MyPlate Mania: Action-packed Nutrition & Literacy

An innovative activity framework that can be modified to any level and integrates health, literacy, nutrition and fitness concepts while holding students accountable for their movement with pedometers. Several resources will be shared, including the FREE MyPlate ‘10 Tips’ Series.

Activity #1: My Plate Mania (or Food Bucks) Activity:

EQUIPMENT: 10 cones, 3 exercise options per cone, 1 hoop and/or MyPlate mat per team, Collection of Food Group Cards (from MyPlate Healthy Helpings Game, or FREE Dairy Council food cards), and Gopher or Skillastics Nutrition Cards or food bucks ‘tickets’ of some sort.

SKILLS: Overall Fitness, Cooperative Team Challenge,

CONCEPTS: Fitness theme for the day AND Nutrition My Plate.

SETTING: Teams of 3-5 players

- Each team selects one cashier (put on a wrist band or jersey to designate for ease).
- Teams disperse and complete physical activities to earn Food “BUCKS” (tickets, etc.).
- A student goes to a cone, completes 10 reps of the exercise of their choice and then finds the Teacher (Banker) to ask for a Food Buck (I use NUTRITION CARDS, or you can make tickets). Then student goes to another cone and repeats process to earn more bucks.
- Teams collect their bucks to cash them in at the food bank.
- When a team cashier turns in 10 bucks (or 5 depending upon time) to the Teacher they are allowed to go shopping for a food item (food card in bucket). Cashier is still active in game.
- Cashier takes the food card back to their plate (teammates are still earning bucks during this).
- Continue until a certain amount of time, or until everyone has a full plate, or whatever goal. If students believe their plate is full they can continue to exercise and try out the cards they have not done yet. They are to always select a new cone and new activity each time.

Bankers: It gets a bit crazy and fun, so try having multiple bankers: one rep from each team on rotation. This way everyone gets a “rest” period. Or have each team take turns as a team.
There are many variations/rounds you can play. The format is: Simple. Fun. Effective. Gets Heart Rates Up. Lots of Movement/Steps/Activity Time. Also teaches honor system.

**Sequences:**
- Round 1: Get one piece of food for each food group. Debrief: Is it a balanced plate?
- Round 2: Collect as much food as you can. Debrief: Is it a balanced plate?
- Round 3: Create an actual meal. Debrief: Is it a balanced meal?

Others: can go by nutrition labels, etc. The power of the lesson is in debrief at end and what you ask of your students in how they analyze the food choices. Which could they eat more of? What is a new one they have not heard of? What kind of recipe could they create with the foods they got?

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**TIPS:** Have a specific exercise focus for each cones (strength, agility, muscular endurance, cardio) or have an overall theme to ALL the cones for a specific type of workout. Vary the repetitions and intensity teaching FITT principle.

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**NUTRITION – HEALTH LITERACY EXTENSION:**
Using the same set up as above and focusing now on the Nutrition Quiz CARDS, place a pile of the nutrition cards at each cone. Along with the Fit Deck exercise choice cards.

**Competitive variation:** Have each team wear different colored jerseys. You can repeat colors if you don’t have 6 colors. So now, students go to a cone and have a ‘friendly face-off’ with a member from another team. They say, “nutrition challenge” and the other person says, “Challenge accepted!” or whichever statement you prefer…They each take one Nutrition Quiz card (the Skillastics Nutrition cards) and cover up the answer (on the bottom right hand side) and quiz each other. They can read and show the other person the card (as some people are better visual than auditory learners. They each answer each other’s cards. The winner gets to choose the exercise and they both complete the # of reps of that exercise (could have dice at cone for reps or a specified amount of reps). The winner then gets to go to the food bank. The loser goes to another cone to challenge someone new.

**Cooperative variation:** Same format as above but students work together in pairs (from their teams) to go to cones and quiz each other on the cards. They keep the correctly answered cards to earn their food cards and put the incorrectly answered ones at the bottom of the pile. They complete an exercise at each cone, taking turns as to who gets to choose the exercise.

*Depending upon how many nutrition quiz cards you use, you could have students put the cards at the bottom of the pile no matter if they answer correctly or incorrectly. OR, if they answer correctly they bring the card to you to cash in for a piece of food.

*A simple way to integrate reading, friendly competition, and nutrition information!

**Nutrition Quiz Cards:** We even do this as a RELAY. Ideal with smaller teams of approx. four. Teams are across from each other (either baseline or sideline) and run to the middle to quiz each other on the cards. Same principles apply for correct/incorrect answers. You can lay the cards next to a fit spot with exercise choice so they know what to do and then you don’t have to get out cones/fitdeck cards for the relay version. Could add various locomotor movements or scooters as a way to move to the middle “challenge” area.

**Other activity/skill work adaptations:** Integrate any sports skill. Shoot a basket and then go to the middle to do a nutrition card. Have a team rotation within the skill building time. Especially helpful with larger classes so all kids are busy all the time!

**Using the same foundation of the MyPlate Mania Above, Add READING…with nutrition tips.**