

## SESSION 2

# The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

TEACHER'S GUIDE



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2/

The healthy food pyramid  
and the food groups



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Energy to grow

Energy to grow

## Breakdown

### SESSION SUMMARY

- Information on the importance of your diet.
- Information on the consequences of a poor diet.
- Activities: two reading comprehension texts.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

To learn about and understand the healthy food pyramid and integrate it into daily life.

### CONTENTS

Food groups.  
The healthy food pyramid: what a healthy diet is.

### KEY COMPETENCIES

1. Linguistic communication.
2. Mathematical comprehension and basic science and technology comprehension.
3. Digital comprehension.
4. Learning how to learn.
5. Social and civic comprehension.
6. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurial spirit.

## Session plan

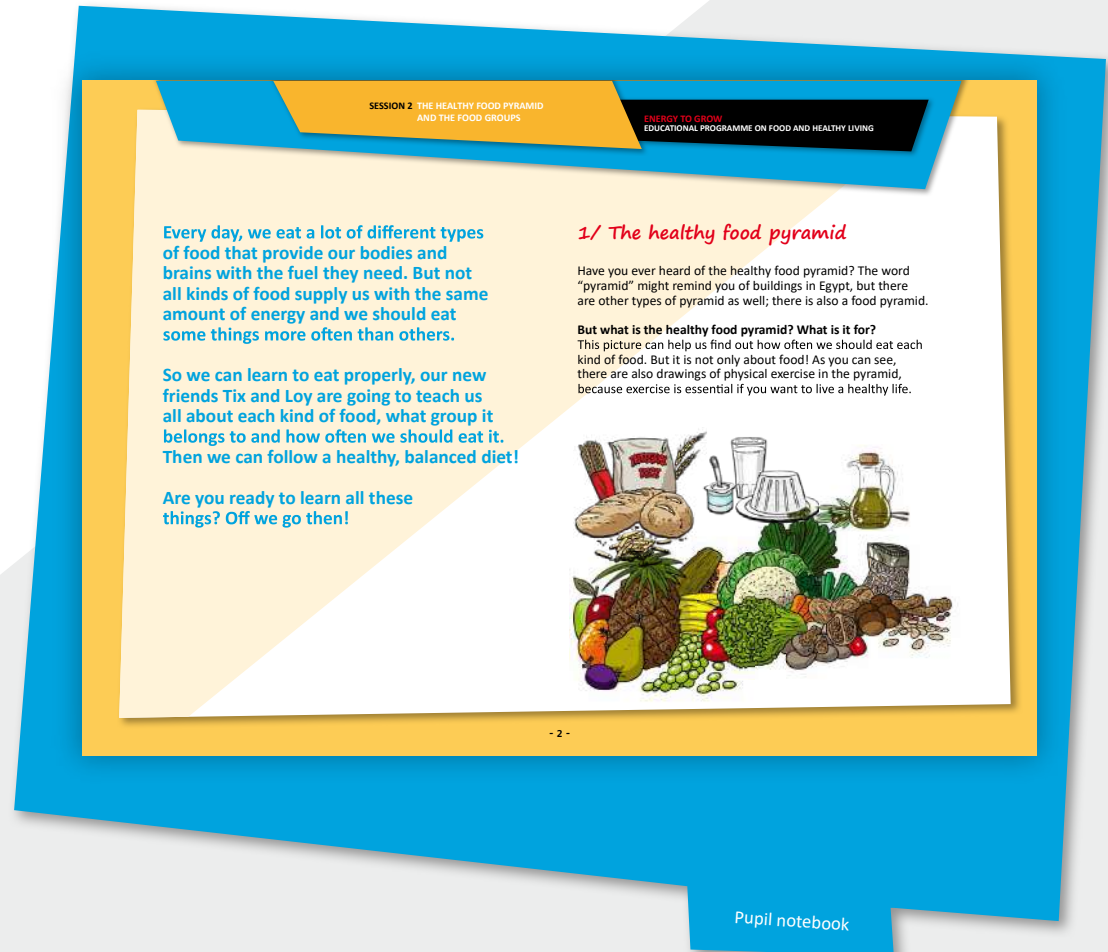
Every day, we eat a lot of different types of food that provide our bodies and brains with the fuel they need. But not all kinds of food supply us with the same amount of energy and we should eat some kinds of food more often than others.

So we can learn to eat properly, our new friends Tix and Loy are going to teach us all about each kind of food, what group it belongs to and how often we should eat it.

The contents of this session are divided up into two blocks:

1. Healthy food pyramid
2. Food groups

There are activities related to the contents at the end of the session.



## 1/ The healthy food pyramid

Have you ever heard of the healthy food pyramid? The word “pyramid” might remind you of buildings in Egypt, but there are other types of pyramid as well; there is also a food pyramid.

### But what is the food pyramid? What is it for?

This picture can help us find out how often we should eat each kind of food. But it is not only about food!

As you can see, there are also drawings of physical exercise in the pyramid, because exercise is essential if you want to live a healthy life.



## 2/ The food groups

Milk, cocoa, bread, olive oil... There are lots of different kinds of food around. Each kind contains nutrients and properties that make it unique. That is why it is very important to follow a varied diet which combines them all if you want to grow up to be strong and healthy.

In order to put all the kinds of food that exist into some kind of order, we need to classify them into different groups according to their characteristics. We call these **"the food groups"**, a classification which allows us to split all the different sorts of food up into 6 groups.

### GROUP 1. MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS

#### Includes:

Milk and everything made from milk: yoghurt, cheese, junket and other dairy desserts.

#### Characteristics:

The things in group 1 provide proteins, which your body needs in order to grow and repair tissues, carbohydrates and fats. They also contain a lot of calcium and vitamin D, which you need in order to keep your bones strong.



## GROUP 2. PROTEIN FOODS

### Includes:

Meat, fish, eggs and nuts.

### Characteristics:

The things in group 2 contain proteins, which help form our tissues and muscles, B-group vitamins and minerals, mainly iron, which is essential if you want to have a quick mind and not get tired easily.

## GROUP 3. HIGH-CARBOHYDRATE FOODS, PULSES, CEREALS AND TUBERS

### Includes:

Pulses, cereals (like rice or wheat) and everything made from them (like pasta, flour, bread and corn), and tubers (like potatoes).

### Characteristics:

Pulses provide us with a lot of proteins, fibre, which is vital for our health, carbohydrates, minerals, like iron and calcium, and B-group vitamins. They also have another advantage: they contain very little fat.

Cereals provide us with a lot of carbohydrates and tubers not only contain a lot of carbohydrates, but also fibre, proteins, vitamin C and iron.

We recommend cereals be wholemeal, not refined.

## GROUP 4. VEGETABLES

### Includes:

Vegetables like peppers, lettuce, onions, carrots, etc.

### Characteristics:

Vegetables contain a lot of antioxidants, which are very good for our health, and a lot of water (up to 80-90%). This water contains minerals and vitamins. They also provide a lot of fibre.

In order not to lose all the minerals and vitamins in vegetables, you should boil them in a small quantity of water just before eating them or eat them raw as salad.

## GROUP 5. FRUIT

### Includes:

Citrus fruit (like oranges and lemons), tropical fruit (like pineapple and bananas), berries (like strawberries) and dried fruit (like almonds and chestnuts).

### Characteristics:

Fruit is essential to our diet. It provides a lot of vitamins and minerals. Most types of fruit contain a lot of water (between 80% and 90%) and, consequently, few calories. Some types of fruit contain more carbohydrates (bananas, grapes) or fat (avocado pears) than others, providing us with more energy. Fruit is perfect for when you feel thirsty or just before doing your favourite sport.

GROUP 2

**PROTEIN FOODS**

**Includes:**  
Meat, fish, eggs and nuts.

**Characteristics:**  
The things in group 2 contain proteins, B-group vitamins and minerals, mainly iron, which is essential if you want to have a quick mind and not get tired easily.



GROUP 3

**HIGH-CARBOHYDRATE FOODS,  
PULSES, CEREALS AND TUBERS**

**Includes:**  
Pulses, cereals (like rice or wheat) and everything made from them (like pasta, flour, bread and corn), and tubers (like potatoes).

**Characteristics:**  
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## GROUP 6. FATS, OILS AND BUTTER

### Includes:

Fats (which are found in ice cream and pastries), oil and butter.

### Characteristics:

These things give you a lot of energy. They also give food a lot of flavour, which means they are important in our meals. Olive oil contains vegetable-based fat. It is a very important part of our food culture. We know that it is very beneficial to the health, and particularly good for the heart, veins and arteries.

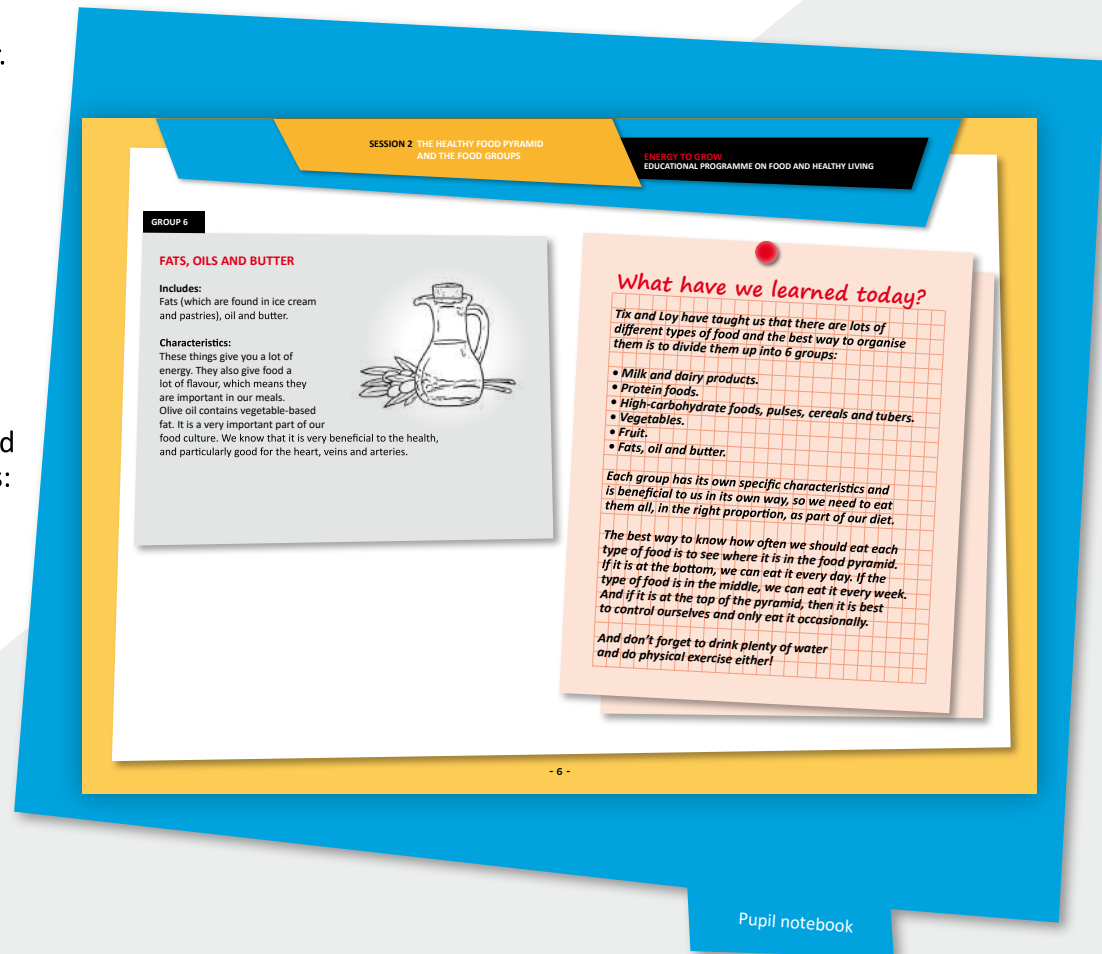
## What have we learned today?

We have learned that there are lots of different types of food and the best way to organise them is to divide them up into 6 groups:

- Milk and dairy products.
- Protein foods.
- High-carbohydrate foods, pulses, cereals and tubers.
- Vegetables.
- Fruit.
- Fats, oil and butter.

Each group has its own specific characteristics and is beneficial to us in its own way, so we need to eat them all, in the right proportion, as part of our diet.

The best way to know how often we should eat each type of food is to see where it is in the food pyramid. And don't forget to drink plenty of water and do physical exercise.





The main objective of this activity is for students to know and understand the food groups and the healthy food pyramid and to integrate this knowledge into their daily lives.

It consists of preparing an oral presentation in groups to share with classmates from lower grades.

## Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

Use this activity tab to do the activities

## Group 1. Milk and dairy products.

This group includes milk and everything made from milk, like yoghurt, cheese, junket and other dairy desserts. The things in group 1 provide proteins, which your body needs in order to grow and repair tissues, carbohydrates and fats. They also contain a lot of calcium and vitamin D, which you need in order to keep your bones strong.

**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

**Recommended quantity:** 1-3 servings a day.

**A serving is equivalent to:**

- 1 glass of milk.
- 2 yoghurts.
- 1 individual portion of fromage frais.



## Group 2. Protein foods.

This group includes meat, fish, eggs and nuts. The things in group 2 contain proteins, B-group vitamins and minerals, mainly iron, which is essential if you want to have a quick mind and not get tired easily.

**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** ORANGE SECTION. MIDDLE (EAT SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK).

**Recommended quantity:**

- The intake of cold meats should be occasional (chorizo, salami, etc.) because it contains a lot of saturated fat and salt.
- Meat and fish: 3 to 4 servings a week.
- A serving is equivalent to:**
  - 1 fillet or breast of chicken
  - 1 slice of ham.
  - 1 fish fillet/2 fish steaks.

• Eggs: 2 or 3 a week

• Nuts: 3-7 servings a week

- A serving is equivalent to:**
- 4-5 walnuts.
  - 10-15 almonds.



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## Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

## Group 3. High-carbohydrate foods, pulses, cereals and tubers.

Nutritionally, pulses are a very important type of food because they provide us with a lot of proteins. They can be even more nutritious if you combine them with cereals and eat lentils with rice for example. They also provide a lot of fibre, which is vital for our health, and carbohydrates. Pulses contain minerals, like iron and calcium, and B-group vitamins too. And they contain very little fat! Cereals, like rice or wheat, and everything made from them, like pasta, flour, bread and corn, provide us with a lot of carbohydrates. The most important tuber in this part of the world is the potato. Tubers not only contain a lot of carbohydrates, but also fibre, proteins, vitamin C and iron.

**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

• **Group 3:** bread, rice, pasta, breakfast cereal, biscuits and potatoes.

**Recommended quantity:** 4 servings a day.

**A serving is equivalent to:**

- 2 slices of bread.
- 1 large potato.
- 1 plate of pasta.
- 30 g of breakfast cereal.

ORANGE SECTION. MIDDLE (EAT SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK)

• **Group 3:** pulses.

**Recommended quantity:** 3-5 servings a week (normal individual bowl).



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## Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

## Group 4. Vegetables.

Vegetables contain a lot of water (up to 80-90%), which contains minerals and vitamins. They also provide a lot of fibre. In order not to lose all the minerals and vitamins in vegetables, you should boil them in a small quantity of water just before eating them or eat them raw as salad. They are also important because they contain a lot of antioxidants, which are very good for our health.



**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

The slogan says "5 a day", counting fruit as well. If you eat "5 a day", then you eat enough vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. Enough means eating three pieces of fruit, varying the type of fruit you eat, and two servings of vegetables, making sure that one of these servings is raw (salad), because raw vegetables are richer in minerals and vitamins.

**A serving is equivalent to:**

- 1 plate of mixed salad.
- 1 plate of boiled vegetables.
- 1 large tomato.
- 2 carrots.

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## Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

Soft drinks, cake, pastries, sweets, crisps...  
are not really food

**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** RED SECTION. TOP (ONLY EAT OCCASIONALLY). This is the smallest part of the pyramid and it's red, meaning that you should only eat these things every now and then.



The things in this section give you lots of energy, but contain fats that are not good for you, like saturated fat. They also have a lot of sugar, which can cause tooth decay and make you overweight, and often contain a lot of salt. You do not need to eat the things in this section because they do not have a lot of nutrients.

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## Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

## Group 5. Fruit.

Fruit provides a lot of vitamins and minerals. Most types of fruit contain a lot of water (between 80% and 90%) and, consequently, few calories. Some types of fruit contain more carbohydrates (bananas, grapes) or fat (avocado pears) than others, providing us with more energy. Fruit is perfect for when you feel thirsty or just before doing your favourite sport.



**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

The slogan says "5 a day", counting vegetables as well. If you eat "5 a day", then you eat enough vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. Enough means eating three pieces of fruit, varying the type of fruit you eat, and two servings of vegetables, making sure that one of these servings is raw (salad), because raw vegetables are richer in minerals and vitamins.

**A serving is equivalent to:**

- 1 medium-sized apple, pear or banana.
- 2 mandarins.
- 2 slices of melon.
- 1 bowl of strawberries or cherries.

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## Group 6. Fats, oil and butter.

These things give you a lot of energy. They also give food a lot of flavour, which means they are important in our meals. Olive oil contains vegetable-based fat. It is a very important part of our food culture. We know that it is very beneficial to the health, and particularly good for the heart, veins and arteries.



**POSITION IN THE PYRAMID:** GREEN SECTION. BASE (EAT EVERY DAY).

Olive oil to cook and dress salads.

**Recommended quantity:** 2-4 servings (soup spoon).

## 1. Today you are the teacher

Each group of students will prepare an oral presentation of a food group to teach to a lower level class.

With six different food groups, ideally the students will be grouped into six different groups, so that each one presents a specific food group.

In the exhibition they must include in which part of the healthy food pyramid certain foods are found.

For the presentation, the student teachers may use a poster or a PowerPoint presentation.

## 2. How much have we learned today?

As a suggestion, at the end of the presentations, the older students can write down some questions to ask the younger students to check their level of understanding.

This activity is very positive and motivating for the students since their effort, hard work and dedication will be on display for another group of classmates.

Children love these kinds of activities, in which some teach others. It makes them feel important, experts in the field and “older”. And at the same time they work in groups in a cooperative way.

SESSION 2 THE HEALTHY FOOD PYRAMID AND THE FOOD GROUPS

ENERGY TO GROW  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME ON FOOD AND HEALTHY LIVING

### Activities

The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

**1 Today you are the teacher**


You are already experts in healthy eating. So now it's time for you to become a teacher and share your knowledge with younger students. They will love listening to you and learning from you. Surely they'll listen closely and pay attention to everything you do and say.

You are going to prepare an oral presentation about the different food groups.

Your presentation must be well organized and very clearly structured.

- 1 You will be placed in groups of 4 or 5 students.
- 2 Each one will be responsible for a certain group of foods.
- 3 In the presentation you must include which part of the nutritional pyramid the foods are in.
- 4 You can use visual aspects such as a poster, a script or a PowerPoint presentation.
- 5 Try to speak in an appropriate voice and try not to read directly from a script.

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SESSION 2 THE HEALTHY FOOD PYRAMID AND THE FOOD GROUPS

ENERGY TO GROW  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME ON FOOD AND HEALTHY LIVING

### Activities


The healthy food pyramid and the food groups

**2 How much have we learned today?**

It's time to write down a few questions to ask the younger students and check their level of understanding. They will enjoy participating and trying to get the answer right.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_

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## More on the contents

### FOOD AND NUTRIENTS

Food is everything that people eat and drink in order to survive, because it contains substances that we need in order to live. These substances are called nutrients.

Nutrients carry out different functions in our bodies and are classified into three types according to the task they perform:

**Nutrients that build and repair:** these nutrients build our cells, tissues, bones, guts, etc. They can be compared with the building bricks which, one by one, form a building, in this case our organism. We need them, therefore, in order to grow. The nutrients that perform this function are proteins. Proteins can be found in meat, fish, eggs, milk and dairy products.

**Nutrients that provide energy:** these nutrients provide the energy we need in order to perform our everyday activities. They are our body's petrol. The nutrients that perform this function are carbohydrates and fats. They can be found in pasta, rice, pulses, cereals, oil and sugar.

**Nutrients that regulate body processes:** these nutrients allow our organism to use the other kinds of nutrients properly and help them perform their functions. Vitamins and minerals are nutrients that regulate body processes. Fruit, vegetables and water provide us with significant amounts of nutrients of this kind.