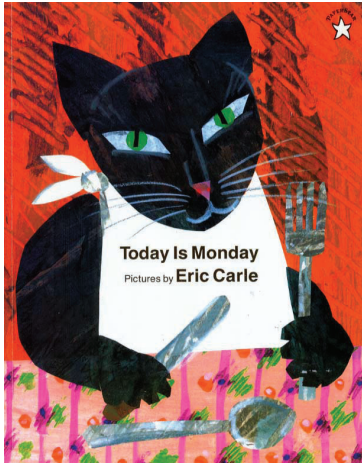


Reading with children can improve their language, literacy, and social-emotional skills, increasing their knowledge of the world around them. With the right book choices, reading can introduce children to healthy eating habits too!

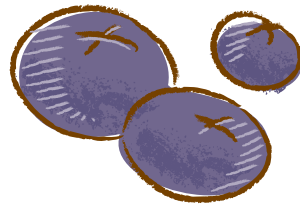


TODAY IS MONDAY

by Eric Carle

What It's All About

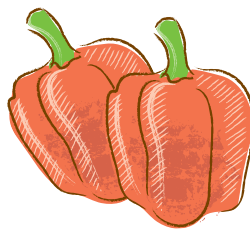
Each day of the week brings a new food - string beans, fresh fish and more. In the end, a diverse set of children are invited to come together and share a meal.



Discover a World of Words

Throughout the book introduce new vocabulary words using gestures, tone of voice, pointing to illustrations, or providing brief explanations. Examples include:

- *String Beans*: a long green vegetable
- *Roast Beef*: baked meat, from cattle
- *Parrot (photo)*: a brightly colored, talking bird



Dig into the Story

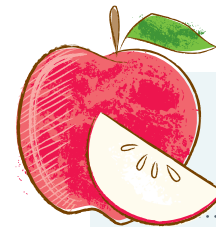
Develop children's comprehension of the book by discussing higher-level information (e.g., link characters' feelings to their actions and/or events in the story, predict what might happen, summarize chunks of text). Use prompts throughout the story, such as:

- *How do you think the pelican catches the fish?*
- *How does the snake cook spaghetti?*
- *Look at the last page together. Ask children what they think is happening in this page.*

Make Connections Beyond the Book

After reading the story, make connections to an aspect of the child's real-life by:

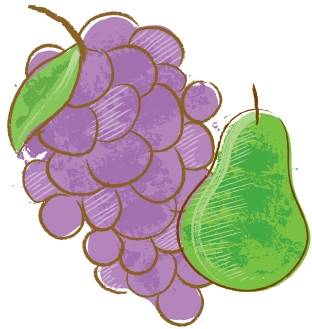
- *Discussing a special food or day of the week for eating in your family*
- *Asking who they might invite to a meal with all of these different foods*
- *Singing the song at the end of the book. If you can't read music, make up a tune!*



Together Time Activity

“WHICH FOOD AM I?” GAME: Based on the popular “Who Am I?” party game, this is a fun way to get kids talking about healthy foods and how they grow. Play it with the family, in the classroom, on the playground or at a birthday party.

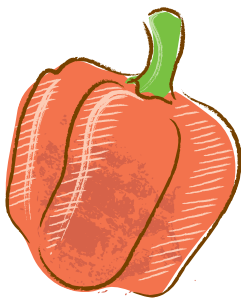
You’ll need: a pen and enough sticky labels or name tags for each person to have one.



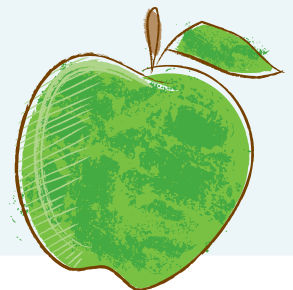
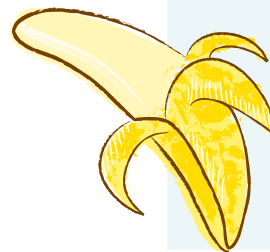
- 1** Write the name of a healthy food on each label or tag (for non-readers, draw pictures or print photos of the foods). Use the foods from the book or think of your own.
- 2** Stick one label/tag on each person’s back. Do not let the person wearing the tag see it!

- 3** Each child asks friends questions to try to figure out what food they are. Examples: Am I a fruit or a vegetable? Do I grow on a tree or in the ground? Can I be eaten raw? Do people usually peel me? Depending on the age range, time allowed and size of the group, kids can break into pairs and each child asks their partner questions, then makes a guess. Alternately, kids can circulate around the whole group and keep asking questions until everyone has guessed what food they are. Set a time limit if needed.

Once everyone has guessed what food they are, you may want to play another round!



TIP:
To make it more challenging, only allow them to ask yes or no questions or limit the number of questions they can ask.
To make it easier for younger children, allow them to ask for clues.



Talking Points

- Discuss the nutrition value of each food. Where is it on the food pyramid? What nutrients does this food provide?
- Talk about what makes a “serving size” for different foods. How many servings of each type of food should you eat each day?
- Brainstorm different ways of preparing each food.
- Which of the foods can you put together to make a complete meal? Let the kids “build a meal” by organizing themselves into small groups to represent which foods they would serve together.
- Talk about where each fruit or vegetable grows: on a tree, shrub or vine and in what climate. Visit the library or research online to find out when it’s in season and whether it is something you could grow in your own backyard.