First Foods
3rd Grade

Lesson 5 – Health: Food Groups, Healthy Food, Physical Activity

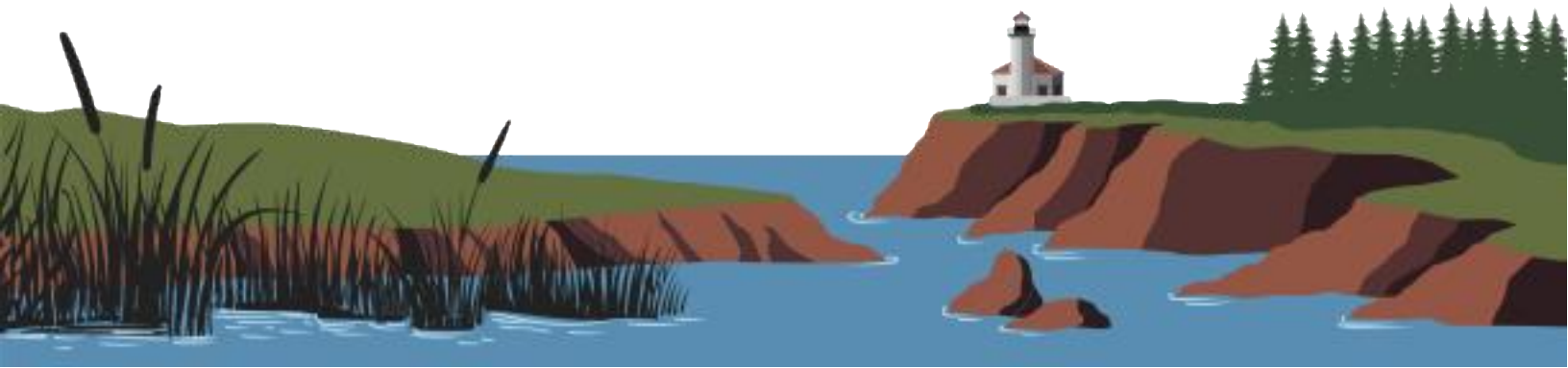
Activity 1: Understanding First Foods
Activity 2: First Foods Relay

Summary

First Foods are explored as part of Indigenous food systems that reflect relationships between people, place, and season. Through organizing foods, comparing ways of understanding meals, and experiencing gathering practices, this lesson highlights how food is gathered, prepared, and shared across time and place. These experiences emphasize connection, knowledge, and shared responsibility, positioning health as something practiced through everyday interactions with food, land, and community.

Key Discovery:
Health is shaped by how food is gathered, prepared, and shared, where physical activity, community, and knowledge support wellbeing and the continuation of Indigenous food systems.

Standards	• Primary: 3.FNP.2, 3.WHP.7,3.FNP.3 • Secondary: 5.DMS.1, 5.AMF.1, 5.SSM.1, 5.SSM.3
Materials	• First Food Illustrations • First Foods Fact Sheet • First Food Relay Cards • Paper plates • Cones/rope/tape
Vocabulary	• **Salmon:** Fish that live in rivers and oceans, caught with nets. • **Salmon Berries:** A type of berry we pick gently with our fingers, the first berries to ripen every year. • **Bull Kelp:** A green vegetable that is a type of seaweed gathered from the ocean. • **Camas:** An Indigenous plant and root vegetable traditionally harvested with a digging stick



Setup & Logistics:

- Prepare copies of the First Foods Illustrations and the First Foods Fact Sheet
- Review the My Plate Activity Poster
    - https://agclassroom.org/matrix/lesson/410/ (Focus on the visual structure of MyPlate (categories and portions) rather than details from the full lesson or website.)
- Set up the First Foods Relay Course either inside or outside.
- Print First Foods Relay Cards-provide multiple cards for each food so students can gather more than one of each type

Language Extension:

Language Audio to be added soon.

Class Flow:

Activity 1: Understanding First Foods

Step 1: Noticing First Foods

Engaging with First Foods through handling, observing, and shared experiences.

- Distribute the First Foods Illustrations sheet and invite students to carefully cut out each food, preparing a set they can move and organize.
- Encourage close observation while cutting, noticing details, and what feels familiar.
- In small groups, invite students to share observations and experiences (foods they have seen, eaten, or heard about; places they have noticed them; family or community connections).
- Once the illustrations are cut out, invite students to sort foods in ways that make sense to them and begin noticing patterns or connections among the foods.

Step 2: Connecting Foods to Place and Season

Using the First Foods Fact Sheet to deepen and refine understanding.

- Introduce the First Foods Fact Sheet as a resource for learning more about each food.
- Invite students to revisit their food groupings and use the Fact Sheet to check or revise their thinking.
- Support students in identifying:
    - Where foods are found (river, ocean, forest, inland)
    - When foods are available across the year.



- Encourage students to reorganize foods based on place, season, noticing patterns and differences across groups.

Step 3: Understanding Gathering and Care
Exploring how people interact with foods across place and season.

- Invite students to revisit selected foods and use the First Foods Fact Sheet to explore how each food is gathered and used.
- Encourage students to connect gathering practices to place and season (e.g., digging in the soil, collecting in the forest, fishing in the rivers)
- Support students in identifying the effort and knowledge needed to gather the correctly identified foods at the right time and the right place.
- Invite students to consider how people might work together to gather, prepare, and share these foods.
- Suggested prompts:
  - What would people need to do to gather these foods?
  - Would people gather these foods in the same way, or in different ways?
  - How might people work together to gather and prepare these foods?

Step 4: Representing Foods as a Meal
Combining foods based on place, season, and relationship.

- Invite students to select and arrange foods that could be gathered and eaten together.
- Encourage students to use the First Foods Fact Sheet to consider when foods are available and where they come from.
- Invite students to explain how they decided to group their foods.
- Suggested Prompts:
  - How did you decide which foods belong together?
- Introduce MyPlate as one way of organizing food into groups and portions.
- Invite students to look at both models (First Foods and MyPlate: https://agclassroom.org/matrix/lesson/410/)
- Suggested Prompts:
  - How does MyPlate organize food?
  - How is that different from how you organized your foods using the First Foods Fact Sheet?
- Guide comparison by noticing:
  - categories vs. relationships
  - portions vs. availability and season



Step 5: Comparing Ways of Organizing Food
Noticing different ways food can be grouped and understood.

- Display the MyPlate model (projected, printed, or whole-group view) rather than directing students to explore the website.
- Invite students to briefly observe how foods are organized in the MyPlate model.
- Invite students to look at both their First Foods meal and the MyPlate model.
- Suggested Prompt:
  - What do you notice about how these two ways organize food?
- Support students in noticing that MyPlate organizes foods into categories and portions, while their First Foods groupings are based on place, season, and relationships.
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Step 6: Reflecting on Food, Place, and Choice

- Guide students to recognize connections between food, place, culture, and community.
- Suggested Prompts:
  - What is something you noticed or thought more about as you learned where foods come from, when they are available, and how they are gathered?
  - What is something important to remember about food that might not show up in a model like MyPlate?
  - If you were helping someone decide what to eat, what would you want them to think about? Why?
  - What knowledge do people need to gather or prepare these foods?
  - Which First Foods might you want to try?

Activity 2: First Foods Relay

This should be done in sequence *after* the Understanding First Foods Activity. Students experience how First Foods are gathered through movement and shared activity, connecting physical effort, coordination, and community to systems of food, place, and wellbeing.

Step 1: Introduce the Relay
Framing the activity as a shared experience of gathering and movement.

- Introduce the relay as a group activity where students will move through stations representing different ways First Foods are gathered.
- Emphasize that gathering is often done together and involves awareness of others, shared responsibility, and care for the process.



- Invite students to notice how movement, effort, and coordination are part of how food is gathered.
- Briefly review expectations for safe movement and working together in a shared space.

Step 2: Prepare the Relay
Setting up materials and space for a smooth, shared experience.

- Prepare relay stations that represent different gathering practices, using simple materials to mark movement paths or gathering areas as needed
- Place First Foods cards (salmon, camas, kelp, salmonberry) at each station, making them accessible for students to gather
- Organize students into small teams and provide each team with a designated collection space (such as a plate, tray, or marked area)
- Identify a starting point and movement path so students can take turns moving through the relay
- Introduce the cards students will gather, noting that each card represents a First Food and includes an image, Indigenous language words, and a common name.
- Invite students to notice the food shown on each card, which they will gather and return to their team
- Briefly introduce the gathering practices connected to the lands and waters of the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, such as digging for camas, collecting berries, fishing for salmon, and diving for kelp from the ocean

Step 3: Experiencing Gathering Practices
Students practice moving through relay stations, gathering First Foods by engaging in movements that reflect how these foods are gathered.

- Invite students to take turns moving through the relay, gathering one food card at a time
- At each station, students gather a card using movement that reflects how the food is gathered (digging, fishing, diving, collecting)
- Encourage students to notice how movement, timing, and coordination are part of gathering different foods.
- Invite students to return the gathered food to their team's collection space before the next student begins.



Step 4: Gathering Stations
Representing ways First Foods are gathered across the lands and waters.
Each station represents a way First Foods are gathered, reflecting relationships between people, place, season, and knowledge.

- **Camas (Digging)**
  Students gather camas cards from a designated area, representing harvesting in inland prairies and meadows. This practice reflects careful digging and knowledge of when the plant is ready to be gathered.
- **Kelp (Diving)**
  Students move along a path to gather kelp cards, representing harvesting in ocean environments. This movement reflects timing, conditions, and awareness needed to gather from coastal waters.
- **Salmon (Fishing)**
  Students follow a movement path to gather salmon cards, reflecting fishing in rivers and ocean waters. This practice connects to knowledge of salmon movement and seasonal return.
- **Salmonberry (Collecting)**
  Students gather salmonberry cards one at a time, representing harvesting in forested areas. This reflects careful collection and awareness of when berries are ready to be picked

Step 5: Relay Flow
Moving through gathering stations as a shared experience.

- Assign each team a starting station
- Invite students to take turns moving through the relay, gathering one food card at a time and returning it to their team's collection space
- After each round, teams rotate to the next station, continuing until all stations have been experienced
- Continue the relay until all foods have been gathered or each student has had multiple opportunities to participate
- Invite students to gather around their team's collection space to observe the foods they collected



Step 6: Share and Reflect:

- Invite students to gather around their team's collection space to observe the foods they collected
- Suggested Prompts:
  - What do you notice about the foods your team gathered, and how might they come together as a meal?
  - How might these foods be prepared or shared, and who might be involved?
  - How do these foods connect to nourishment and community?

Language Extension	• Each First Food Relay Card includes the word translated into the languages of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians: ***miluk*** (m), ***hanis*** (h), ***sha'yuushtl'a*** (s), and ***quiich*** (q).

"The contents of this curriculum were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

