

Food Pyramid Bead Activity

Creating a bracelet or book mark will help students understand the new food pyramid and how to calculate their dietary needs for each food group. Students should refer to the <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/kids-pyramid.html> website for complete information on the new food pyramid, serving sizes and portions and other nutritional information. There is more information also available at www.zip4twens.com. The amounts listed below are averages and not for a specific age group or body size.

Materials Needed:

- One 12"-14" brown leather strap, jute string, pipe cleaner (for book marks) or other item to string beads on.
- Beads:

Color:

Clear bead
3 Blue pony beads
2-3 Green pony beads
2 Red pony beads
6 Orange pony beads
5-6 Purple pony beads
1 Yellow pony beads

Representing:

Serves as the adjuster bead
Milk Group
Vegetable Group
Fruit Group
Grains Group
Meat and Beans Group
Oils Group

Procedure:

If making a bracelet, tie a knot on one end of the string close to the end. Begin with the clear bead as it will serve as the adjuster bead. String the colored beads either a) grouped as a color (easier for students to see the numbers involved or b) in random order for aesthetic purposes. Take the end of the string without a knot and lace it through the clear bead. Tie a knot at the end. Now your clear bead has become an adjuster for the bracelet. Excess string below knots may be trimmed.

If using a pipe cleaner, make a knot or twist the cleaner at one end so the beads stay on. A clear bead is not needed. You can make a loop after all beads are put on the pipe cleaner that can be used for the top of the bookmark.

Discuss the resources that each colored bead represents: (Amounts and types of food based on a total of 2,000 calories)

1. Blue- 3 cups or equivalent of milk or dairy products
2. Green- 2-3 cups of vegetable group
3. Red- 2 cups of the fruit group
4. Orange- 6 ounces or the equivalent of the grains group
5. Purple- 5 ½ ounces or the equivalent of the meat and beans group
6. Yellow- Oils are not a food group, but you need some for good health. Get your oils from fish, nuts, and liquid oils such as corn oil, soybean oil and canola oil.