

# Peppers

**GRADE  
K-1**

**Month: February**

**Time Required: 30 minutes**

**Alternative Tastings: Tomato and Cucumber**

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## Lesson Goals

- Students will increase their knowledge of fruits and vegetables.
- Students will learn to try new fruits and vegetables and increase their preference for them.
- Students will learn that their peers like to eat fruits and vegetables.
- Students will learn how to ask their parents/caregivers for the fruits and vegetables tasted in class.

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## Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to categorize food colors.
- Students will be able to practice the concept of eating a rainbow.

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## Academic Standards Connection

Coming soon.

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## Essential Components Checklist

- Physical Activity
- “Asking” Discussion
- Voting
- Newsletters, BINGO Cards, Stickers, and Incentives
- Tasting

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## Materials

- Several sheets of construction paper: red, orange, yellow, green, purple/blue
  - Prepared rainbow outline - on flipchart or another large sheet of paper (example attached)
  - Printed and cut fruit and vegetable cards
  - Tools to attach cards to the rainbow (ex: tape, Velcro depending on rainbow design)
  - Bell pepper outline for necklaces
  - Several colors of bell peppers (enough for each student to sample each color)
  - Paper plates and/or cutting boards
  - Disposable or reusable plastic knives
  - Knife
  - Cutting board
  - Hand sanitizer
  - Dip (ex: homemade dip, hummus, etc.)
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## Preparation

- ❑ Prepare rainbow outline: this can be developed to be reused from class to class, using a felt-board rainbow, Velcro and laminated cards; or make one rainbow for each classroom using flipchart paper, color printing, and tape.
- ❑ Prepare fruit and vegetable cards: print and cut a colorful array of fruit and vegetable images to be used for the classroom rainbow; consider laminating these and adding velcro if they will be reused.

## Engage

### 1. Introduction: 2 minutes

*The “Introduction” section is a time to introduce yourself, recap previous lessons, establish norms, or introduce the day's lesson.*

### 2. Engage Activity: 6 minutes

*The “Engage Activity” section has two purposes: 1) to activate students' prior knowledge and 2) to engage every student.*

*Today, we're going to learn about and practice eating a rainbow of colors. But first, I want to know, what is your favorite color? Think in your head (can put fingers up to temples and close eyes) and when I say the magic word, “pepper,” I want you to say your favorite color out loud. Ready? Pepper. Students say their favorite color out loud.*

#### Physical Activity

Holding several sheets of construction paper, flip through the colors.

- **Round 1:** When a student sees their favorite, instruct them to do a physical activity (ex: make up a dance move, do a number of jumping jacks, etc. See [page 52 of Get Movin'](#) or [pages 27-28 of Brain Breaks](#) for ideas). Flip through each color a couple of times, speeding up as you progress.
- **Round 2:** Tell students, *I have another question for you. Think about which of these colors is your favorite to eat - green, red, yellow, orange, and purple. When I hold up your color, do a star jump to show us that it's your favorite color of food to eat.* Flip through each color a couple of times, speeding up as you progress.

*Excellent! Thank you for sharing your favorite colors with all of us.*

## Explore

### 3. Experiential Learning: 10 minutes

*This is a time for students to familiarize themselves with what you'll be tasting. The best way to do this is through a hands-on or exploratory activity.*

Seat students together at the carpet (opportunity for 3 deep breaths).

#### Make a Classroom Rainbow

Show the rainbow outline prepared on flipchart paper. Explain, *Today, we'll be tasting a vegetable called a pepper. Peppers grow in a rainbow of colors* (stick images of a red, green, yellow, orange and purple peppers to the large classroom rainbow). *Colorful fruits and vegetables contain different types of vitamins, mineral and other nutrients. When we eat a rainbow of colors, our body takes in a rainbow of nutrients.*

Put printed images of fruits and vegetables into the center of the carpet and instruct students. *We're going to build our classroom rainbow using these colorful fruits and vegetables. When it's your turn, please pick-up a fruit or vegetable from the pile, and stick it to our rainbow in the line matching its color. When you're done you'll transition back to your desk.*

\*Consider using this transition as an opportunity to wash hands or share hand sanitizer with students.

### Eating a Rainbow Together

While holding up a fresh bell pepper say, *For our tasting today, we're going to taste a rainbow of peppers (serve 3 different colors of bell peppers). We can eat all sides of the pepper after we remove the seeds and the stem (demonstrate if preparing tasting from fresh, whole pepper or explain that this has already been done). You're going to be a chef today and prepare your own pepper strips that we'll taste with a dip (ex: homemade dressing or hummus).*

Before passing out materials, be sure to review the following safety:

- Always cut down.
- Always place your knife down on the table when you're not using it.
- Use pinching fingers or the bear claw to protect your fingers.

Pass out hand sanitizer, then paper plates to each student. Paper plates can serve as both their cutting board and their plate, if you're not using reusable cutting boards. *Before* passing out knives, pass out pieces of the pepper and demonstrate how to properly cut it up. *Then* pass out knives. (Passing out plates and peppers first means no idle hands holding knives while waiting for peppers).

*Raise your hand when your peppers are all chopped up, and I will come around to give you some dip.*

### **4. Tasting Activity: 3 minutes**

*The "Tasting Activity" section is when students get to try the fruit or vegetable. Don't forget to review your food tasting norms (for example, "don't yuck my yum").*

Explain to students that *we're going to taste different colors of peppers one at a time and compare their flavors*. Be sure to review your brave tasting rules (for example, don't yuck my yum, we all try together, etc.). Ask students to use their senses while they wait until the entire class is ready to taste the peppers together.

**Tasting Options:** Depending on how much time you will have for hands-on food prep during a lesson, consider chopping food ahead of time or portioning pieces of fruits and vegetables for students to chop during the lesson.

- Decorate a large cracker with a rainbow of fruits and vegetables, on hummus/cream cheese.
- Make rainbow wraps, using half a tortilla and a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. See USDA's "[Summer Food, Summer Moves](#)" [recipe for a hummus wrap](#) for ideas.
- Consider adapting the recipe from [FoodCorps' Rainbow Grain Salad Lesson](#) to fit your lesson.

## Reflect

### **5. Voting Activity: 2 minutes**

*This is a time for students to give their opinion on what they tried!*

As students taste the different peppers, have them vote with their thumbs. Observe their voting and offer positive reinforcement regarding the Brave Taster Rules. If a student dislikes the tasting, perhaps ask what they would change about it.

### **6. Reflection: 7 minutes**

*Reflection is one of the most important processes for students to process and retain new information or*

*experiences. Give students an opportunity to reflect on what they've learned or tried in your lesson. This is an excellent place for students to practice the "Asking Discussion".*

Make a rainbow pepper necklace.

Print and cut out 3-4 pepper images for each student (coloring template attached). Students will color the peppers and attach them to a length of string using tape. Work with the teacher to make a necklace for each student. Or, if the class will keep their classroom rainbow, attach the peppers to that.

Reflection Questions:

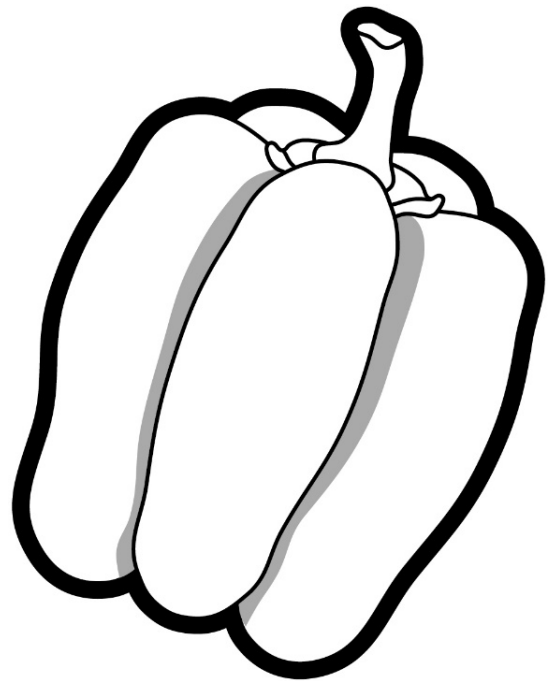
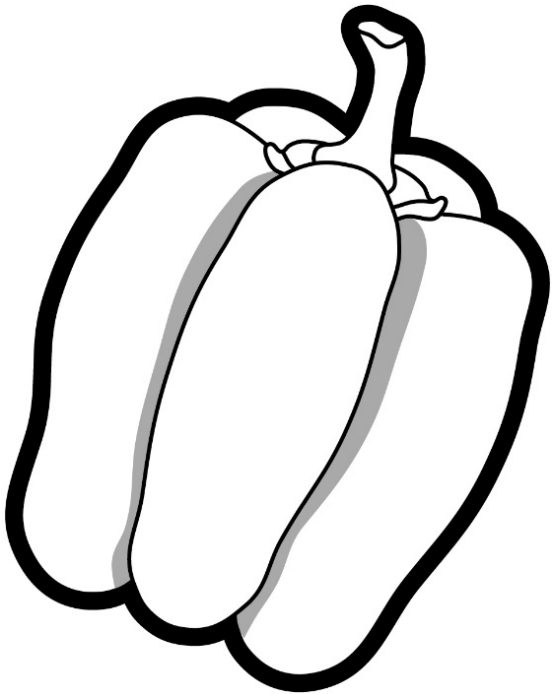
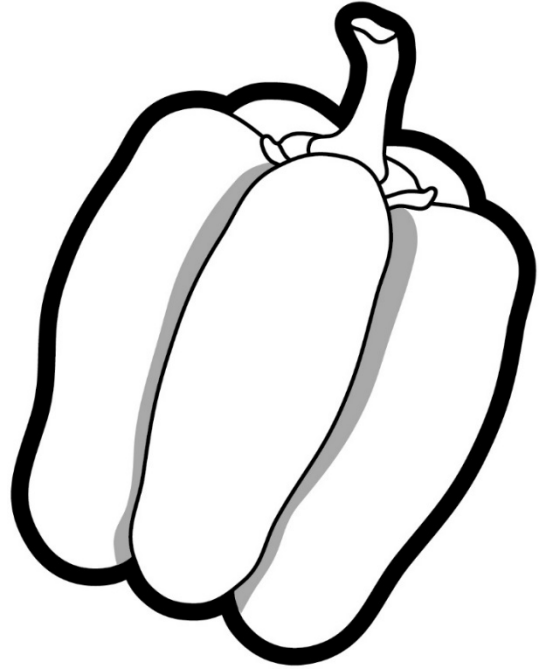
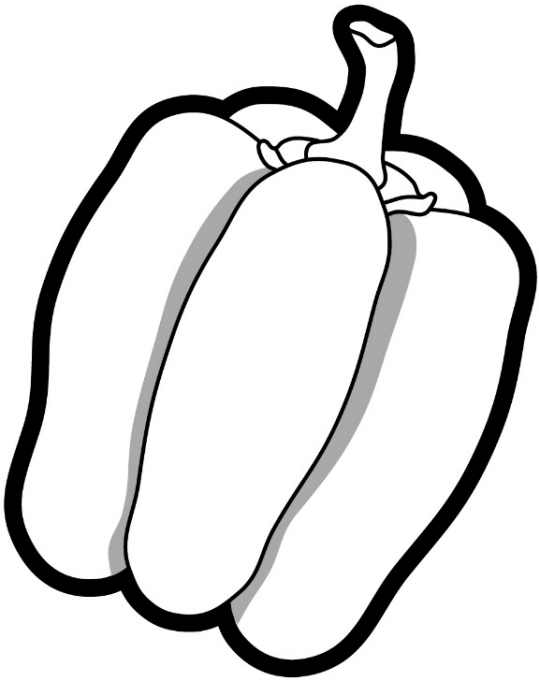
- Did anyone eat their favorite color today?
- Out of the 3 colors we tasted, what was your favorite color of pepper?
- Can someone raise their hand and tell us what they liked or loved about the pepper?
- Can someone raise their hand and tell us what they would change about their pepper tasting?

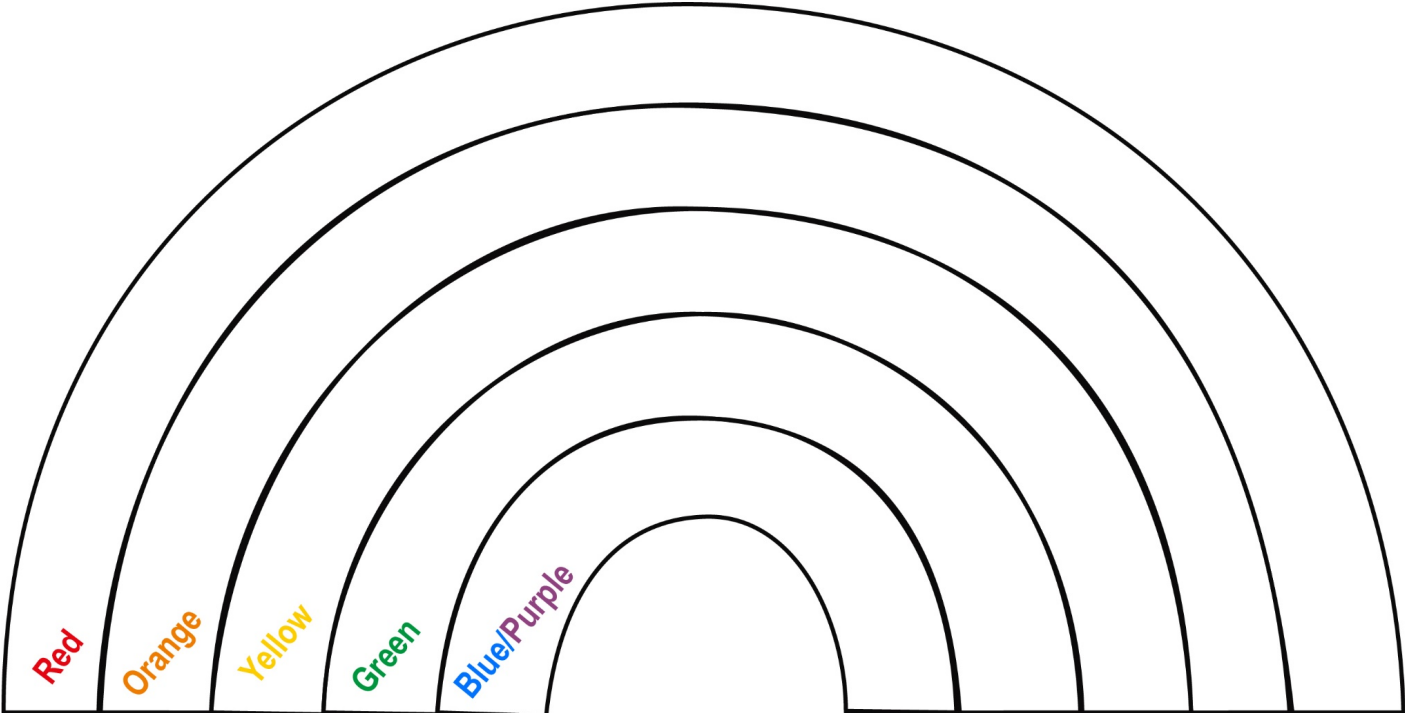
Asking Discussion:

*Raise your hand if you're excited to go home and tell your family about tasting peppers.*

- Ask a student with a raised hand: *if you wanted to try this at home, how might you ask your grown-ups?*
- You might also ask additional questions like, *where could you buy peppers?*

Leave newsletters, incentives, stickers, and BINGO sheets with the teachers to pass out.





**Make on flipchart paper or a reusable felt version on poster board.**

# Lesson Supplement

## Recommended Books

“Chile Pepper Pete” by Dawn Boone, “Chicks and Salsa” by Aaron Reynolds, “A Very Purple Pepper: Colors to Know So You Can Grow” by Peggy Sissel-Phelan, “Eat Lots of Colors!” by Helen Marsteller, “Growing Colors (Avenues)” by Bruce McMillan, “Green is a Chile Pepper” by Roseanne Thong, “It’s Me, Serrano the Pepper!” by Dina Attlias Nahmani

## Physical Activity

“Fruit and Veggie Yoga” in “Brain Breaks” (page 24) or the “Chile Pepper Pete” book (act out the sports for each pepper on the back page.)

More ideas for physical activity are available at <https://idph.iowa.gov/inn/play-your-way/brain-breaks>.

## What You Need to Know About Peppers

- Peppers can grow in Iowa.
- The variety and stage of ripeness determine the flavor and color of the pepper.
- As bell peppers age, they become sweeter and milder. Most peppers are harvested when they are green (immature). Most but not all green peppers will turn yellow to red over time. A red pepper is a mature green pepper.
- Select a pepper that has firm skin and is heavy for its size. The stem should be fresh and green.
- Take out the seeds before eating.

## Facts About Peppers

- Peppers originated in Central and South America.
- California and Florida grow 80% of the bell peppers in the United States.
- Christopher Columbus discovered peppers in the West Indies and thought they were spices. He brought them back to Europe.
- Peppers have two broad categories: (1) hot or chili peppers, and (2) sweet or bell peppers.

## Health Connection

- Peppers are high in Vitamin C, which helps fight off germs and heal cuts and wounds (Reinforce with defense shield by crossing arms).
- Peppers are a good source of Vitamin A. (Reinforce healthy eyes with super goggles).

## References and Resources

[https://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Summer/021712/ED\\_Peppers\\_Newsletter\\_Final.pdf](https://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Summer/021712/ED_Peppers_Newsletter_Final.pdf)

<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/produce-item/peppers/>

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/discover-myplate-emergent-reader-mini-books>

<https://fruitsandveggies.org/fruits-and-veggies/bell-peppers/>

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide/bell-peppers>

