

## 10 Uses for a Blank Food Guide Pyramid

The blank MyPyramid can be used in a variety of ways to teach MyPyramid concepts.

1. Display a colored poster or overhead of MyPyramid for kids. Pass out the blank MyPyramid sheets and ask children to fill in names of the food groups and color and label the bars.
2. Bring in food magazines, catalogs and/or weekly food advertisements from the newspaper. Ask students to cut out pictures and paste on the blank MyPyramid in the appropriate food group bands.
3. Use the blank MyPyramid as a daily record. Carry it with you and record each food you eat or drink in the appropriate food group band. Break foods into their components (e.g. record a soup made of noodles, chicken, vegetables, in the grains, meat and beans, and vegetable groups). Check your record for balance. Is there a lot of blank space in certain groups? Are other groups overcrowded? Are there changes you could make to better balance MyPyramid?
4. Chart breakfast or lunch. Are they balanced? Would you make changes to the meals?
5. Use MyPyramid to plan your after-school or bedtime snack. Close your eyes and think about what foods are usually available in your refrigerator or cupboards. Next, think about which of these foods would make a good “MyPyramid snack.” Write down this snack on the blank MyPyramid. Be sure to include food that you like to eat.
6. Draw a vegetarian MyPyramid. What foods would you include in the meat and beans group? What about the milk group? Do vegetarians eat eggs? (Answer: Vegetarian diets are varied. Some called lacto-vegetarian included milk, yogurt, and cheese in their diets. Lacto-ovo vegetarians also eat eggs. Strict vegetarians known as vegans eat only plant based foods, and often include calcium fortified soymilk and tofu in their diets.)

7. Using the blank MyPyramid, dissect combination foods and write the components in the proper food group bands. Use one of the following examples or create your own:
  - a. Vegetarian Pizza: Whole wheat crust, tomato sauce with spices, part skim mozzarella cheese, red pepper rings, mushrooms, onions, and black olives.
  - b. Stir-Fry: Water chestnuts, bean sprouts, pea pods, broccoli florets, chicken pieces, peanuts, and rice.
  - c. Sub Sandwich: Whole-wheat roll, sliced turkey, tomato slices, shredded lettuce, pepper slices, cucumbers, pickle slices, oil and vinegar.
  
8. Discuss why activity is now a part of MyPyramid. Ask students to write their favorite activities on the steps of the blank MyPyramid sheet.
  
9. Research the nutrients that each food group provides. Write the key nutrients from each group on the blank MyPyramid. (Answers: Grains- carbohydrate, fiber, B vitamins, and iron; Vegetables- vitamins A and C, folate, iron, magnesium, and fiber; Fruits- vitamins A and C, potassium, folate, and fiber; Milk- calcium, vitamin D, riboflavin, potassium, and protein; Meat and Beans- protein, B vitamins, iron and zinc.)
  
10. Draw a “body-part” MyPyramid, which will represent how each food group helps the body. Example: Draw an exercising body in the grain space, healthy eyes in the vegetable group, glowing hair and skin in the fruit group, a healthy toothy smile for the milk group, and an arm posing a muscle in the meat and beans group.