



FOCUS ON FRUITS

Begin each nutrition education lesson with a short physical activity break from the card set provided by IDPH. Have fun and get active with your students!

Objectives

Identify apples and bananas by shape, color, and special characteristics

Learn why apples and bananas are good snacks to eat

Supplies Needed

February
Pick a **better snack™** & **Act**
bingo card

Apples (2-3 varieties)

Bananas

Knife

2nd Grade: “Apple Chronology - Applesauce” worksheet

3rd Grade: “Banana Crossword” worksheet

Tasting Opportunities

Featured Fruits:
Apples
Bananas

Background

Apples and bananas are two of the most popular fruits eaten around the world.

Apples

Most apples are red, but they can also be speckled, red-yellow, yellow, or green. They are a round fruit with a skin that you can bite into and eat. The inside part of the apple is white and juicy. If you slice an apple from top to bottom, you will find a star shape formed by seeds. Apples come in more than 7,500 varieties. The most popular variety in the United States is Red Delicious. Here is a list of a few others:

Red – Jonathon, McIntosh, and Delicious

Yellow – Golden Delicious

Green – Granny Smith

Speckled with Red and Yellow – Braeburn, Fuji

Apples are grown on apple trees in 36 states in the U.S., with Michigan and Washington growing the most. China produces the most apples in the world, but France and Canada also grow a lot.

Apple trees live year after year. In the spring, the apple tree blooms with white blossoms that are very fragrant. After the blossom dies, an apple grows in its place. Apples are members of the rose family.

Most apples are eaten raw, but they can be used in many recipes like apple pie and applesauce. Apples are very good for us to eat because they contain fiber, which helps move food through our bodies.

Bananas

Bananas may have been the first fruit farmed by man. They are believed to have originated in Malaysia, but came to the Caribbean by Spanish settlers in 1516, where most are grown today. The Africans are credited with giving the banana its permanent name.

Bananas are a long, curved-shaped, yellow fruit. Bananas are harvested when they are green. The peel is yellow when we buy it, but we don’t eat the peel. We take off the peel and



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eat the creamy, soft, white fruit inside. Bananas are nutritious to eat because they contain fiber, and small amounts of vitamins and potassium. One large banana (about 8 inches long) is equal to 1 cup of fruit.

Bananas do not grow on trees. They grow on very large plants with very big, green leaves. The plants do not have a trunk or branches. The plants can grow up to 20 feet tall.

The banana plant grows from bulb called a "rhizome." It contains many buds, similar to the eyes of a potato. A leafy stem grows from each bud. Each stem grows "hands" of tiny flowers. These flowers become individual bananas, called "fingers." Each row has about 15 to 30 fingers that make up a "hand". The stem develops 7 to 10 hands of bananas.

When the plant is 9 months old, the stem weighs up to 100 pounds (45 kilograms) or more and is ready to harvest. After harvesting, the mother plant is cut back to 2 to 5 feet (61 to 152 centimeters) high. Meanwhile, a daughter plant from the same rhizome has sprouted and grown to about one-third the size of the mother plant and the whole process starts again. It's possible for plants to grow from the same rhizome for over 100 years!

People in hot, tropical cultures use the large leaves to build roofs for houses and use them to make into mats and bags. Bananas grow in countries where it is very hot and humid and where it rains a lot like Brazil and Ecuador. Banana plants need tropical sun, rich soil, and a lot of water to grow effectively. Unless you live in Hawaii, we have to buy bananas from other countries and have them shipped to us.

Bananas are the most popular fruit in the United States. Americans eat an average of 28 pounds of bananas per person, per year. That equals 112 bananas per person per year.

You can ripen green bananas more quickly by placing them in a paper bag. Store ripe bananas in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. The skin will turn brown, but the fruit will stay white.

Bananas become sweeter as they ripen. Dip banana slices in lemon juice or orange juice to prevent browning.

Web Site Resources

www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabetersnack
www.5aday.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org
www.choosemyplate.gov

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Do the Activity:
2nd Grade

Discuss the stages of making applesauce. Using the “Apple Chronology- Applesauce” worksheet, cut the sentences into strips. Have the students put them in chronological order.

3rd Grade

Distribute a “Banana Crossword” worksheet for each student. Discuss the answers as a class.

Talk It Over:

How can you tell the difference between an apple and a banana?

*Shape: an apple is round and a banana is long
 Taste: an apple tastes sweet, tart, crunchy, sour, and Juicy. A banana tastes sweet, soft, and mushy.
 Smell: each fruit has a distinct smell that we can identify even with our eyes closed.*

Raise your hand if you like apples. Why do you like apples?

How many of you like bananas? Why do you like bananas?

Apply:

When might you eat an apple? (*for breakfast, lunch, snack, in a salad, anytime*) There are many ways to eat an apple. Raise your hand if you have eaten an apple in any of the following ways:

- A whole apple, peel and all (but not the core!)
- Applesauce
- Apple pie
- Baked apple
- Apple butter
- A caramel apple

There are many ways to eat a banana. Raise your hand if you have eaten a banana in any of the following ways:

- A whole banana (without the peel)
- Banana slices on cereal
- Banana and peanut butter on bread
- Banana bread or pancakes
- Banana chips (dried fruit)
- Banana dipped in chocolate
- Banana in a fruit salad or fruit smoothie

Can you think of other ways to eat apples or bananas?



Tasting Opportunity

Have students wash their hands. Cut up apples for the students to sample. Try to offer 2-3 different varieties. (*Common varieties found in grocery stores in February*)



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include Granny Smith, Braeburn, Red and Golden Delicious, and Fuji.) Place a whole apple and cut-up pieces of another apple of the same variety, on each plate.

Look at the whole apple. Note size, shape, color, and stem. Look at the cut apple. Note flesh color: Is it the same color as the skin? Is the peel thin, thick, smooth, or leathery?

Smell each apple. Does it have a characteristic odor?

Taste a slice of each variety. Is it sweet, tart, or sour? What about texture? Is it tender, crisp, juicy, mealy, or hard? Is the peel tender or tough?

Which variety has the most flavor? Which has the strongest aroma?

Note the color of the slices after exposure to air. Does the flesh of some varieties stay white longer?

Which varieties would be best for salads and fruit cups?

Which variety do you prefer to eat fresh?

Peel and cut a banana for the students to sample. They can then put an "X" through the bingo square of the fruit that they sampled.

How would you get an apple ready to eat as a snack?

Apple – **Wash. Eat. (How easy is that?)**

How would you fix a banana for a snack?

Banana – **Peel. Eat. (How easy is that?)**

On the back of the Pick a **better** snack™ & **Act** bingo card for each month, there is information for their parents and grandparents. Send the bingo card home and ask students to encourage their family to pick out a snack idea to try at home.

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Extend the Activity



Art, Music & PE

Make a mural illustrating the changes in the apple orchard during the year. (winter – no leaves; spring – blossoms; summer – small apples; fall – red, ripe apples)



Language Arts & Reading

On the “Apple observations” worksheet, write a description of the taste, feel, appearance and scent of a variety of apples.



Math

Find 3 apples of approximately the same size. Cut one in half, the second in quarters, and the 3rd in eighths. In groups of 3, ask the children to examine the apples and write equivalent fractions based on comparing the pieces of the apples.



Science & Health

Thinly slice an apple and look at it under the microscope. Compare it to another kind of fruit. The cells in apple tissue fit imperfectly together. Air sits in the spaces. Apples are 20-25 percent air. Demonstrate this by floating the apples on water.



Social Studies

Make an apple flow chart of the journey an apple takes from being a blossom on a tree to a snack for you.

Apple Chronology - Applesauce

Mount the sentences on tag board, cut them apart and let the children put them in the correct order.

The apples are picked off the tree.

We wash the apples.

We peel the apples.

The apples are cut into chunks.

We put the chunks into a pan.

We add some water to the apples in the pan.

We put the pan on the stove.

The apples begin to get soft.

The apples get mushy.

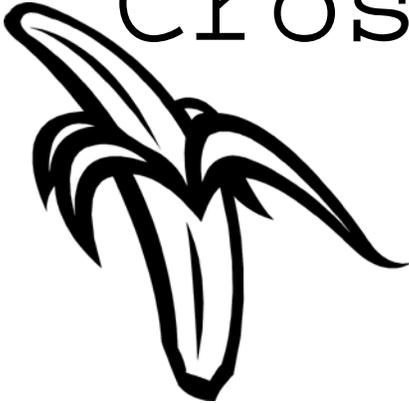
We take the pan off the stove and let the applesauce cool.

We eat the applesauce.

Apple Observations

	Apple #1	Apple #2	Apple #3
Color			
Size			
Shape			
Feel of Skin			
Taste			

Banana Crossword



Words used in the puzzle:

- Trees
- Fruit
- Fiber
- Ripen
- Green
- Bananas
- One
- Room
- Water
- Tropical

Across

- 3. Bananas require warm tropical sun, rich soil, and lots of _____.
- 5. Bananas grow in _____ areas.
- 6. You can _____ green bananas by placing them in a paper bag.
- 8. Bananas are harvested when they're _____.

Down

- 1. _____ are the most popular fruit in America.
- 2. Bananas were probably the first _____ farmed by man.
- 4. Bananas are a good source of _____ and potassium.
- 5. Bananas do NOT grow on _____.
- 6. Store bananas at _____ temperature.
- 7. One banana is equal to _____ cup of fruit.

Answer Key

Banana Crossword



Words used in the puzzle:

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