

# Planning Meals with Appeal

## Summary

Meals should be planned for nutritional balance, appeal, and suitability to various individual and family circumstances.

## Materials

Any good food and nutrition textbook.

- *Managing Your Meals*

, Winnifred C. Jardine, Deseret Book Co., Salt Lake City, Utah. 1987.

## Background for Teachers

Proper meal planning principles must be utilized to ensure that the nutritional, social, and psychological needs of families and individuals are met.

When planning meals there are six things to consider so that food is appealing as well as nutritious. Imagine eating the following for dinner: mashed potatoes, cauliflower, white bread, halibut, vanilla ice cream. Illustrate with food models or real food. Would this be appealing? Why or why not? Answer: The foods are all the same color.

### ELEMENTS THAT MAKE FOOD APPEALING:

**COLOR:** Some of the most beautiful objects in nature are foods. (Show vignettes of fruits, vegetables, bottled foods, etc. or show paintings of fruits, bread, etc.) Many, many colors of food are available.

Color combinations can be appealing or make you lose your appetite. Colors that are nearly the same are dull and boring. When planning meals, we need to be like artists painting a picture and use the elements and principles of line and design.

Example of a dinner served to special guests:

fresh broccoli, raisin, peanut salad (green)

cran-raspberry drink (red)

chicken cordon blue (yellow)

rolls with blackberry jam (dark purple)

**TEXTURE:** What can be seen; it can be felt with the tongue. A variety of textures adds interest; i.e., smooth, rough, lumpy, soft, crisp.

Some foods that have similar textures:

soup, milk, pudding

chili, stew, some casseroles, baked beans

tacos, chips, crackers

**SIZE AND SHAPE:** Use various sizes and shapes. Meatballs, peas and olives are different colors but not different shapes.

**FLAVOR:** Variety is important! Each person has 9,000 tastebuds that can taste sweet, bitter, sour, and salt. Smell is also important to tell small differences. (Tell about taste test experiments where flavor cannot be distinguished without the sense of smell, i.e., food tastes blend with a cold.)

**TEMPERATURE:** Meals are more interesting if some hot and some cold foods are used. The temperature outside is a consideration.

**HEAVY/LIGHT:** Rich, very sweet or fatty foods need to balance with lighter foods. When planning a menu start with a main dish, add appetizers, vegetables, beverages, and a dessert that complements it.

**APPETIZERS:** Include fruit/vegetable juice, raw fruits/vegetables, soup, sea food, etc.

**MAIN DISH:** A main dish can be meat, seafood, poultry, a salad, an omelet, pancakes or a casserole.

**ACCOMPANIMENTS:** Vegetables, breads, rolls, sauces, relishes

SALAD: tossed vegetable or fruit, jellied

DESSERT: cakes, cookies, pies, puddings, fruit

#### SEVEN MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FAMILIES:

The circumstances, values, and ways families manage their resources from house to house are very different in terms of meal preparation. Have the students give an example of a time they ate at someone else's home and how the food, as well as the circumstances under which it was eaten, was very different from what they normally experience.

1. FAMILY SIZE:

This affects the amount of money needed, the preparation time, and the style of table service preferred.

2. AGE:

Babies, children, teenagers and parents need different foods and don't eat the same amount.

3. ACTIVITY LEVEL:

With more exercise, the body requires more energy.

4. FOOD PREFERENCES:

All families don't like the same kinds of foods because of culture and traditions.

5. TIME:

Recipes vary greatly in preparation time required. When there is little time, fix foods requiring little time.

6. SPECIAL DIETS:

Health considerations such as diabetes, high blood pressure, lactose intolerance, ulcer, stroke, and heart problems influence what people eat.

What are some examples of foods some people must limit and why.

7. FOOD BUDGET:

If money is limited, foods from basic ingredients prepared from scratch may be a better choice than fast-food or convenience foods. Some families don't realize this and the fact that they could help themselves out of a trying financial situation with their food budget.

#### SHOPPING TIPS

Fruits and vegetables in season are generally at their lowest price.

Plan menus around grocery ads.

Make a weekly menu plan.

Make a list and use it.

#### Instructional Procedures

#### LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

##### OPTION #1

Show students a plate of all white foods. Food models would be a good visual here.

Have the students tell whether or not they think the food is appealing and why or why not. Give an example of three foods that go well together which have a variety of color.

Review the basic concepts of color, texture, flavor, temperature, sizes and shapes as they relate to meal planning and food preparation.

##### OPTION #2

In groups of three, have the students select one of the menu descriptions listed below and create a poster depicting that menu. Use pictures of food and table services or drawings to illustrate the menu. All foods in the menu are round in shape.

All foods in the menu are soft in texture.

All foods in the menu are cold.

All foods in the menu are sweet.

All foods in the menu are white in color.

Have the students share their posters in class. Ask the following questions about each poster:

Do these posters look appetizing? Why or why not?

What other senses, besides sight, do we use in deciding whether a meal is appetizing?

How would you feel if any of these meals was served to you in a restaurant?

Is the presentation of food important? Why or why not?

#### OPTION #3

In unit groups have the students create a daily menu plan (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack) which they feel would be appealing. Consider color, texture, temperature, shape and flavor of the foods used.

Have the students share their menus with the class, giving reasons for their food choices.

#### OPTION #4

The students will practice utilizing the 2,000 calorie/day plan from MyPyramid and six meal planning considerations. Groups of students will arrange pictures of food on a plate. Then each group will rotate to each plate, using the round robin teaching. As each group evaluates the food choices, a group scribe will record the advantages and disadvantages. The scribe will divide his/her paper into two columns, one for advantages and one for disadvantages. Teacher will discuss the findings with the class.

#### OPTION #5

Using food pictures, models or boxes, have the students go through a mock cafeteria line from which they will choose a meal. Have them analyze their meal using the [PYRAMID BLANK](#).

Allow the students to take turns acting as cashiers, checking to see that the choices include foods that are nutritionally balanced and attractive.

#### OPTION #6

Given instructions on planning appealing meals and utilizing MyPyramid guidelines, have the students analyze the menus using the [ANALYSIS OF BASIC NUTRIENTS IN A MENU](#) worksheet.

Divide the class into 4 groups. Each group will analyze one of the following groups of menus. Within each group have each person take a different menu to analyze.

[MENUS FOR THRIFTY PLAN FOR ONE WEEK](#)

[MENUS FOR ONE WEEK OF LOW-COSTS MEALS](#)

[MENUS FOR ONE WEEK OF MODERATE-COST MEALS](#)

[MENUS FOR ONE WEEK OF LIBERAL-COST MEALS.](#)

Discuss results.

#### OPTION #7

Students will complete [MEAL PLANNING SITUATIONS](#) and correct and discuss in class. In order for all students to have a proper experience, require that each student's menu be different from that of the other members of their unit.

#### OPTION #8

Using the posters made at the beginning of this unit, have the students make a second poster which illustrates how the menu could be improved. Display the posters as before and after on the bulletin board. (These can be done on legal size construction paper and displayed as part of a large bulletin board).

#### OPTION #9

Students and the teacher will examine types of foods from various price categories.

The students will take a field trip to the grocery store. Each unit is allocated \$3.50 with which to purchase foods for a balanced meal. All go through the check out together.

In the lab, the students will prepare the balanced meal they planned and shopped for.

#### OPTION #10

In small groups have the students plan menus for three days for the following family situations. Allow

them to share their menus and do a class evaluation.

Family situations - pretend you have/are:

- a new baby in the household
- an emergency situation; flood, blizzard
- to feed a large group of people quickly
- 30 teenagers and advisors hiking and camping out for a week
- an illness in family/special diets
- an elderly person living alone
- a low-income budget

OPTION #11

Meals are more enjoyable for all concerned when good table manners are practiced.

Review proper table manners before the FINAL PROJECT takes place.

Have the students take the [FUN FOOD QUIZ](#).

OPTION #12

HOMEWORK: Have the students prepare a simple meal utilizing at least 4 of 6 considerations. They must write a paragraph on what was selected and why it was selected. Papers are to be turned in with a parent's signature.

OPTION #13

Have units plan meals for one day as an evaluation.

NOTE TO TEACHER: If this unit is taught close to a special holiday the following activity may be in keeping with the occasion.

Circular response method variation: Numbers from 1-10 are printed on ten slips of paper. Blank slips of paper are put with the numbered slips in an envelope. Each student pulls out a slip. The ten students with the numbered slips are to name a special food their family has that is associated with a holiday or a holiday tradition.

Each unit is assigned a holiday. Students will then select a food which is associated with the holiday and can be prepared and eaten in one class period. Students will utilize cookbooks or selected recipes assembled by the teacher. As each unit receives teacher approval they will complete their lab sheets. Students will then have a holiday customs lab experience.

Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)