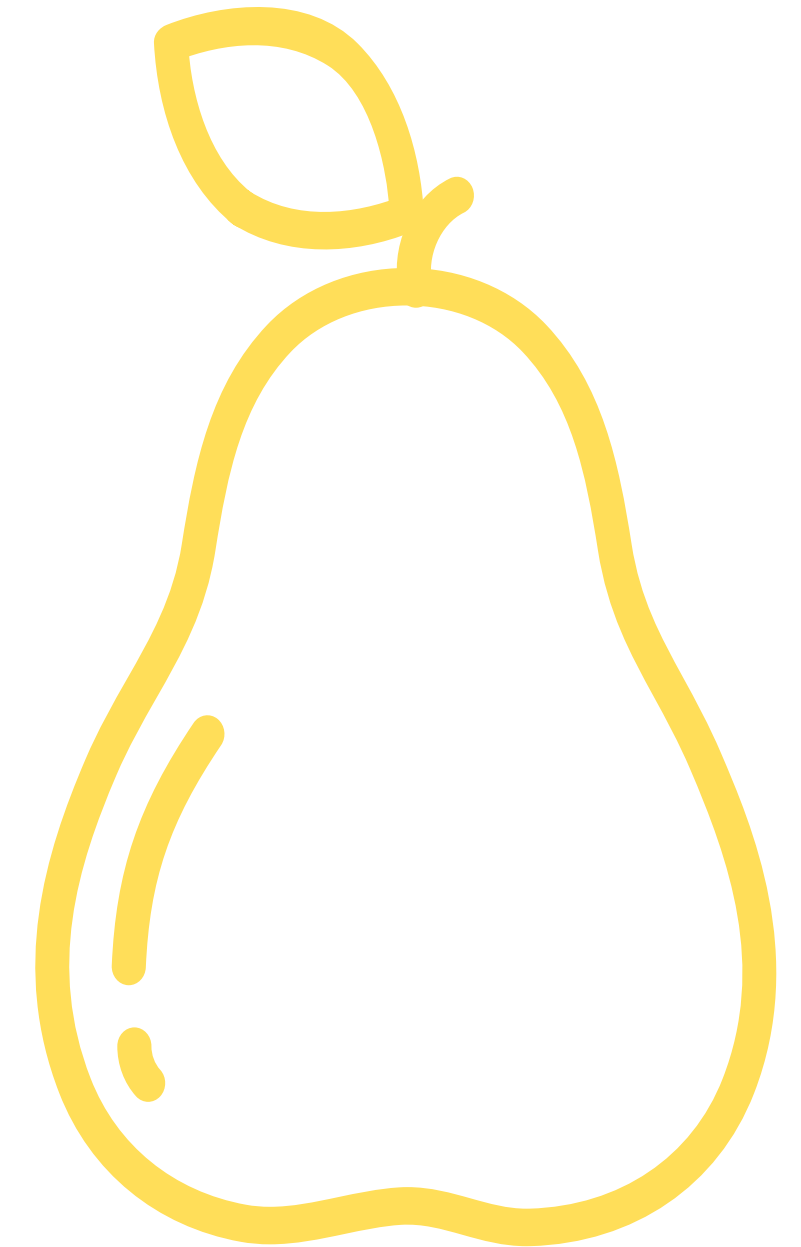
- ☐ Physical Activity
- ☐ Tasting
- ☐ Voting
- ☐ “Asking” Discussion
- ☐ Newsletters, Stickers
- ☐ Lesson Objectives
- ☐ Science Connection: Seeds (2nd) and plant life cycles (3rd)

Lesson Section: Engage

This section is the beginning of the lesson. It often includes a question we call the "Engage Question." This question is meant to get every student participating from the start. There are no right or wrong answers, and students respond in a variety of ways, like to a partner.

The "Engage Question" also serves as an opportunity to learn about the students and build relationships. As you get to know students, they may be more willing to try new foods, and classroom management may become easier.

Sometimes an activity is used at the beginning of the lesson instead of a question. This is another way to get all the students participating. The "Engage Question," or activity, is a segue to the lesson topic.

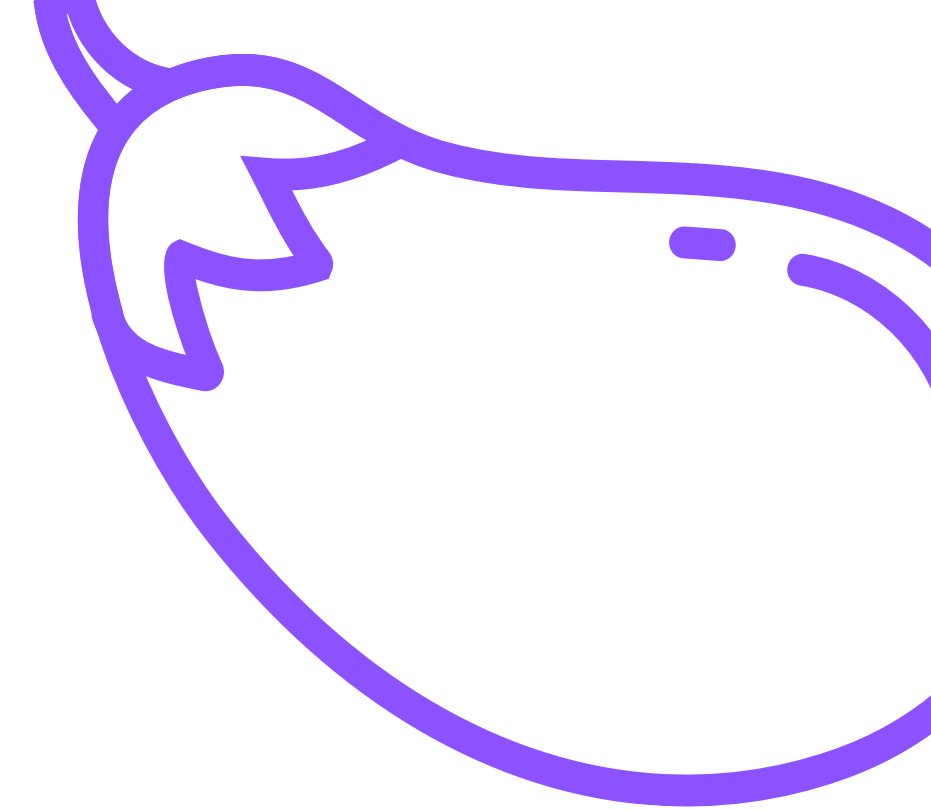


Lesson Section: Explore

The Explore section is the middle of the lesson. This is where the main lesson content lives. It's a time to provide the more "technical" information and meet the lesson objectives. Pay extra attention to the script in this section as this is where strong connections are made to the science standards.

Aim to not just present to the class but to provide a hands-on or interactive learning experience. This is a great time to use props, videos, pictures, real produce, etc. Visuals like these, as well as hands-on experiences, help ingrain the information in the students' minds and make the lesson more interesting! The Explore section is capped off with a tasting of the fruit or vegetable.

Lesson Section: Reflect



The last part of the lesson is the Reflect section. Here, students have a chance to process what they learned. You don't want to rush through this section or skip it. It's an important part of the learning process!

The Reflect section includes students voting with their thumbs on how they liked the fruit or vegetable. There are also questions for you to ask the class that will help students solidify what they learned. Many of the questions connect the lesson to the science standards. Write them down and take them with you if needed.

The "Asking Discussion" is included here and refers to talking to the students about how they can talk to their grown-ups (i.e., parent or caregiver) about what they tasted in class and ask for it politely at home. A student's grown-up decides what food is in the home and is more likely to purchase the food the child is requesting if they know their child likes and will eat it.

Lesson: Additional Materials

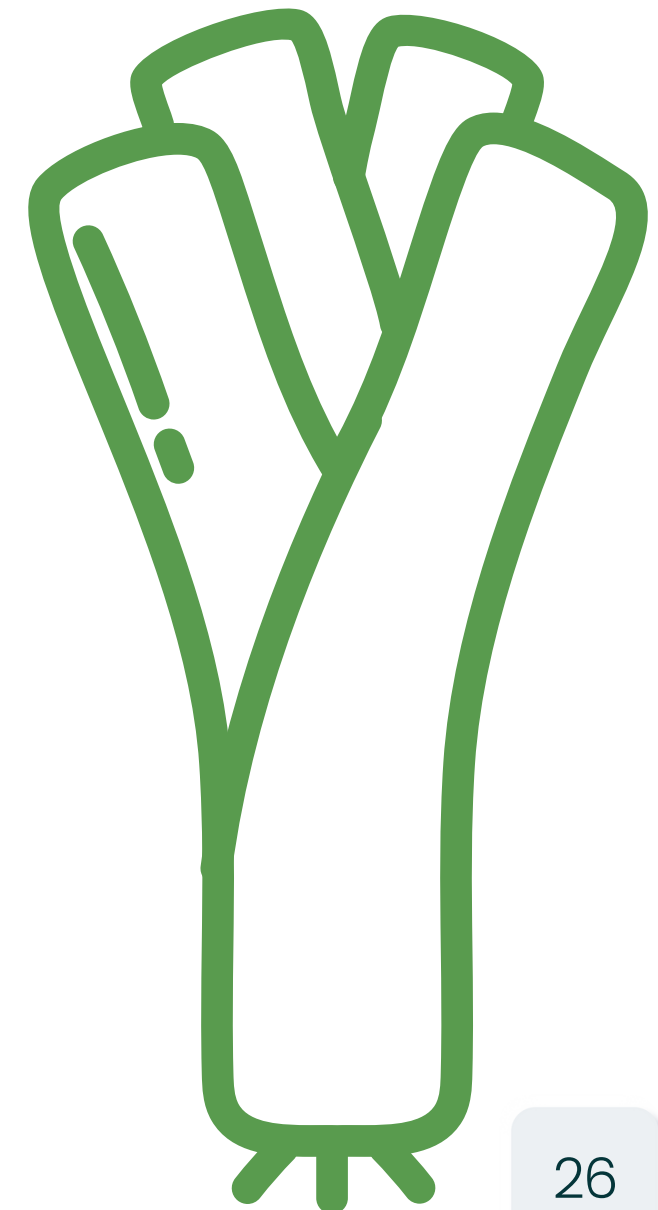
The final page of the lesson provides resources to give you more knowledge on the topic. Read through this page and check out the resource links before planning your lesson.

Physical Activity

Please note, a physical activity is required in each lesson and is built into the lesson. If needed, choose a different physical activity from the [classroom physical activity booklets on the website](#). The activity should last for about 3 minutes. Adapt activities for those with limited mobility.

“What You Need to Know” and “Facts About” Sections

These facts can be incorporated into your teaching as you see fit. Students can learn the part of the plant, where it grows and how to tell when the produce is ripe and ready to eat.



Lesson: Additional Materials

Health Connection

A fun and memorable way to teach kids about why fruits and vegetables are healthy is with actions.

- For vitamin C, cross your forearms in front of you to make a defense shield.
- For vitamin A, make a circle with your fingers over your eyes to make super goggles.
- For fiber, rub your stomach.
- For protein, hold up your arms like you're flexing your muscles.

References and Resources

Want background information on the topic? Check out the links at the bottom of the page. On most lessons, you will find the [USDA's Seasonal Produce Guide](#) and resources from ISU Extension's [Spend Smart. Eat Smart.](#)

Check-In Question

Which of the following is NOT a requirement with each lesson?

- a. Connecting to the science standard**
- b. Providing a tasting of a fruit or vegetable**
- c. Reading a book**
- d. Conducting a physical activity**

Answer

c. Reading a book

Reading a children's book that connects to the topic is encouraged but not required.

TIP: Reading a book doesn't always fit in the time allotted for lesson but having one on hand that applies to lesson to fill time is a good strategy.

Tasting Activity

Undoubtedly the students' favorite part of the lesson is the food tasting! In each lesson, you will find suggestions for ways to taste the fruit or vegetable. You may pick the option that works best for you, your students and your budget. Consider supporting a local farmer and sourcing local when possible.



Tasting

We want the students to have a positive, tasty experience with food. Many times, a sample of the fresh (raw) fruit or vegetable is best. If the fresh version isn't in season, you may want to use the canned, frozen or dried version for a better-quality tasting.

If you would like your students to taste the fruit or vegetable mixed with other ingredients, like in a smoothie, it's a good idea to provide a piece of the fruit or vegetable plain first. This will allow students to learn what the fruit or vegetable tastes like on its own and shows that little preparation is needed to enjoy the fruit or vegetable. For example, if you are serving hummus, give each student a chickpea to taste before trying the hummus. If you are making a mango smoothie, offer a small piece of mango to students before the smoothie. If you are cooking vegetables with oil and seasonings, it is not necessary to offer the vegetable plain first.

For any tasting, avoid or limit salt and added sugars. Choose canned vegetables with low-sodium or no-salt-added, and canned fruit packed in 100% juice. If you use a dip, choose healthier options, like Greek yogurt-based, hummus, low-fat, salsas, etc.

For some vegetables, it may be better to cook them during class or beforehand. When cooking, use unsaturated fats, like olive, canola or vegetable oils (but not coconut oil, which is mostly saturated fat), rather than saturated fats, like butter. Use salt sparingly.

Taste Testing

- It's recommended to serve a sample size (ex: 1-3 pieces or 1/4 cup), not a full serving.
- Students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before eating.
- Consider using student helpers and the classroom teacher to help distribute food and supplies (those serving food should wear gloves).
- Lead students through a series of questions, asking them to use their senses to explore the fruit or vegetable before they eat it. How does it Look? Smell? Sound? Feel?
- Don't force students to taste the food. Be encouraging and positive.
- Taste the food yourself if possible. Offer the food tasting to the teacher or other adults in the room. It's good for students to see those who care about them trying new foods and eating fruits and vegetables.



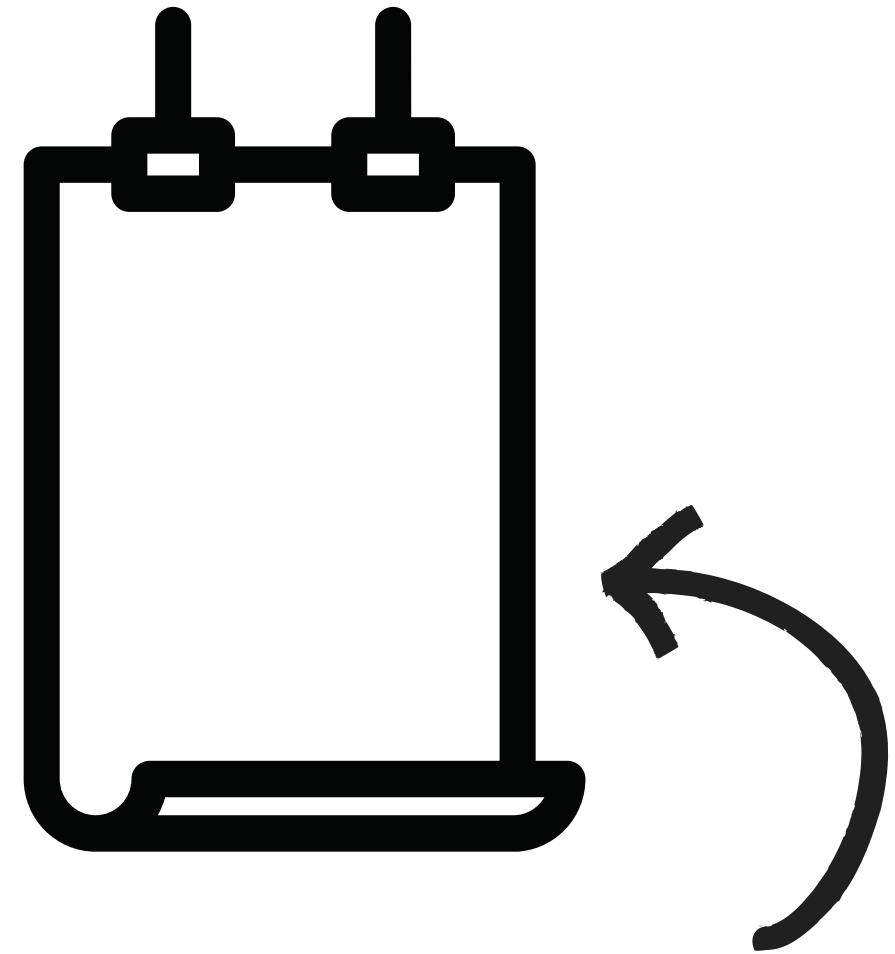
Taste Testing

Develop a tasting routine for each lesson. Teach students to:

- Wait until everyone is served before trying the food.
- Be a Brave Taster; be willing to try new foods. Be willing to try it another time if you don't like it today.
- Be polite. Say "yes" or "no thank you."
- Don't say "Yuck" or make faces. Other students may like it, and you don't want to hurt their feelings or keep them from trying it. "Don't yuck my yum" is popular advice from nutrition educators in Pick a Better Snack.
- Politely remove the food with a napkin if needed; It's okay not to like it.

If a student refuses to taste the food, perhaps ask them to use one of their other senses, like smell or touch, to become familiar with the food.

Share with your teachers your expectations for students, explaining that students won't be forced to taste the food. Teachers can encourage kids, too, but should not force them to eat.



Click for a Taste Testing sign.

Check-In Question

Is it okay to *require* a student to taste the food?

Answer

No, a student should not be required to taste the food. Forcing students to eat can create negative feelings about food and eating.

Putting It All Together

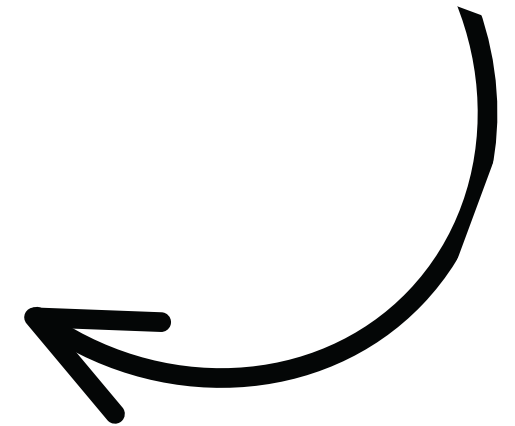
You're doing a great job completing the training! Keep going!

Now that we've talked about each part of the PABS lesson, take 20 minutes to watch this video of an actual lesson.

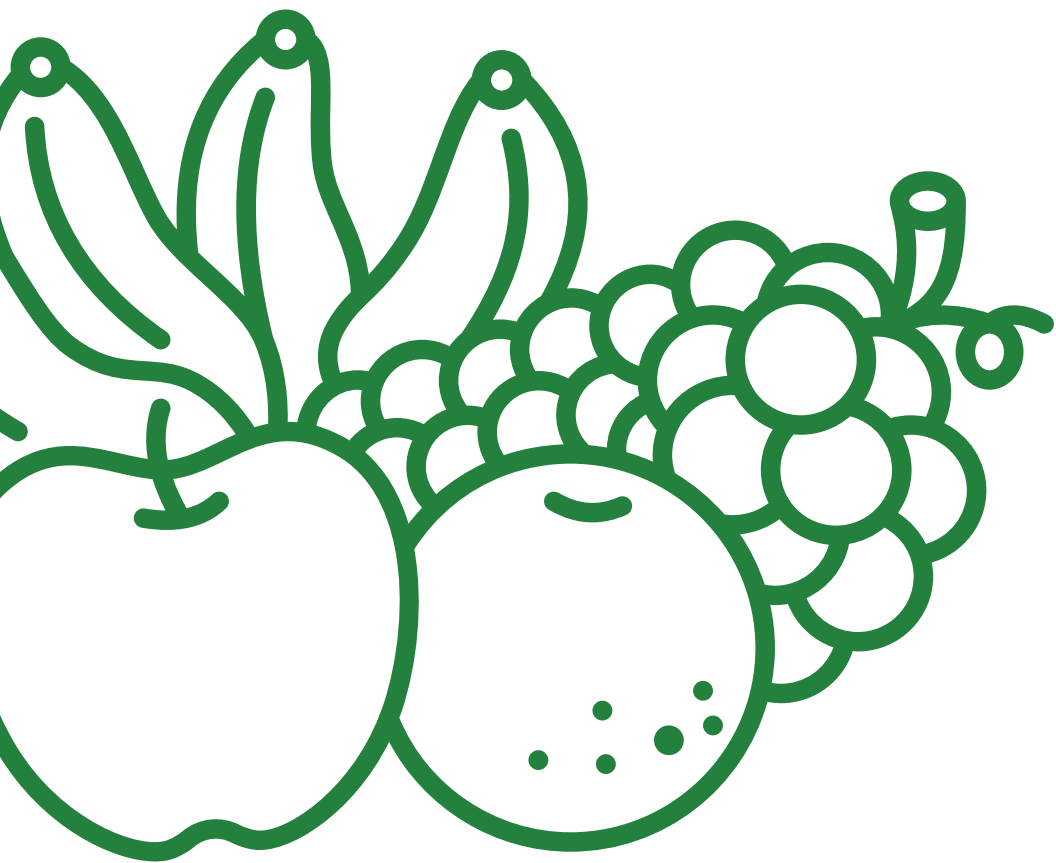
(Note, the lesson is shorter in this video but should last about 30 minutes.)



**Click the image
to watch a
PABS lesson.**



Food Safety



Safe food handling practices must be used as you prepare, serve and store the food tasting. [Read through this document about classroom food tasting.](#)

Reminders:

- Before serving the food to be eaten, wash hands (for at least 20 seconds) or use hand sanitizer (60% or more alcohol) and then put on gloves. Discard and replace gloves if contaminated. This applies to helpers, too.
- Keep cut-up produce and other perishable foods in a refrigerator at or below 40 degrees F. Use ice packs in a cooler or an insulated bag with a refrigerator thermometer to ensure proper temperature when transporting food to classrooms. Don't keep perishable foods at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Wash cutting boards, utensils and surfaces before and after food prep.
- Students must wash hands or use hand sanitizer (60% or more alcohol) before eating.

Food Allergies

Food safety also includes keeping those with food allergies safe. The CDC estimates that 8% of children have a food allergy; this is about 1 in 13 children or 2 students per classroom.¹

The most common food allergies are from these 9 foods: milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, wheat, soy, sesame, peanuts and tree nuts.¹

Fortunately, these foods are not the focus of our lessons. Allergies can occur with fruits and vegetables, however. Symptoms from any allergy vary among individuals and can be severe and life threatening.

It's important that you communicate with the school nurse and classroom teacher (foodservice staff are another good resource) about the foods you're serving. Check before the start of the year for any allergies to inform your planning and at the start of each month to get updated information. If a child has an allergy to a food, follow your school building's policies and procedures for bringing food into the classroom. It may be best to choose an alternate food for the entire class.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/index.htm>

Check-In Question

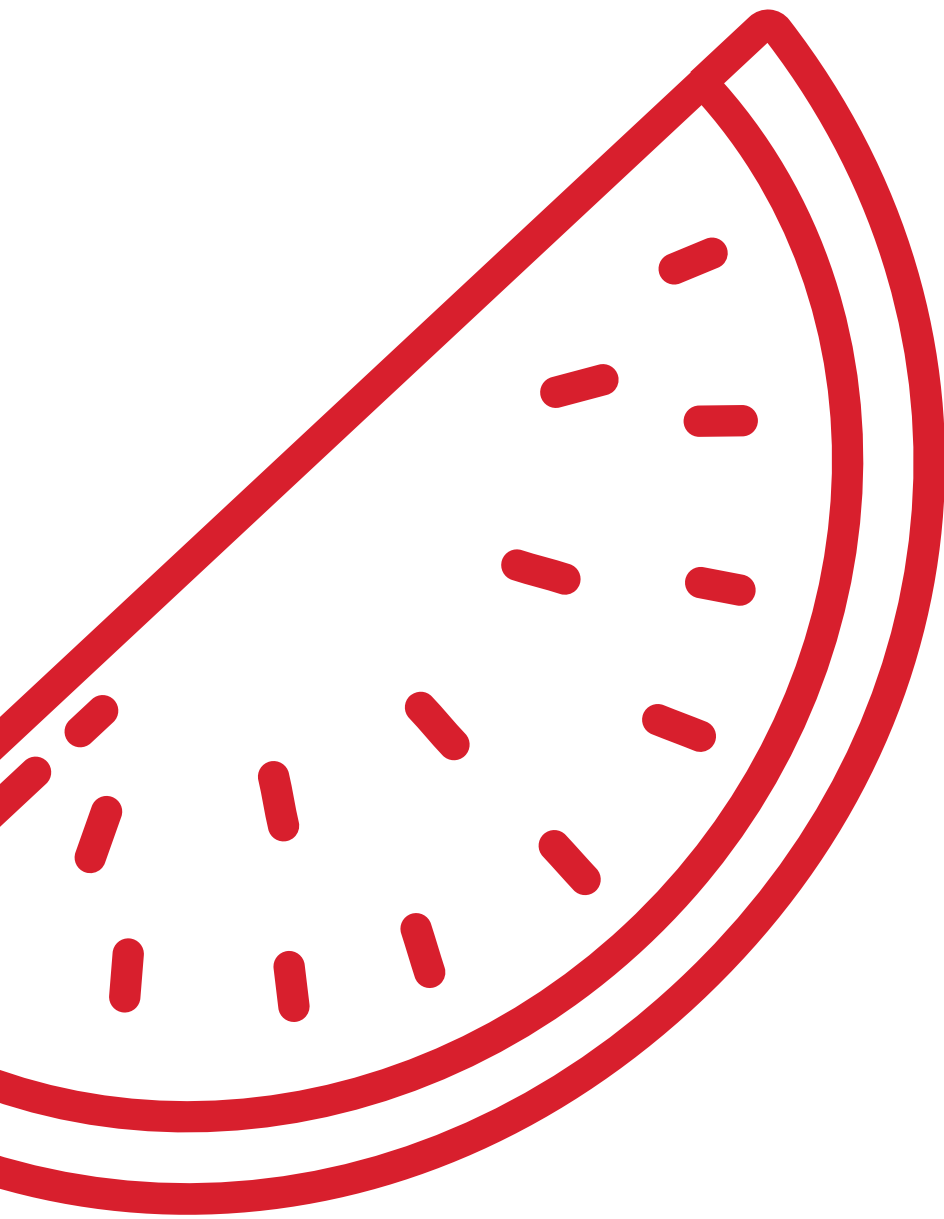
True or False:

**Cut-up fruits or vegetables
need to be refrigerated if not
consumed right away.**

Answer

True. Cut-up fruits or vegetables that are not consumed within 2 hours need to be refrigerated, or stored in a cooler with ice packs, at or below 40 degrees F.

Classroom Management



Common concerns for nutrition educators are student behavior and effective classroom management. Rest assured, you're not the only one who struggles in this area. It's a problem for teachers, too.

A few key points on this topic are:

- Communicate. Communicate. Communicate. Talk to the teacher beforehand to learn about the class. Ask for techniques and strategies they use to keep students' attention and the classroom under control. Talk to the teacher after lessons when you have concerns about how students behaved. You may have to follow up about this at another time.
- Let teachers know that you would like them to stay in the classroom during the lesson. Most will do this naturally. They should be the one responsible for correcting behavior issues.
- Keep kids engaged to keep bad behaviors at bay. This isn't fool proof, but a good strategy.

Classroom Management Strategies

Tips shared from experienced PABS educators:

1. Upon arrival, read the class and be prepared to rearrange the lesson as needed (ex: if class is antsy, do the physical activity first. If the class just came from recess or PE, start with a book or instruction.)
2. Use students as helpers to pass out the tasting or other items.
3. Allow for a few minutes for students to say what they're eager to tell you. Similarly, embrace a distraction when appropriate (ex: if it suddenly starts snowing, and students can't help to look out the window, take time to talk about the snow.)
4. Be prepared to change how you teach. For example, rather than reading facts, make it interactive and have students respond with a movement or action if they think the statement is true or false.



What else can you do to engage students?



- Move to a different part of the room. Stand near students that may be losing interest.



- Switch up what you're doing frequently. Don't talk continuously for more than 5 minutes. Use different props (ex: whole fruit or vegetable), visuals (ex: videos, photos) and technology (ex: Google Earth) to mix it up. Use hands-on activities.



- Give clear directions about what you want students to do.



- Have back-up activities ready if you finish early, like a book to read.

What else can you do to engage students?



- Vary the volume of your voice. A quiet voice can really get students' attention.



- Learn the attention-getters the classroom teacher uses. Have students repeat after you to get their attention.



- Ask the teacher about methods for calling on students to answer questions (ex: Pick-a-stick = names on popsicle sticks). This helps ensure everyone gets a turn.



- Put the fruit or vegetable in a paper bag and give clues for students to guess what it is.

Scheduling Lessons



At the beginning of the school year, email teachers to introduce yourself, tell them a little about the program if they are new and how you will schedule lessons. Aim to schedule 7-9 lessons, once a month, during the school year. Avoid scheduling lessons during P.E., recess or lunch.

You may choose the method that works best for you and the teachers to schedule lessons. Many nutrition educators email teachers a link to a sign-up spreadsheet. You will want to set aside a certain day(s) for each school so that you're efficient with your time. Also plan for a small break after every 2-3 or so classes. It tends to work best to schedule all the lessons at the start of the year.

Commonly, educators follow up with teachers who forget to sign up. You may have to schedule for them based on previous times that work and have them tell you if it needs to be rescheduled.

Monthly Reminders to Teachers

Once you've made your initial contact with teachers, send them a reminder at the beginning of each month. Keep it short and friendly.

A sample email is shown at the right. This is just one way you could do it.

Greetings,

I wanted to send out a reminder that I will be at Bryant on January 11 for the PABS lesson and in your classrooms at the following times:

12:30pm - Alfredson

1:00pm - Wilson

2:30pm - Howe

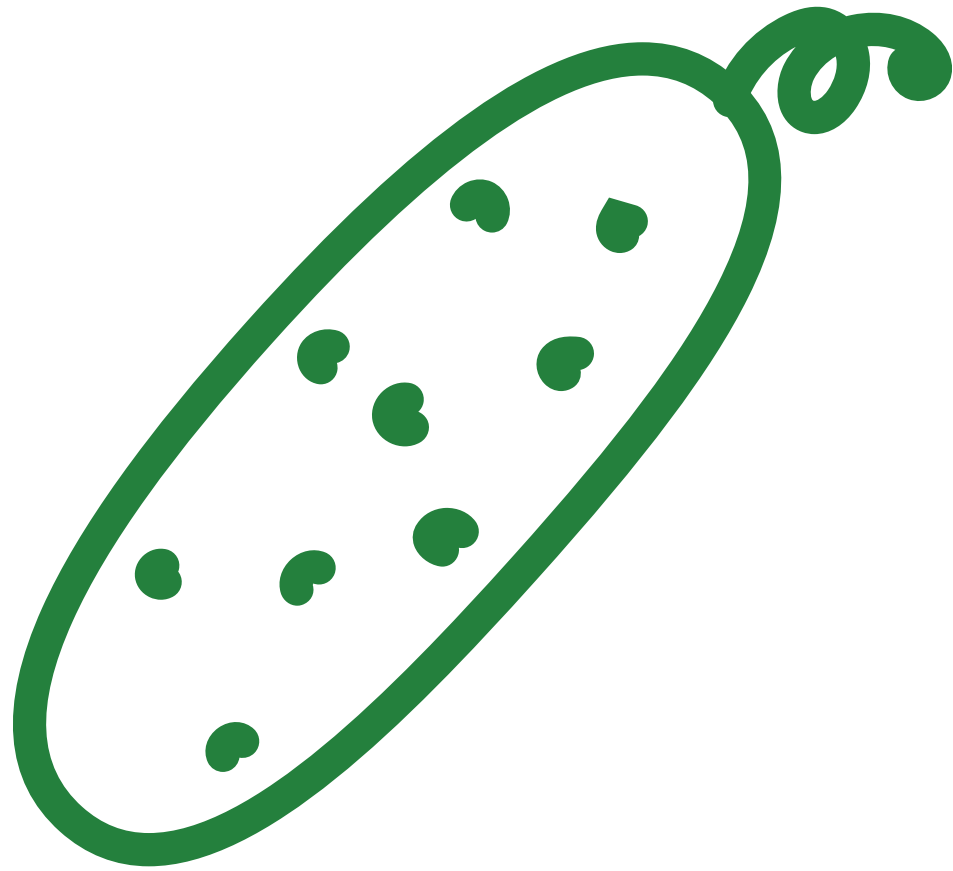
I have a picture I will be bringing in so if I could use the doc-share cam to present to your class, I would greatly appreciate it. I will also be playing a short 2-minute video on YouTube as well ([It's Okay to Be Different](#)). I tried to play it on my laptop when I was in the schools but due to the internet connection, I had a hard time showing it on my end. I may need to borrow your laptop to show this video. I will be serving pumpkin pudding.

Here are the Standards Connections:

- Health Education Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8
- Science
 - Kindergarten - [K-LS1-1](#). Patterns
 - First grade - [1-LS3-1](#). LS3.B: Variation of Traits

I look forward to seeing you all this month!

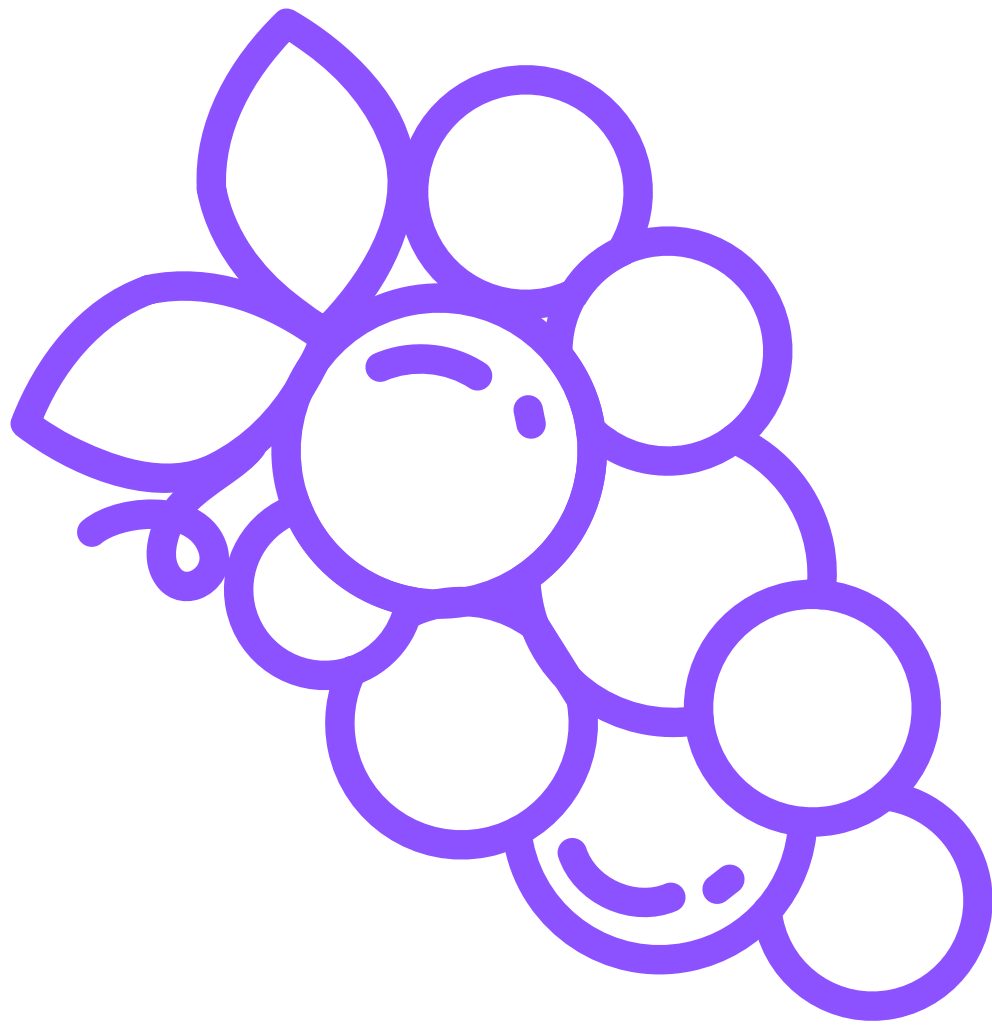
Peer Support



One of the great things about this program is the network of nutrition educators across the state. Many talented individuals teach PABS lessons each year and are willing to share their ideas and experiences. Here's how you can connect:

- **Monthly Community of Practice Virtual Meetings:** HHS staff host an online meeting for PABS educators to discuss tips and tricks for the upcoming lesson.
- **Online Forum:** Join our closed Facebook group to learn what others are doing and share resources. Find us and send a request to join at "Iowa Nutrition Network Educators."

Reach Tracking



As the creator of the Pick a Better Snack Program, Iowa HHS would like to know who is using the program and how it is being used. Please complete this form after you implement a series of lessons. A series of lessons is a set of lessons, like the Year 1 lessons. Please complete the form even if you didn't teach all the recommended 7-9 lessons or if you mix and matched lessons (ex: You taught some lessons from Year 1 and some from Year 2 in one series.) Complete a new form for each series of lessons.

Please email Suzy Wilson at suzy.wilson@hhs.iowa.gov to request the program tracking form.

Program Evaluation

Iowa HHS recommends that you evaluate your Pick a Better Snack Program regularly and share your successes with key stakeholders. While not an exhaustive list, ideas for program evaluation are included below.

Process Data

- Number of students reached by grade or age
- Number of participating schools and classrooms, or locations where lessons were taught
- Number of lessons taught, and specific fruits and vegetables tasted
- Number of students who tasted the fruit or vegetable during the lesson
- Types and amounts of fruits and vegetables sourced locally

Qualitative Data

- Success stories (print or video) with photos about children trying, liking and eating fruits and vegetables as well as parents and caregivers who are now purchasing and serving the produce featured in the lessons
- Testimonials or quotes from children, parents or caregivers, or school or community partners

Outcome Data

- Changes in number of students who can identify the specific fruit/vegetable after participating in PABS
- Changes in the number of students who tasted the specific fruit/vegetable for the first time after participating in PABS
- Changes in number of students who like fruits/vegetables or specific fruits/vegetables after participating in PABS
- Changes in number of students who eat specific fruits and vegetables after participating in PABS

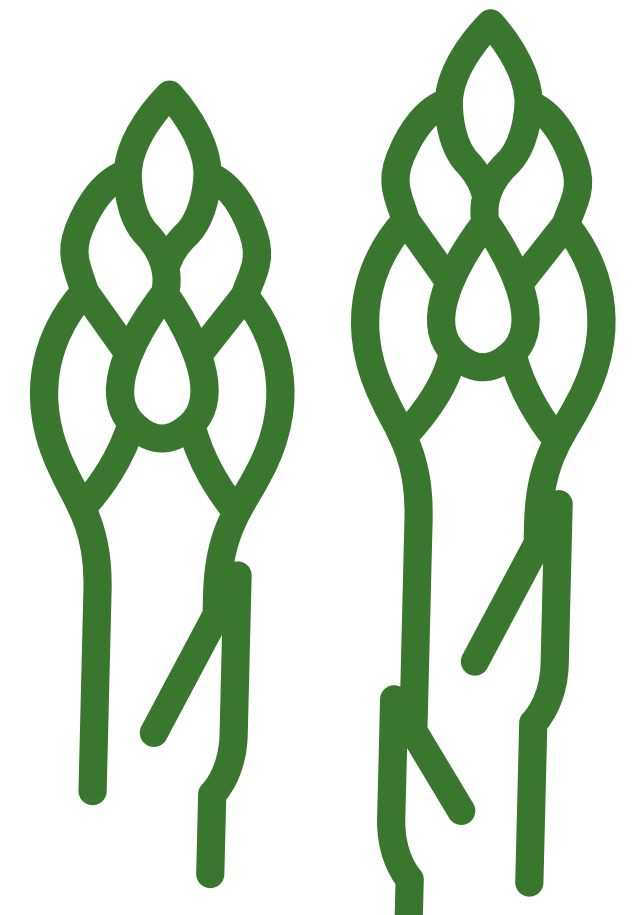
Program Evaluation

Other data you may want to collect in a program evaluation include:

Outcome Data

Changes after participating in PABS in:

- The amount (cups) of fruits/vegetables student eats in a typical day
- Number of days in the past week student ate more than one kind of fruit/vegetable
- Number of days in the past week student ate a fruit/vegetable for a snack/dinner
- How often student asks for fruits/vegetables
- Frequency student is willing to try a new fruit/vegetable
- Parent confidence to prepare fruit/vegetable in ways student will eat
- Number of days a week student was physically active for at least 60 minutes per day or how often students are physically active (ex: never/almost never, some days, most days, every day)
- Student attitude about being physically active



Related Resources

Below is a list of websites that may be of interest to you and help support your Pick a Better Snack Program.

- [USDA MyPlate](#)
- [ISU Extension's Healthy Food Access Community and Food Resources](#)
- [ISU Extension's Spend Smart. Eat Smart.](#) – recipes and food prep and purchasing resources
- [Recipes from SNAP-Ed Partners](#)
- [Choose Iowa](#) – educational resources for students and teachers
- [Choose Iowa Food of the Month Campaign](#)
- [Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Network](#) – includes where to find local food and how to participate in annual events, such as Great Apple Crunch and Iowa Kids Garden Day
- [USDA Farm to School Resources](#)



HHS PABS Team

If you have questions at any time about the Pick a Better Snack Program, please contact us.

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Pick a Better Snack

Eat Fruits and Veggies

Congratulations!

You have finished the Pick a Better Snack Nutrition Educator Training.