

## Learning Module Four: Whole Grains

### Objectives of Module Four Lessons:

#### Children will be able to:

1. Name at least three examples of whole grains.
2. Explain at least two health benefits of whole grains.
3. List at least three whole grain foods they have tried during the past month.

#### Lesson 1: Grains- On MyPlate & in My Body

##### Children will:

1. Review all of the food groups in MyPlate
2. Learn how bread and grain products are made.
3. Discover which foods are included in the grains group
4. Identify the parts of a whole grain.
5. Work together to prepare a healthy, whole grain snack.



#### Lesson 2: Whole Grains- Reading & Language Arts Application

##### Children will:

1. Identify samples of whole grains.
2. Recognize the importance of eating whole grains at breakfast.
3. Draw a picture and tell a story about a grain they like to eat with their family.

#### Lesson 3: Whole Grains - Math & Science Application

##### Children will:

1. Observe how popcorn kernels change when heat is applied.
2. Learn science concept that heating and cooling can change the properties of a substance.

#### Lesson 4: Whole Grains – Tasting Activity

##### Children will:

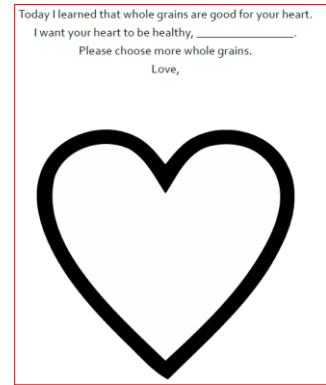
1. Tell something they have learned about whole grains
2. Name at least one health benefit of whole grains.
3. Name at least two whole grain foods they have eaten since Module 4 began.
4. Sample whole grain cereals.

**Module Four Resources:**

1. UME-FSNE. Read for Health: Lesson 12: Whole Grains.  
<https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/read-for-health>
2. Florida Department of Health. The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train.  
<http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/wic/nutrition-materials/whole-grain-choo-choo-train/>
3. Arizona Nutrition Network Champions for Change. Whole Grain PreSchool Activity.

### **Suggested Craft Activity:**

1. Create copies of the provided page with the outline of a heart.
  - You may want to print these on colored paper (consider pink or red).
2. Remind students that whole grains are good for the health of our hearts. You can mention that the fiber helps our blood vessels in good shape to deliver blood, oxygen and nutrients to all of our body parts.
3. Ask children to think of someone in their family they want to have a healthy heart. Help the children write that name on their paper.
4. Use glue or glue stick to affix either old fashioned oats or Cheerios inside the heart on each child's page.
5. Allow to dry, and encourage children to bring the heart to the person whose name is on the page.



### **Follow-Up Opportunity when/if pancakes are on the menu:**

#### **Teacher:**

1. Read: *Pancakes, Pancakes* by Eric Carle (Saxonville, MA. Picture Book Studio, 1995), or *Pancakes for Breakfast* by Tomie De Paola (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978).

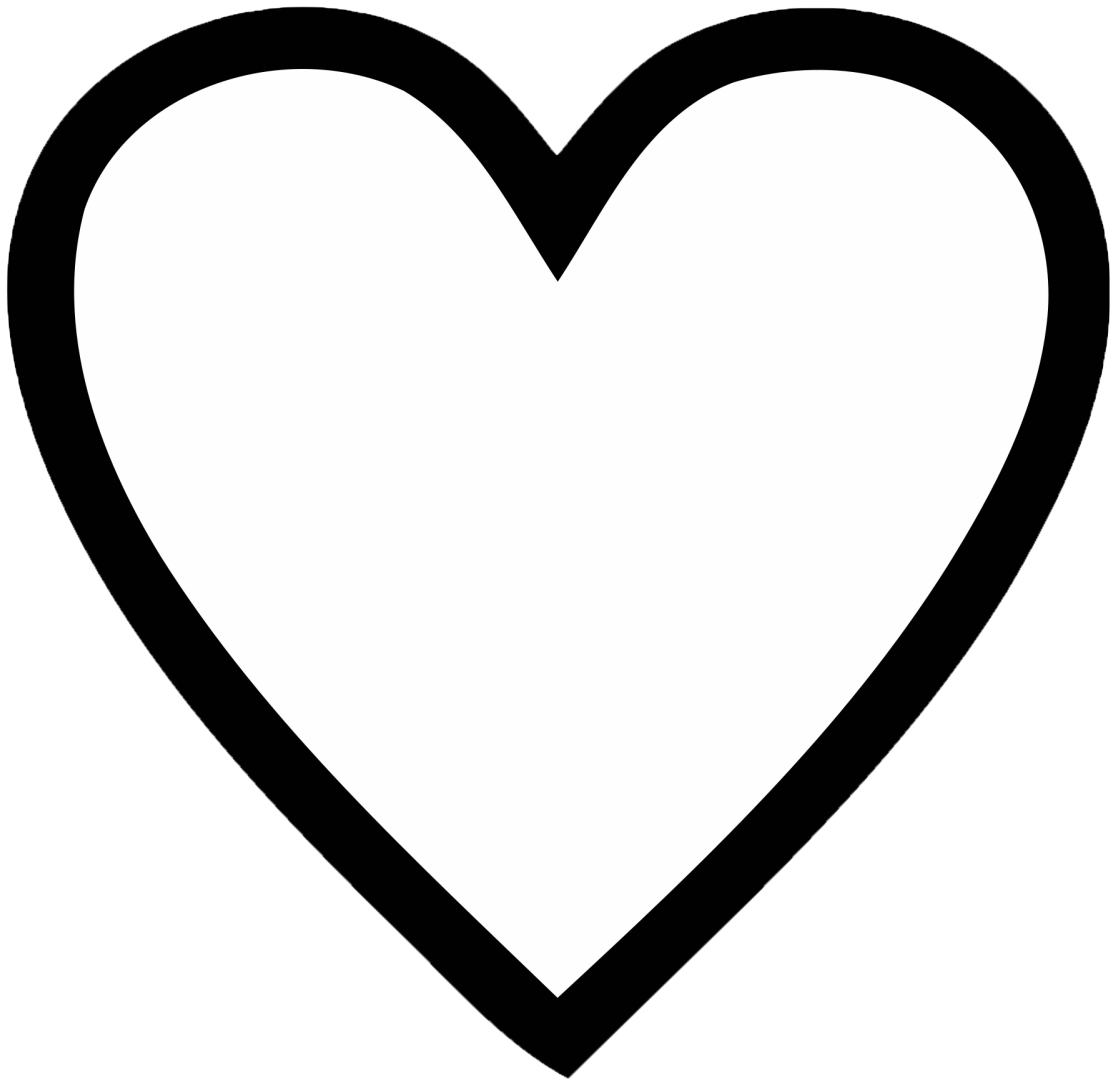


Today I learned that whole grains are good for your heart.

I want your heart to be healthy, \_\_\_\_\_.

Please choose more whole grains.

Love,





## Learning Module Four: Whole Grains

### Objectives of Module Four:

#### Children will be able to:

1. Name at least three examples of whole grains.
2. Explain at least two health benefits of whole grains.
3. List at least three whole grain foods they have tried during the past month.

### Lesson 1: Whole Grains- On MyPlate & In My Body

#### Children Will:

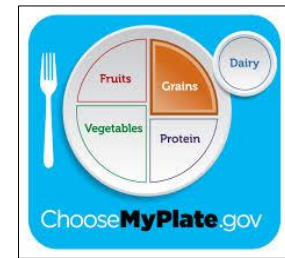
1. Review all of the food groups in MyPlate
2. Learn how bread and grain products are made.
3. Discover which foods are included in the grains group

#### Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.

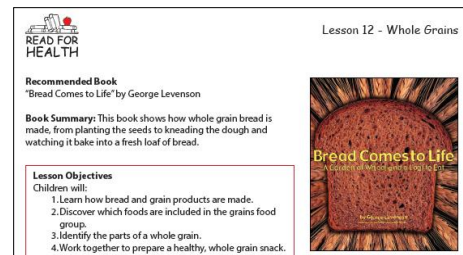
#### Teacher:

1. Display MyPlate Poster at start of lesson.
2. (5 minutes) Teacher will prompt children to identify all of the groups on MyPlate, and ask for 1-2 examples from each group.
3. Pass around the baggies of different grains as you discuss them.



For large classes, you may want 2 bags of each grain.

4. Follow (with changes noted below) Lesson 12 (Whole Grains) from the University of MD Extension *Read for Health* Curriculum (pgs 73-75).
  - a. Skip the blacked out sections “2a” which states “For older audiences...”
  - b. The “Make it Myself Pizza” activity is best for ages 5 and above.
5. Read the book Bread Comes to Life: A Garden of Wheat and a Loaf to Eat by George Levenson. You may need to break the book up into 2-3 sections, especially for younger classrooms.
6. Follow the discussion guide on page 73 of the Read for Health curriculum.
7. Talk about the whole grains served as part of meals and snacks at the center. It may be helpful to have a menu available during the conversation.



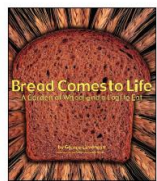
Lesson 12 - Whole Grains

**Recommended Book**  
“Bread Comes to Life” by George Levenson

**Book Summary:** This book shows how whole grain bread is made, from planting the seeds to kneading the dough and watching it bake into a fresh loaf of bread.

**Lesson Objectives**  
Children will:

1. Learn how bread and grain products are made.
2. Discover which foods are included in the grains food group.
3. Identify the parts of a whole grain.
4. Work together to prepare a healthy, whole grain snack.



- Send home parent sheet from Read for Health labeled page 75.

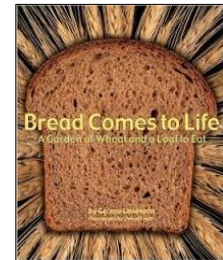
**Parent Connection:**

- Send the parent handout from “Read For Health” labeled page 75 home with the children.



**Supplies Needed:**

- MyPlate Poster
- Book: *Bread Comes to Life: A Garden of Wheat and a Loaf to Eat* by George Levenson.
- Weekly or monthly menu from the child care center.
- Copies of parent handout from *Read for Health* labeled page 75.
- Small plastic baggies with approximately 1/2 cup of each of the following (uncooked) grains (for large classes, you may want 2 bags of each grain):



- Whole oats (rolled, Old Fashioned, etc.)
- Brown Rice
- Whole Wheat Flour
- Quinoa
- Whole Grain noodles
- Cheerios
- Slice of whole grain bread

**Resources:**

- UME-FSNE. Read for Health: Lesson 12: Whole Grains.  
<https://eatsmart.umd.edu/resources/curricula/read-for-health>

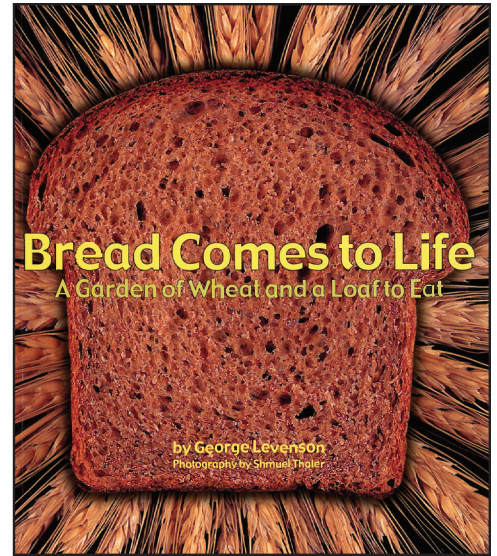




**Recommended Book**

“Bread Comes to Life” by George Levenson

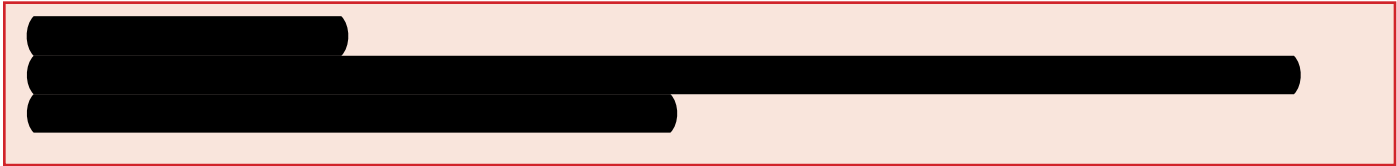
**Book Summary:** This book shows how whole grain bread is made, from planting the seeds to kneading the dough and watching it bake into a fresh loaf of bread.



**Lesson Objectives**

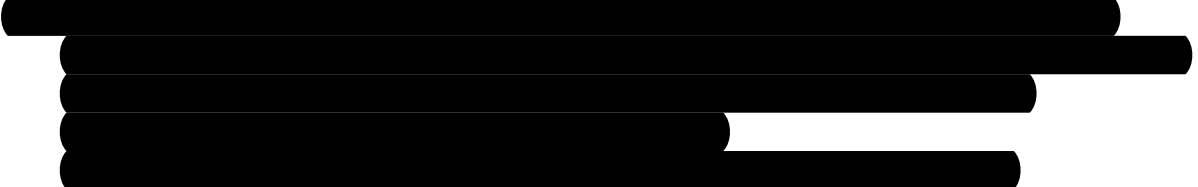
Children will:

1. Learn how bread and grain products are made.
2. Discover which foods are included in the grains food group.
3. Identify the parts of a whole grain.
4. Work together to prepare a healthy, whole grain snack.

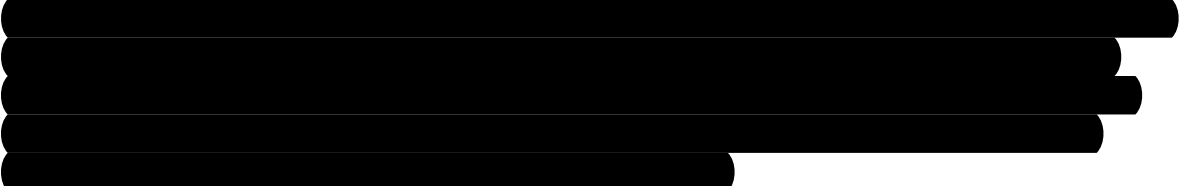


**Lesson Format**

1. Discuss foods that are included in the grains group. Include examples for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Bread, cereal, crackers, pasta, pancakes, tortillas, and rice are all great examples.
2. Read book aloud to children. Stop during the story when appropriate or wait until reading is finished to discuss the following questions or key points:

a. 

b. Can anyone recall which part of the plant are grains made from? Seeds. Explain that seeds hold energy and vitamins and minerals for a growing plant.

c. 

d. When we eat whole grains, we are getting all of the nutrients and energy included in the whole seed. This helps us grow strong and healthy.

- e. Guide a discussion to identify whole grain foods. Examples include whole wheat bread and pasta, brown and wild rice, and whole grain cereals.
- f. How do you like to use your energy? Name some of your favorite activities.

**Materials**

- Recommended Book

[Redacted text]

**Estimated Time:**

- \* Completing pre-work: 45 minutes
- \* Completing lesson: 75 minutes
- \* Completing reinforcement activity: 30 minutes

- Supplies for an optional reinforcement activity selected from the Activities Appendix

**Prep-Work**

Chop vegetables into small pieces. Store in the refrigerator. This may also be done in the classroom with children.

**Make it Myself Pizza**

Makes 1 sample-size portion.

**Ingredients**

- ½ whole wheat English muffin
- 2 Tablespoons of pasta sauce
- ¼ cup low-fat mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup chopped vegetable\*

**Directions**

Have children take a paper plate and move through the assembly line as follows:

1. Take ½ whole wheat English muffin.
2. Spread 2 tablespoons of pasta sauce on top.
3. Add ¼ cup low-fat mozzarella cheese.
4. Sprinkle ¼ cup chopped vegetables on top.
5. Bake in the oven or toaster oven at 425 degrees, or in the microwave on high until cheese melts.

\*Suggestions include red or green bell peppers, broccoli, mushrooms, and onions.

Want to make your own whole wheat pizza dough? Follow this link for easy directions:

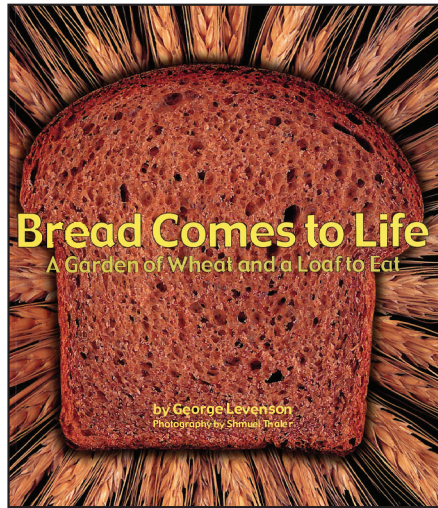
<http://www.wheatfoods.org/Quick-Whole-Wheat-Pizza-Crust.217.1.htm>



# READ FOR HEALTH

## Whole Grains are Great!

Your child learned about the importance of whole grains today. We read about how bread is made from planting the seeds to making the dough. We then made a healthy pizza together with whole grain crust!



## Whole Grain Foods Have Tons of Health Benefits!

Eating whole grains can help reduce the risk of some cancers, heart disease and high cholesterol.

Many whole grain foods are high in fiber. Eating fiber will help you feel full. This also helps with weight management.

Some examples of whole grain foods are listed below.

- Whole wheat bread
- Brown or wild rice
- Whole oats or oatmeal
- Whole grain barley
- Popcorn
- Whole wheat pasta
- A complete list of whole grains can be found at the following link.

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov> and click "grains"

## Shopping for Whole Grains

A grains food that is brown in color does not mean always mean it is whole grain.

Watch out for labels that say "multigrain" or "wheat". These may not be whole grain choices.

To be sure you are choosing a whole grain food, read the ingredients list on the nutrition facts label. The first ingredient must list a whole grain.

## Make at Least Half Your Grains Whole Grains.

Instead of white bread, rice and pasta, try some whole grain choices.

Snack on whole grain cereals.

Eat popcorn plain or with light butter.

Substitute half of the flour with whole wheat flour in muffin, pancakes, and cookie recipes.

Try whole wheat crackers with low-fat string cheese for a great snack.

## Take Action!

How many of the following tips can you and your family check off this week?

- Try one new whole grain food this week.
- Have a scavenger hunt in your kitchen with your child. Search for grains and decide if they are whole grains.
- Locate a food in the grocery store that you typically buy and purchase its whole grain variety.
- Make whole grain pita pizza with your family. Visit the following link for quick and easy directions. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMWdlpDhUQ>



## Learning Module Four: Whole Grains

### Objectives of Module Four:

#### Children will be able to:

1. Name at least three examples of whole grains.
2. Explain at least two health benefits of whole grains.
3. List at least three whole grain foods they have tried during the past month.

### Lesson 2: Whole Grains- Reading & Language Arts

#### Children Will:

1. Identify samples of whole grains.
2. Recognize the importance of eating whole grains at breakfast.
3. Draw a picture and tell a story about a grain they like to eat with their family.

#### Teacher:

1. Prepare before class to use during lesson:
  - a. Containers with samples of the following whole grains (brown rice, old fashioned oats, one whole grain tortilla, one slice of whole wheat bread).



- b. Bring in a box of Cheerios and a box of whole grain crackers (may be empty)



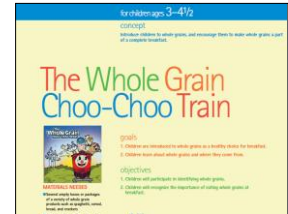
### Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.  
**This lesson includes a tasting!**
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.

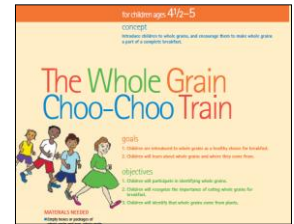


2. Follow “The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train” lesson from the Florida Department of Health, with the changes noted below, (separate lesson plans for ages 3-4½ and 4½-5)

a. For classrooms with 3 – 4½ year old children, use pgs 31-33.



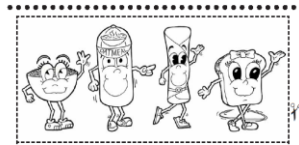
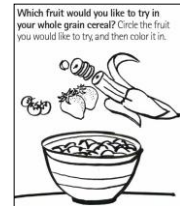
b. For classrooms with 4½ - 5 year old children, use pgs 34-36.



c. To simplify the lesson, we suggest that you change the snack activity from a “choo-choo wrap” to the whole grain crackers used during the demonstration earlier. See supplies list below for details. Depending on which version of the lesson, you will find the tasting activity #9 on pages 33 and 36.

d. While we are providing a copy of the “train tickets,” there is no need to print and cut out the tickets unless you are interested. They are not important to the lesson.

e. If pressed for time, the coloring activities (“The Whole Grain Friends” rectangle and “Which fruit would you like to try in your whole grain cereal”) may be used outside of the lesson as a follow-up activity.



3. Talk about the whole grains served as part of meals and snacks at the center that day or week. It may be helpful to have a menu available during the conversation.

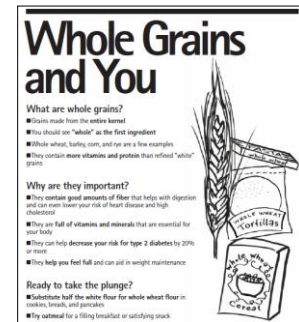
**Parent Connection:**

1. Send the parent handout labeled page 48 & 50 home with each child.

**Supplies Needed:**

1. Printed copy of The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train story.
2. Copies of “The Whole Grain Friends,” pre-cut for each child to have a rectangle to color (you may skip or postpone this part if desired).

3. Crayons for coloring the “The Whole Grain Friends” rectangle and “Which fruit would you like to try in your whole grain cereal” page (you may skip or postpone this part).
  - a. Either of these may be used outside of the lesson as a follow-up activity.
4. Containers (clear, plastic) with each of the following grains:
  - a. At least ½ cup brown rice
  - b. At least ½ cup old fashioned oats
  - c. one whole grain tortilla
  - d. one slice of whole wheat bread
5. Box of Cheerios and canister of oats (these may be empty)
6. Box of whole grain crackers (please be sure that “whole grain is listed as **first** ingredient). You should have enough for each child to have a small portion as a tasting.
7. Copies of “Dear Parent” letter (page 48 & 50) for each child to take home. Teacher should sign the bottom. This should be copied, 2-sided with the “Whole Grains and You” handout.



## Resources:

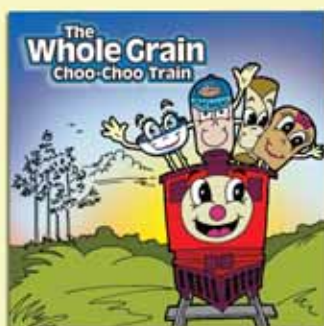
1. Florida Department of Health. The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train. <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/wic/nutrition-materials/whole-grain-choo-choo-train/>

for children ages 3–4½

## concept

Introduce children to whole grains, and encourage them to make whole grains a part of a complete breakfast.

# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train



## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Several empty boxes or packages of a variety of whole grain products such as spaghetti, cereal, bread, and crackers
- *The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train* by Reeves, Stickney, and Bowden
- Pictures of wheat, corn, and rice fields (included)
- *Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train Ticket* coloring sheet (included)
- Scissors for the teacher
- Non-toxic crayons
- *Rachel's Fun Time* music CD (optional)
- Tape
- Picture of a train (included)
- Whole grain tortillas or wraps (5-inch) and a slice of cheese for each child

## goals

1. Children are introduced to whole grains as a healthy choice for breakfast.
2. Children learn about whole grains and where they come from.

## objectives

1. Children will participate in identifying whole grains.
2. Children will recognize the importance of eating whole grains at breakfast.

## activities

**1** Prior to starting this activity, arrange several empty boxes or packages of whole grain foods where each child can see them as they are discussed.

**2** Begin by having the children sit in a circle and then read the book *The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train*.





# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

**3** After reading the book, announce, "Today, let's pretend to ride on the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train!"

Make a whistle sound like "Wooo, wooo" while motioning right hand up and down.

Say, "Before we board the train and meet our Whole Grain Friends, let's find out what a whole grain is."

**4** Say, "We are going to be learning about whole grains. You may have eaten whole grains this morning at breakfast. Do you remember what you ate for breakfast?"

Wait for a response and then share what you had to eat for breakfast. Say, "Breads, rice, cereal, pasta, waffles, and pancakes can be whole grains. Whole grains have all (emphasize all) their vitamins. We know our bodies need foods that give us vitamins. When we eat whole grains we have energy to run, think, and play!"

**5** Say, "We are going to learn where whole grains come from."

Show the children pictures of wheat, corn, and rice fields (included) while saying, "Whole grains come from plants like wheat, corn, rice, and oats."

Hold up a picture of the wheat field again and say, "This is where wheat comes from. Raise your hand if you have ever been to a farm or seen one on television or while riding in a car?"

Allow enough time for the children to respond. Then hold up a box or package of a whole wheat grain food and say, "This food started here (pointing to the picture of the wheat field) before your parents were able to buy it."

You can do the same with the picture of the corn field and a box or package of food made from corn. If possible, show the children a real husk of corn to help the children make the connection between the food and the corn field. Ask, "What whole grain foods do you like to eat for breakfast?"

Allow the children an opportunity to respond. As you point to each package, tell the children that their parents have to read the box or package to make sure it's a whole grain.

Smile and say, "We have the easy part—we get to eat it. When we eat whole grain foods we eat foods that are good for our growing bodies!"

**6** Have the children stand up. Ask, "Which one of the Whole Grain Friends was your favorite? Raise your hand if it was Bonita Brown Rice or Ollie Oatmeal, or Tito Soft Tortilla. Oh, I almost forgot Haley Whole Wheat Bread!"

Allow the children time to respond to their favorite character. Encourage the children to do some of the same movements the Whole Grain Friends do in the book by saying, "Let's all do what our Whole Grain Friends do!"

Demonstrate and call out the movements so the children can run, turn around, hop, and jump like the Whole Grain Friends in the book. Then say,

"Run in place like Tito Soft Tortilla,

Turn around and around like Haley Whole Wheat Bread,

Hop like Bonita Brown Rice,

Jump like Ollie Oatmeal!"

**7** After the movement activity, make copies of the *Whole Grain Train Tickets* handout (included) and cut the tickets so each child can receive one to color and later use it to board the train. Provide each child with a ticket and crayons then announce, "Let's color our tickets so we can ride on the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train!"

You may want to play the song "Purple Train," from the CD *Rachel's Fun Time*, in the background.

# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

**8** After the children have colored their tickets of the Whole Grain Friends, decide which of the following options works best.

**A. Have the children stand up with their tickets.** Say, "Let's all get in a line; the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train is coming!"

In a very animated voice say, "All aboard the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train! Please have your tickets ready!"

Collect each child's ticket as they pretend to board the train (save the tickets to be given back later). Make the train whistle sound "Wooo, wooo" and motion up and down with your right hand asking the children to also pull the train whistle.

Demonstrate how to make circular movements on each side of the body while making the sound of a train like "Chuga, chuga, chuga."

Encourage the children to do the same. You can tape a picture of a train (included) on your back and have the children follow behind making the sounds and movements of a train.

**B. If space is available, set up rows of chairs with an aisle down the center (2 to 3 chairs on each side of the aisle) to pretend the children are riding in the train.** In a very animated voice say, "All aboard the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train! Please sit down and have your tickets ready!"

Go down the aisle collecting tickets; these will be given back to the children at the end of the day. Make the whistle sound "Wooo, wooo!" and motion up and down with your right hand asking the children to also pull the whistle on the train.

Demonstrate how to make circular movements on each side of the body while making the sound of a train like "Chuga, chuga, chuga."

Encourage the children to do the same while sitting in the chairs.

**9** If sitting in chairs, ask the children to stand up and get into "train formation." Have the children ride the train to the sink (while making the circular movements with their arms) to wash their hands before eating their snack. Say, "Let's ride the train to the rest room to wash our hands and then ride back to have a whole grain snack!"

Have the children help make the snack by providing each child with a whole grain tortilla and a slice of cheese. Say, "Let's have fun eating a Choo-Choo Wrap."

The children can roll up the cheese inside the tortilla and sit in their seats pretending they are eating in the train's dining car. You can have the children pretend they are riding past a farm with different types of fields. Encourage the children to imagine the different types of fields and animals on the farm. In an enthusiastic voice say, "I see a cornfield and cows. What do you see?"

Allow the children time to respond.

**10** After the children have finished their snack, say, "I enjoyed riding on the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train today. Did you enjoy it too? I am so proud of you because now you know that when we eat whole grains our bodies have lots of energy to think and play."

Return each child's train ticket and tell the children to take them home to their parents and talk about their whole grain train ride!

**Remember to make copies of the parent letter with the take-home activity sheet printed on the reverse side to send home with each child. The community fact sheet is also included for you to copy and display at your center or distribute as appropriate.**

for children ages 4½–5

## concept

Introduce children to whole grains, and encourage them to make whole grains a part of a complete breakfast.

# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train



## goals

1. Children are introduced to whole grains as a healthy choice for breakfast.
2. Children will learn about whole grains and where they come from.

## objectives

1. Children will participate in identifying whole grains.
2. Children will recognize the importance of eating whole grains for breakfast.
3. Children will identify that whole grains come from plants.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Empty boxes or packages of whole grain and non-whole grain products for comparison, such as spaghetti, cereal, bread, and crackers
- *The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train* by Reeves, Stickney, and Bowden
- Pictures of wheat, corn, and rice fields (included)
- *Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train Tickets* coloring sheet (included)
- *Whole Grain Friends* coloring sheet (included)
- Scissors for the teacher
- Non-toxic crayons
- *Rachel's Fun Time* music CD (optional)
- Non-toxic glue sticks
- Craft sticks (1 for each child)
- Tape
- Picture of a train (included)
- Whole grain tortillas or wraps (5-inch) and a slice of cheese for each child

## activities

**1** Prior to starting this activity, arrange several empty boxes or packages of whole grain foods where each child can see them as they are discussed.

**2** Begin by having the children sit in a circle and then read the book *The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train*.

**3** After reading the book say, "Today we are going to learn about whole grains. Does anyone know what a whole grain is?" Allow children an opportunity to respond.

Then ask, "Did anyone have oatmeal, bread, pancakes, or cereal today?"

Allow the children an opportunity to share what they had to eat earlier and then share what you had to eat as well. Say, "Did you know they can be made with whole grains? Remember the grains group from MyPlate?"

Then show the children pictures of the wheat, corn, and rice fields (included) while saying, "Whole grains come from plants like wheat, corn, rice, and oats." >>>

# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

>>> Hold the picture of the wheat field again and say, "This is where wheat comes from. Raise your hand if you have ever been to a farm or seen one on television or while riding in a car?"

Allow enough time for the children to respond. Hold up a box or package of a whole wheat grain food and say, "This food started here (pointing to the picture of the wheat field) before your parents were able to buy it."

Smile and say, "We have the easy part we get to eat it. When we eat whole grain foods we eat foods that are good for our growing bodies!"

You can do the same with the picture of the corn field and a box or package of food made from corn. If possible, show the children a real husk of corn to help the children make the connection between the food and the corn field.

**4** Say, "Raise your hand if you can tell me the name of a food that you eat at home that can be a whole grain."

Allow time for the children to respond. Praise them if they said rice, tortillas, spaghetti or another whole grain food. Hold up an empty box of spaghetti and say, "This is a box of spaghetti. Did you know you can buy healthy spaghetti? Raise your hand if you know what we call healthy spaghetti. We call it whole wheat spaghetti!"

Hold up the various food packages collected and ask the same questions for each one.

**5** Make copies of the *Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train Tickets* and the *Whole Grain Friends* handouts (included). Cut the sheets so each child can receive a ticket and a *Whole Grain Friends* rectangle for later activities.

**6** Next have the children move to their seats and provide them with crayons and a train ticket to color. When the children have finished, say, "Which one of the Whole Grain Friends was your favorite? Raise your hand if it was Bonita Brown Rice or Ollie Oatmeal, or Tito Soft Tortilla. Oh I almost forgot Haley Whole Wheat Bread!"

Allow the children time to respond to their favorite character. Encourage the children to do some of the same movements the Whole Grain Friends do in the book by saying, "Let's all stand up and do what our Whole Grain Friends do!"

Demonstrate and call out the movements so the children can run, turn around, hop and jump like the Whole Grain Friends in the book. Say,

"Run in place like Tito Soft Tortilla,

Turn around and around like Haley Whole Wheat Bread,

Hop like Bonita Brown Rice,

Jump like Ollie Oatmeal!"

**7** Have the children return to their seats and provide them with a *Whole Grain Friends* rectangle to color.

You may want to play the song "Purple Train," from the CD *Rachel's Fun Time*, in the background during this activity. After the children finish coloring, provide each child with a glue stick and a craft stick. Assist the children with gluing the characters onto the craft stick if needed. When the children are finished, enthusiastically say, "Let's take our new Whole Grain Friends on a pretend Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train ride!"

Make a "Wooo, wooo" sound while motioning right hand up and down, like pulling on a train whistle.

# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

**8** You can decide which of the following options works best:

**A. Have the children stand up with their tickets and Whole Grain Friends cutouts.** Say, "Let's all get in a line; the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train is coming!"

In a very animated voice say, "All aboard the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train! Please have your tickets ready!"

Collect each child's ticket as they pretend to board the train (save the tickets to be given back later). Make the train whistle sound "Wooo, wooo" and motion up and down with your right hand asking the children to also pull the train whistle.

Demonstrate how to make circular movements on each side of the body while making the sound of a train like "Chuga, chuga, chuga."

Encourage the children to do the same. You can tape a picture of a train (included) on your back and have the children follow behind making the sounds and movements of a train.

**B. If space is available, set up rows of chairs with an aisle down the center (2 to 3 chairs on each side of the aisle) to pretend the children are riding in the train.** In a very animated voice say, "All aboard the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train! Please sit down and have your tickets ready!"

Go down the aisle collecting tickets; these will be given back to the children at the end of the day. Make the train whistle sound "Wooo, wooo!" and motion up and down with your right hand asking the children to also pull the whistle on the train.

Demonstrate how to make circular movements on each side of the body while making the sound of a train like "Chuga, chuga, chuga."

Encourage the children to do the same while sitting in the chairs.

**9** If sitting in chairs, ask the children to stand up and get into "train formation." Have the children ride the train to the sink (while making the circular movements with their arms) to wash their hands before eating their snack. Say, "Let's ride the train to the rest room to wash our hands and then ride back to have a whole grain snack!"

Have the children help make the snack by providing each child with a whole grain tortilla and a slice of cheese. Say, "Let's have fun eating a Choo-Choo Wrap."

The children can roll up the cheese inside the tortilla and sit in their seats pretending they are eating in the train's dining car. Have the children pretend they are riding past a farm with different types of fields. Encourage the children to imagine the different types of fields and animals on the farm. In an enthusiastic voice say, "I see a cornfield and cows. What do you see?"

Allow the children time to respond.

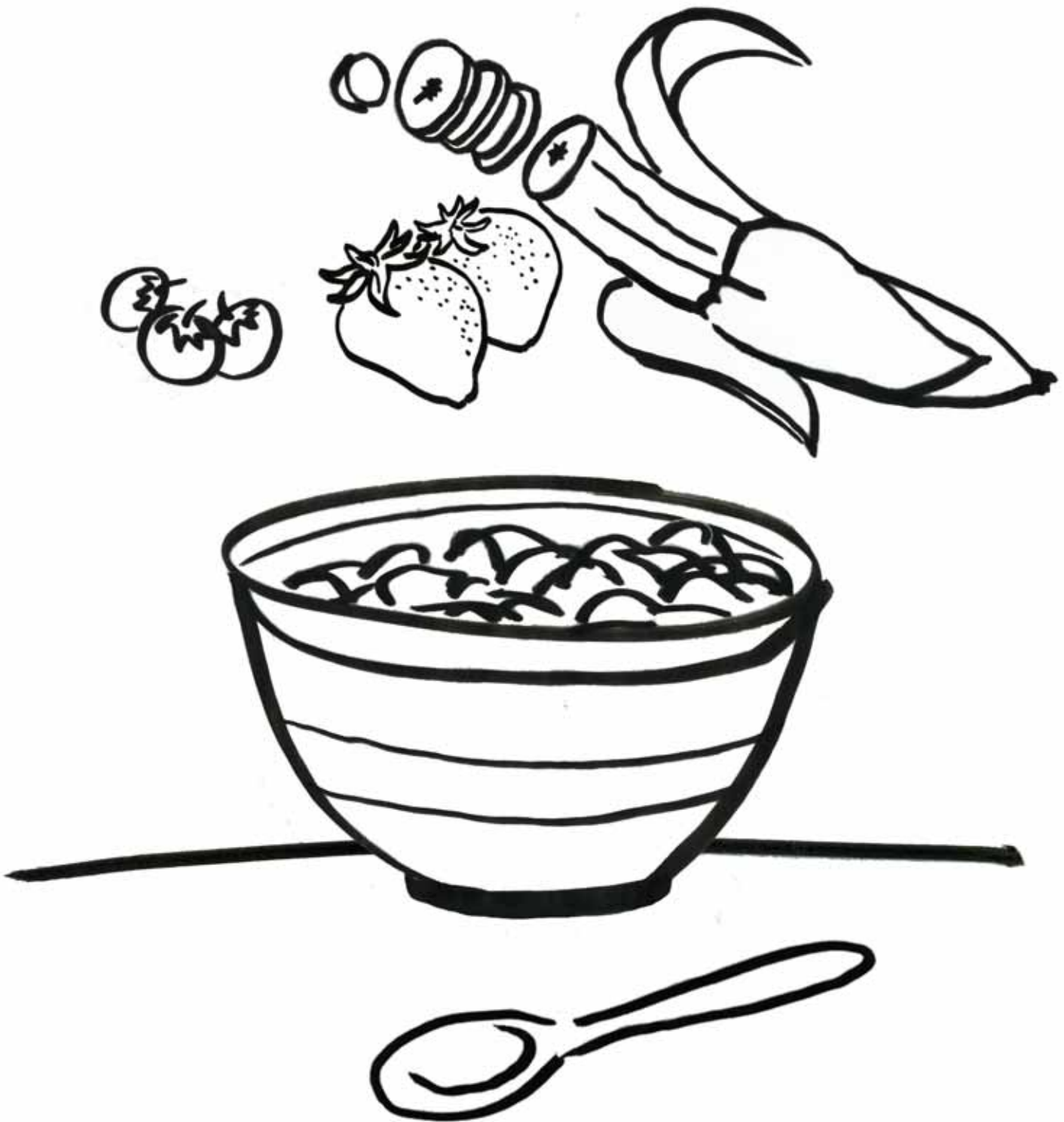
**10** After the children have finished their snack, say, "I enjoyed riding on the Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train today. Did you enjoy it too? I am so proud of you because now you know that when we eat whole grains our bodies have lots of energy to think and play."

Return each child's train ticket and tell the children to take them home along with their Whole Grain Friends to their parents and talk about their whole grain train ride!

**Remember to make copies of the parent letter with the take-home activity sheet printed on the reverse side to send home with each child. The community fact sheet is also included for you to copy and display at your center or distribute as appropriate.**



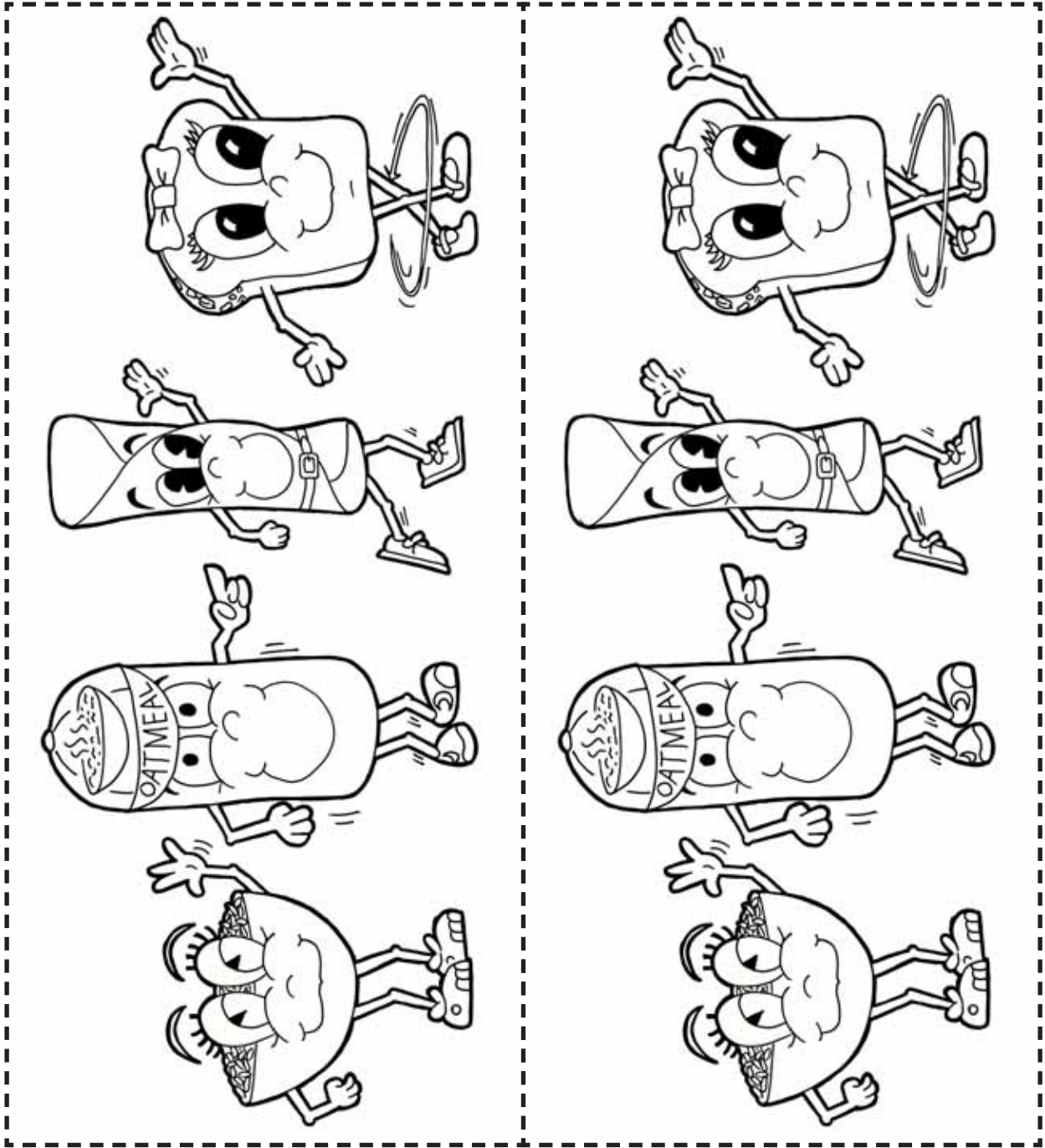
**Which fruit would you like to try in your whole grain cereal?** Circle the fruit you would like to try, and then color it in.



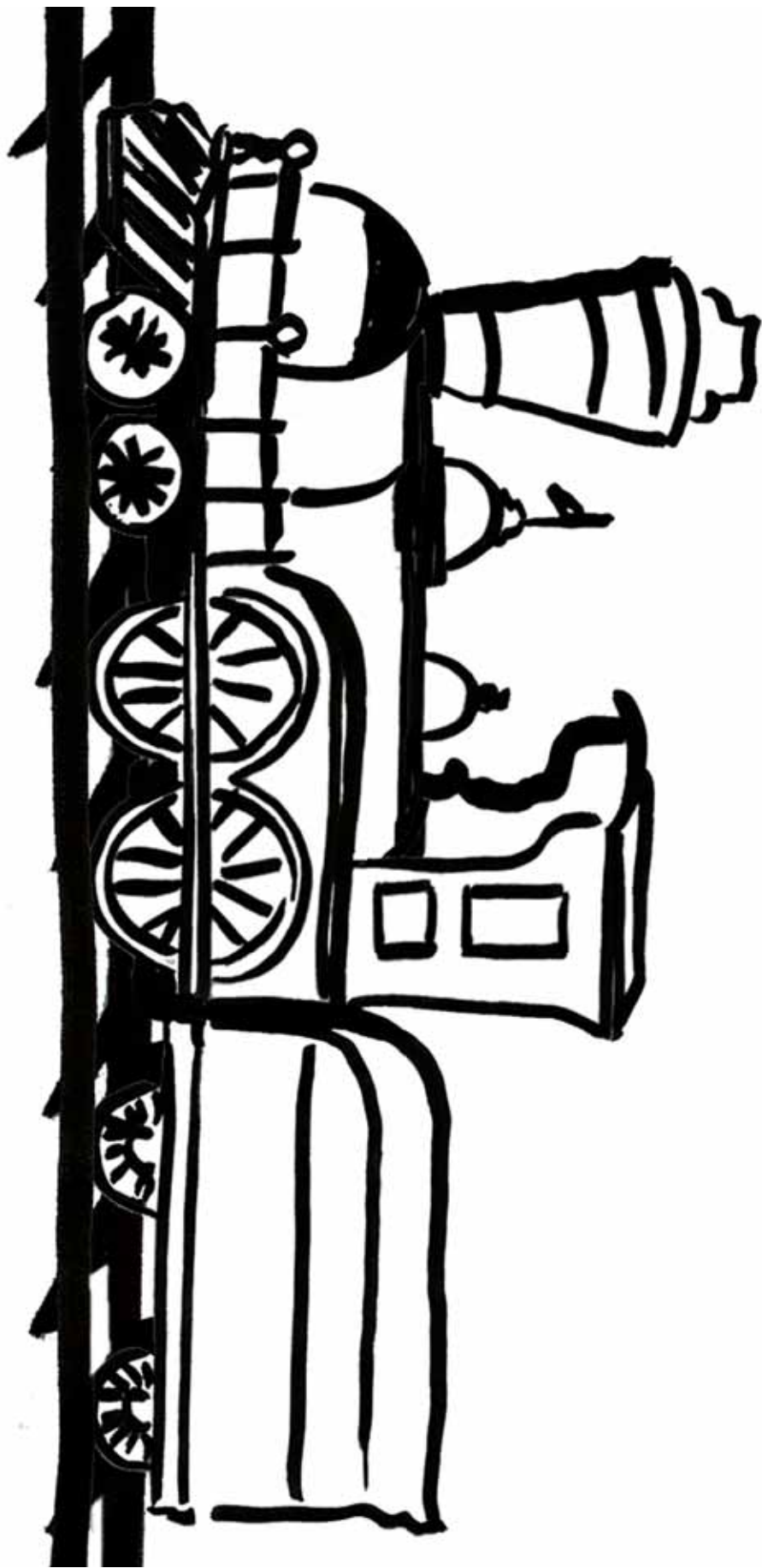




# Whole Grain Friends









# The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train Tickets

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train



# Dear Parent:

Your child has been learning about the importance of eating whole grains in the *The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train* lesson. Your child participated and enjoyed an imaginary train ride where they learned that eating whole grains at breakfast can help them have energy to think, run, and play.

We also learned about whole grains and where they come from. Your child was encouraged to "wake up to breakfast" by eating whole grains in the morning and throughout the day. They also learned that whole grains provide important vitamins and energy for their growing bodies.

Recognizing whole grains is easy—look for ingredients listed on the food label. The word "whole" should be listed before the type of grain, such as whole wheat flour, whole durum flour, whole grain barley, whole corn meal, and whole oats.



When shopping, choose whole grain products like pasta, rice, waffles, whole grain tortillas, crackers, pancakes, breads, rolls, and pizza crusts. When eating out, ask which meals are available with whole grain products.

Encouraging your child and family to eat whole grain foods can help them develop lifelong healthy eating habits. Turn the page and help your child with the whole grain cereal activity.

Sincerely,

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# Whole Grains and You

## What are whole grains?

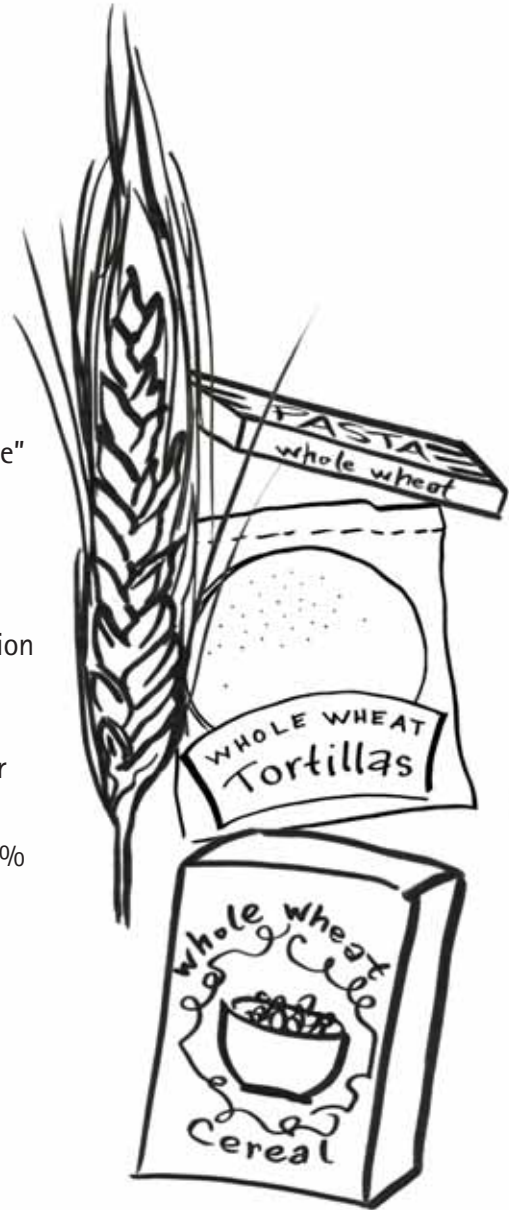
- Grains made from the **entire kernel**
- You should see **"whole"** as the first ingredient
- Whole wheat, barley, corn, and rye are a few examples
- They contain **more vitamins and protein** than refined "white" grains

## Why are they important?

- They **contain good amounts of fiber** that helps with digestion and can even lower your risk of heart disease and high cholesterol
- They are **full of vitamins and minerals** that are essential for your body
- They can help **decrease your risk for type 2 diabetes** by 20% or more
- They **help you feel full** and can aid in weight maintenance

## Ready to take the plunge?

- **Substitute half the white flour for whole wheat flour** in cookies, breads, and pancakes
- **Try oatmeal** for a filling breakfast or satisfying snack
- **Buy whole grain pasta**, breads, and cereals
- **Try whole grain crackers** or pita with cheese for a quick snack
- **Add an unexpected crunch** to your yogurt by **adding oatmeal or crushed whole grain cereal**
- **Try to make half of your daily grain servings whole**



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## Want more information?

[www.wholegrainscouncil.org](http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org)  
[www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/grains\\_tips.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/grains_tips.html)



## Learning Module Four: Whole Grains

### Objectives of Module Four Lessons:

#### Children will be able to:

1. Name at least three examples of whole grains.
2. Explain at least two health benefits of whole grains.
3. List at least three whole grain foods they have tried during the past month.

### Lesson 3: Whole Grains- Math & Science Application

#### Children Will:

1. Identify basic shapes of common whole grain foods.
2. Compare food items based on concepts of more, less, equal using whole grain foods.
3. Observe common proportions of whole, half, quarter using whole grain food items.

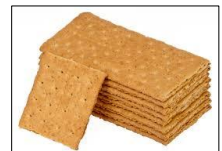
#### Teacher:

1. Display MyPlate Poster at start of lesson.
2. (*less than 5 minutes*) Teacher will prompt children to identify all of the groups on MyPlate, and ask for 1-2 examples from each group. Prompt for more examples of grains, drawing from previous lessons.
3. **Ask** what shape they see in the grains they eat at home and at school.
4. **Hold** up a whole grain tortilla, ask class to identify the shape (circle).
5. **Hold** up a full sheet of a graham cracker\* and ask class to identify the shape (rectangle).
6. **Hold** up a half sheet of a graham cracker\* and ask class to identify the shape (square).
7. Gather children at tables after washing hands.
8. Provide a plate to each child.
9. Provide a full sheet of graham cracker\* to each child and ask them what shape they see.

\* *After October 1, 2017 graham crackers are no longer creditable for CACFP meals or snacks. They are considered a grain-based dessert, but could be offered as a non-claimed snack or "extra."*

### Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.  
**This lesson includes a tasting!**
3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.



10. Instruct the children to break the cracker down the middle to make 2 pieces. Ask them to identify what shape they see (square).
11. Instruct the children to break the cracker down the middle again. Ask the children how many pieces of graham crackers are now on their plate (4).
12. Instruct children to move all of their pieces to one side of their plate. Then instruct them to move one piece to the other side. Ask them to compare the 2 sides of their plate.
  - a. Do they have an equal number of pieces?
  - b. Count how many pieces are on the side with more.
  - c. Count how many pieces are on the side with less.
13. Now instruct the children to move one more piece of graham cracker over so that they have 2 pieces on each side of their plate. Prompt them to compare the number of pieces now (they are equal, the same).
14. Now they can eat the yummy graham crackers\*!
15. Talk about the whole grains served as part of meals and snacks at the center that day or week. It may be helpful to have a menu available during the conversation.

**Supplies Needed:**

1. Whole grain tortillas, at least 2 per table or group of children
2. Whole grain graham crackers\*, 1 box
3. Large paper plates for graham cracker exercise.



*\* After October 1, 2017 graham crackers are no longer creditable for CACFP meals or snacks. They are considered a grain-based dessert, but could be offered as a non-claimed snack or “extra.”*

## Learning Module Four: Whole Grains

### Objectives of Module Four Lessons:

#### Children will be able to:

1. Name at least three examples of whole grains.
2. Explain at least two health benefits of whole grains.
3. List at least three whole grain foods they have tried during the past month.

### Lesson 4: Whole Grains- Tasting Activity

#### Children Will:

1. Tell the rest of the class something they have learned about whole grains
2. Name at least one health benefit of whole grains.
3. Name at least two whole grain foods they have eaten since Module 4 began.
4. Sample whole grain cereals.

#### Teacher:

1. Display the books you have read as a class during Module 4: Whole Grains.
2. Ask class to share something they have learned about whole grains. Allow at least three children to share.
3. Ask class: "how are whole grains healthy for our bodies?" Summarize and add to class responses to cover the following main points:
  - a. They give our body vitamins and minerals to help our bodies grow and stay healthy.
  - b. They provide fiber to help our stomachs and our heart stay healthy.
  - c. They provide energy for us to learn, play, and explore
4. Ask class to list the whole grain foods they have eaten either in class, at center-based meals, or at home.
5. Ask students to name the types of cereal they eat at home.
6. Tell class that they are going to sample some whole grain cereals today and vote for their favorite.
7. Create a poster with a column for each of the 3 types of cereal to be tasted. Glue or tape one piece of cereal at the top of each column for easier student recognition.

#### Preparation 3 - 7 days Before Teaching:

1. Read through the lesson outline.
2. Purchase, copy, and gather all supplies & materials needed.

#### **This lesson includes a tasting!**

3. Adjust the activities or instructions based on the needs and abilities of the children in your classroom.
4. If using multimedia resources, test volume and internet connection prior to lesson to make sure they work.

8. Tasting can be done in several different ways, depending on class set-up and availability of adult assistants. Provide one type of cereal at a time to prevent children from eating too quickly. We want the children to really focus on tasting each type of cereal.
  - a. Option 1: seat children at the table. Provide one cereal at a time one each child has tasted.
  - b. Option 2: create “stations” for each cereal in different areas of the classroom. Students may go to one station for tasting, then the teacher would announce when to rotate to next station.
  - c. Option 3: Seat children in 3 different areas of the classroom and have all three types of cereal available for each group to taste, one at a time.
9. After each student has tried all 3 types of cereal, teacher will invite students up to the board (2-4 at a time) to receive a sticker, and place it in the column representing their favorite of the tasting.
10. Once all votes are cast, ask children to use their words to describe each of the cereals, one cereal at a time. Teacher may need to prompt feedback by asking about different senses.
11. Ask class to help count the votes (stickers). Write the total number of votes for each cereal at the bottom of each column.
12. Ask class which cereal had the most votes. Announce that cereal as the winner for today!

### Supplies Needed:

1. Bring in 3 types of Whole Grain-Rich cereal (generic brands are ok as long as “whole grain” is still first ingredient): regular Cheerios, Whole Wheat Chex, and (unflavored, not frosted) Mini-Wheats.



2. Napkins or small clear plastic 3 oz cups to sample cereals (enough for each child to have 3 cups)
3. Flip chart to create a poster with a column for each of the 3 types of cereal to be tasted.
4. Glue or tape
5. Stickers, enough for each child to have 1 to cast their vote after the tasting.