

Summer Camp Lesson Plan (2-3 hours)

By Casey Brown and Marissa Thobe, VRG Intern and Volunteer

General Lesson Notes:

- It is important to remember that you are there to **educate** the students about vegan and vegetarian diets. You are not there to convert them.

- **Prior to the lesson, contact the instructors to get information on any allergies the students have. Double check this again when you get to the camp and before handing out any samples.**

- The lesson begins with your organization speaking to all of the students in one large group.

Introduction:

Begin by introducing yourselves and your organization, then give a brief summary of your plans for the day.

Discussion Questions:

→ Ask the students if they know anyone who is vegetarian or vegan.

→ Follow up this question by asking the students if they know what a vegetarian or vegan is.

Let the students raise their hands to answer and give multiple students an opportunity to share their thoughts. Give correct definitions after each. Vegetarian is someone who does not eat meat, fish, or fowl. They may still eat eggs and dairy products. A vegan is a vegetarian who does not use any animal products; therefore they do not consume meat, fish, fowl, dairy, or eggs.

Now that the students are familiar with the different foods that vegetarians and vegans do not eat, ask the students:

→ What kinds of foods do you think vegetarians do eat?

Answers can include: PB & J, mac & cheese, pizza, cereal, beans, nuts, tofu, grains, and a variety of other foods (answers will depend on whether you are discussing vegetarian or vegan diets).

Bring in food labels of vegetarian/vegan products to show the students.

→ These can include vegan cereals, rice, beans, granola bars, Amy's Toaster Pops, pasta, popcorn, vegan cheeses, vegan macaroni, vegan meat alternatives, almond milk cartons, crackers, bagels, etc.

*It is good to include a sample of foods that students are already familiar with and will recognize.

Let the students sample a variety of vegan products.

→ We brought a carton of soymilk, a carton of almond milk, two packages of Tofurky deli slices (different flavors), and a box of prepared vegan macaroni (Daiya brand).

→ Ask the students what they thought of each of the samples.

****Remember, ensure there are no allergies prior to sampling these foods.**

----Break into three groups based on the classroom/ages ----

After the introduction, divide the students up into different age groups. For our lesson, students were broken into the age groups of 5-8 year olds, 9-13 year olds, and 14-21 year olds. One group will prepare banana ice cream while the other groups are doing various activities. Groups will rotate until each has had the opportunity to prepare banana ice cream.

Classroom 1 Lesson Plan (5-8 years old):

Begin by reviewing what the students just learned to see if they understand vegetarian diets. Ask them to define vegetarian for you – clarify it as needed. Let them ask any questions they have about vegan/vegetarianism.

1. Discussion
 - a. Ask the students if they like vegetarian foods (provide examples as needed).
 - b. Tell students about Meatless Monday and ask if they would ever want to try Meatless Mondays.
 - c. Ask the students if they help with cooking at home and if they enjoy cooking. Encourage students to cook a meatless meal with their families.
 - d. Talk about vegan snacks they might like.
2. Use My Vegan Plate Coloring Handout
 - a. Explain My Vegan Plate to them. Discuss the different categories and give examples of foods in each category. Show the students how they can use My Vegan Plate to help plan a meal.
 - b. Ask them to name the vegetarian foods featured on My Vegan Plate. Encourage them to draw their vegetarian favorites on the side of the plate. Let students share their favorites with the group.
 - c. Let the students color in the plate.
3. Game
 - a. Have cards depicting foods from each category on My Vegan Plate. Examples can include soymilk, tofu, carrots, berries, rice, pasta, corn, grapes, soy yogurt, spinach, and other foods.
 - b. Go through one card at a time and ask the kids which category it belongs in. Let them draw the food on their plate (in or next to the appropriate category). Go through different foods with them and let them think of additional examples.
4. With any extra time, allow the students to color in “I Love Animals and Broccoli” coloring books.

Classroom 2 Lesson Plan (9-13 years old):

Begin by reviewing what the students just learned to see if they understand vegetarian and vegan diets. Ask them to define vegetarian and vegan for you – clarify it as needed. Let them ask any questions they have about veganism/vegetarianism.

1. Discussion:
 - a. Ask the students to think of examples of vegetarian/vegan foods.
 - b. Ask them if they would ever consider a vegetarian diet. What about Meatless Mondays (explain what this is)?
 - c. Ask them if they help with the cooking at home or if they enjoy cooking. Talk about vegan snacks or meals they might enjoy.
1. Use My Vegan Plate Coloring Handout:
 - a. Show and explain what My Vegan Plate is. Talk about the importance of eating a balanced diet and a variety of foods.
 - b. Ask the students what foods they often eat and what categories they fall under. Let the students draw an example of a plate with vegetarian foods and have them categorize the foods into the appropriate category.
2. Discuss the health aspects of a vegan diet in more detail (can use VRG’s “Vegan Nutrition for Teenagers” brochure).
3. Game
 - a. Go through other activities with the students. You can find a print-out version of activity pages here: <http://www.vrg.org/family/ILABpuzzle.pdf> and http://www.vrg.org/family/ILAB_shopping_basket.pdf
4. Use any extra time to go through discussion questions (listed below for the 14-21 year old group).

Classroom 3 Lesson Plan (14-21 years old):

1. Discussion:
 - a. Begin by ensuring that the students understand the terms vegetarian and vegan.
 - b. Allow the students to guide the discussion with any questions they have about vegetarian/vegan diets.
2. Further Discussion Questions:
 - a. Would you consider becoming vegetarian/vegan? Why or why not?
 - b. What barriers do you think you would face if you decided to transition?
 - c. Go through these each individually and address their concerns.
 - d. How would your friends feel about you becoming a vegan?
 - e. If you were vegetarian would you work in a restaurant that serves meat?
 - f. How would you handle it if you wanted to become a vegetarian/vegan and your guardian/caretaker/parents were against it?
 - g. How do you feel about animal-based products other than food? For example, wool sweaters, leather boots and jackets, or silk?
3. Nutrition:
 - a. Go more into depth on the health aspects of a vegetarian/vegan diet with the students (can use VRG's My Vegan Plate, "Vegetarianism in a Nutshell" handout, or other materials).
4. Meatless Mondays:
 - a. Tell the students about Meatless Monday.
 - b. Have students work in partners to come up with one-day vegetarian meal plans. They can share these plans with the group.

**Let the students guide this discussion and allow AS MANY questions as possible.

Materials Needed:

Resources to bring:

My Vegan Plate handouts - colored and uncolored versions

"I Love Animals and Broccoli" coloring books

"Vegetarianism in a Nutshell" handouts

"Vegan Nutrition for Teenagers" brochures

<http://www.vrg.org/family/ILABpuzzle.pdf>

http://www.vrg.org/family/ILAB_shopping_basket.pdf

Any other handouts from <http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/>

Other materials to collect beforehand:

Empty food packages (pasta, beans, frozen food options, cereal, etc.)

Items needed for Banana Ice Cream:

- Bananas (peeled, cut into thirds, and frozen in containers or large Ziploc bags) – the amount will vary based on the number of students. Estimate one banana per child.
- Toppings (chocolate chips, coconut flakes, chocolate syrup, peanut butter, sprinkles, blueberries, strawberries, etc.)
- Yonanas machine (<https://shop.yonanas.com/collections/all-products/products/yonanas-classic>)
- Bowls, spoons, and napkins

Items needed for sampling:

- Soymilk and almond milk
 - Tofurky Deli Slices
 - Daiya Macaroni (already prepared)
- Dixie Cups and additional spoons for sampling