

# Story Snacks

## Exploring Healthy Food with Pre-school children

Children often avoid vegetables and fruits that are new to them. One way to motivate your child to try new foods is to prepare snacks in a creative way. You might present the snacks as part of a story in which the foods become characters and settings. A celery stick with peanut butter and raisins becomes "ants on a log." Carrot rounds and grape halves become part of a magic necklace. Practice math skills by counting food with your youngster. Try sorting foods into piles of two to five items each. Take turns eating an item from a pile, predicting how many items remain, and re-counting the food to check the numbers. Demonstrate how much you enjoy tasting new foods by snacking along with your child as she tells you a story and explores math.

## Teach Your Child

- ✦ to taste and enjoy healthy foods
- ✦ what natural food looks like inside and out
- ✦ that vegetables, fruits, and grains have important nutrients that help us grow
- ✦ new words related to food preparation
- ✦ math skills: count, compare, and sort various foods

## You Will Need

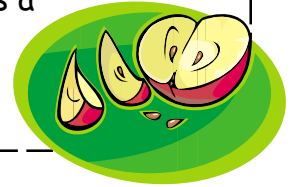
- ✦ A story book with interesting characters and situations.
- ✦ 3-5 different kinds of food that can be assembled in interesting ways. You will need one to several pieces of each item per person.
- ✦ warm soapy water for washing hands
- ✦ utensils for making and serving snacks

## Introducing Story Snacks

- ✦ Read a fun book to your child. After reading the book announce it is time to eat a fun snack.
- ✦ Model for your child how to wash hands before preparing and eating food.
- ✦ Show her the kinds of food available and ask her to point out the ones she knows.
- ✦ Put some food on your plate to make a design or

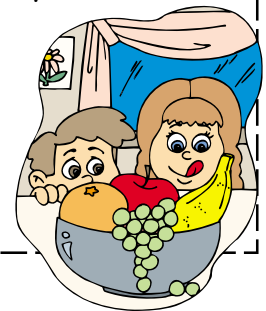
### Fruit Puzzles!

While making snacks with your child, teach her the names and natural forms of the foods. Slice the fruits and vegetables in different ways: an apple cut into three or four pieces becomes a small puzzle for your child to assemble.



### YUMMY!

What better way to celebrate a wonderful story than with healthy food that nourishes the body and delights the mind!



A fun book that relates to food is *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley. See page 2 for additional recommendations.



picture about the story. Add more food you plan to eat while you make the design. Point out the new foods you look forward to trying. "I wonder what it will taste like?"

✧ Invite your child to select some snack items to make a design or picture about the story. Encourage her to take some extra items to eat while making the design.

✧ Let the fun begin! Select a food item and describe it. Let your child do the same. Start making a picture or design to go with the story and have your child do the same with his food. For example, If you read *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown, you might use a tortilla or cracker as the large iron pot, and invite your child to help you add to the soup.

✧ Help your child sort the food into piles by color or shape. Encourage her to predict how many of each item is in a pile, then count the food together.

## Talking About Snacks

✧ Chat with your child about the designs and food.

- How many new foods did you try?
- What are your favorites? What did they taste like?
- Which food was the most colorful? most salty? crunchiest? softest?
- How can this food help your body?

✧ While reading the story, encourage your child to talk about a snack as it relates to the story.

✧ Following the story and snack, encourage your child to draw a picture of the food design.

## Fun Books About Food and Cooking

✧ *Pigs in the Pantry, Fun with Math and Cooking* by Amy Axelrod, Scholastic, New York, 1998.

✧ *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown, Aladdin Books, New York, 1945, 1975.

✧ *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley, Carolrhoda Books Minneapolis, Minn., 1991; *Everybody Bakes Bread*, 1996; *Everybody Serves Soup*, 2000.

✧ *Eating the Alphabet, Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z* by Lois Ehlert, Voyager Books, Harcourt Brace, San Diego, Calif., 1989.

✧ *Thunder Cake* by Patricia Polacco, Putnam Publishing Group, New York, 1997.

✧ *The Tamale Quilt* by Jane Tenorio-Coscarelli, 1/4 Inch Designs & Publishing, Murrieta, Calif., 1998.

**Try various tastes and shapes of foods:**



**Use your imagination. . .**

- ✧ A cherry-blueberry necklace!
- ✧ Ants on a log (celery stick, peanut butter or cream cheese, and raisins!)

