We Are What We Eat: Why We Eat Healthy

**Introduction**

This lesson focuses on the importance of eating a healthy diet and how a healthy diet improves the quality of life. Students will utilize choosemyplate.gov to learn about what constituents a balanced diet. Students will then create their own diet plan for the next 1-2 weeks. This will serve as the basis for healthy eating. Instructors are encouraged to assign an extended individual project where each student creates a personal diet plan that they must follow for a minimum of 2-4 weeks. It is important to consider cultural, SES, and other personal characteristics when helping students design a plan that they will follow for the project.

**Group Size**

Any Size

**Learning Objectives**

Students will be able to accurately recognize and describe a healthy diet.

Students will be able to construct a healthy diet plan according to FDA guidelines provided by [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

**Guiding Questions**

How does what I eat affect me?

What *is* a healthy diet?

What are the food groups?

What foods are considered healthy?

What are the appropriate portion sizes?

What changes can I make in my diet to make my lifestyle healthier?

**Materials**

Computer (1 per student)

PowerPoint

Printer

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

**Procedures**

1. The instructor will begin the lesson by showing a clip from *You Are What You Eat* (a health-oriented show on BBC [clip should be reviewed before showing as some episodes may contain material unsuitable for classroom viewing]; the clip should include the segment when Gillian McKeith shows the person the entirety of their diet)
2. Class will discuss what makes a healthy diet.
3. The instructor will guide students through the choosemyplate.gov website.
4. Students will use and printout the “Daily Food Plan” on choosemyplate.gov to learn what makes a good diet for themselves.
5. Using the tools and resources provided by [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov), Students will then create a healthy diet plan (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) for a one week period (Monday through Sunday). In addition to the diet plan, each day should reference the number of calories, portion sizes of all foods, and the amounts of servings from each food group consumed during that day.

**Assessment**

Students will be assessed by their participation in the choosemyplate.gov activity (healthy diet printout) and by the creation and critical analysis of a healthy diet plan. Each day of the diet plan should consist of the appropriate number of calories, portion sizes, and amounts from each food group (grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein).

**Benchmark/Standards**

HE.912.B.3.1

Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations

HE.912.B.3.2

Examine barriers that can hinder healthy decision-making

HE.912.B.4.3

Implement strategies and monitor progress in achieving a personal health goal

HE.912.B.4.4

Formulate an effective long-term personal health plan