

Students have the opportunity to embark on a scavenger hunt where everyone wins the ultimate prize – a healthy snack!

Objective

Raise students' awareness of the components of a nutritious snack and encourage them to build their own healthy snacks in a fun, memorable way.

The Event

Students are divided into teams and led by teachers and parent volunteers through a premapped scavenger hunt. Their task is to “find” various healthy ingredients that will ultimately be combined into a healthy snack. Multiple stations are set up along the route, and at each stop, students receive a series of clues that guide them to guessing the station's food. When a team identifies the correct food, each student on that team receives a ticket with the name of the food on it. Teams move through the remainder of the scavenger hunt until all food tickets are collected and all ingredients for the healthy snack are found.

Once students have completed their entire clue worksheet, they can redeem their tickets for the healthy snack they “created” during the scavenger hunt – for example, a fruit salad featuring all of the ingredients they “found,” a vegetable salsa and whole-grain chips, a whole-grain and dried fruit snack mix, yogurt parfaits, or smoothies.

Planning

Collaborate with a broad team. Gather wellness committee members, school nutrition staff, parent organization (e.g., PTA or PTO) members, students, and teachers to plan your event. Talk with your school nutrition director about food preparation and using the cafeteria. Investigate options for how to fund the food, such as through your school's parent organization or through local grocers, restaurants, and community groups.

Choose your recipe. Pick a healthy snack that is both easy to serve and also has ingredients that allow for fun stations and interesting clues. Recipes that work well contain fewer than 10 ingredients and involve more than one MyPlate food group. For example, the Farmers Market Salsa (see appendix, page 82) has corn, black beans, and lime juice among its ingredients. For more ideas, consult the *Recipes for Healthy Kids Cookbooks* (see appendix, page 99).

Set the date, time, and process. Decide when you will hold your scavenger hunt and reserve classrooms or other indoor areas for each station. Determine the number of student teams needed, as well as how many teacher and parent volunteers will be needed to escort student teams through the scavenger hunt. Develop a schedule to inform volunteers of when teams should reach each station and how much time they should spend there.

Design the course to be memorable and fun. Map out the route, making sure to lead students around the entire area reserved for the hunt. Try to decorate stations to match their foods, but be careful not to give away a station's answer. For example, a tomato-themed station might use vines in its decorations or a banana-themed station might use monkeys.

Planning (cont'd)

Develop a clue worksheet for students. Create clues that are challenging but solvable. If older students are participating, consider creating more difficult clues for them. For a clue sheet of the ingredients for the Farmers Market Salsa (see appendix, page 83), refer to the *Food Explorer Clue Sheet* (see appendix, page 83). Additionally, Team Nutrition's *The Great Garden Detective Adventure's* Fruit and Vegetable Flash Cards (see appendix, page 95) include interesting facts that can be used to create clues.

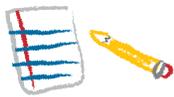
Take your volunteers on an event run-through. This event has a lot of moving pieces – food supplies, rotating teams, stations – so give your volunteers a chance to practice before the event begins. Ask volunteers to come early in order to walk through the schedule of events, including how quickly teams move from station to station and who's in charge of distributing and collecting paper slips.

Team Up ^{FOR} Success



School

- Divide students into teams by classroom or grade. Classes in the same grade can compete against each other to see which one can complete the scavenger hunt first.



Classroom

- Use Team Nutrition's *Serving Up MyPlate* (see appendix, page 94) to help students learn about the five food groups and MyPlate before you begin. If conducting a fruit- or vegetable-themed scavenger hunt, refer to Team Nutrition's *The Great Garden Detective Adventure* (see appendix, page 95) and *Dig In!* (see appendix, page 94) to help students learn about fruits and vegetables.



Cafeteria

- Coordinate with school nutrition services staff to have students eat their snack in the school cafeteria at the end of the hunt. Investigate options for ordering, storing, and preparing food supplies.



Community

- Reach out to local grocery stores about providing donations for the ingredients used in your snack.
- Ask a local chef or registered dietitian to present a demonstration on how to prepare the snack.
- Invite local farmers to discuss how the foods in the scavenger hunt are grown.



Media

- Feature the event and ingredients on the school's Web site.
- Provide a local radio station with the scavenger hunt clue sheet and suggest they challenge listeners to guess the correct answers on the air.

Team Up for Success (cont'd)



Home

- Provide families with the *MyPlate Grocery Store Treasure Hunt* activity sheet (see appendix, page 86) and encourage them to take their kids on a scavenger hunt at the grocery store.
- Provide students with a copy of their snack's recipe so they can make it at home.

Schools **IN** Action

Students at **Kansas' Greeley County** schools participated in a scavenger hunt to build their own salads. Each clue led them to an ingredient they would need to make their salad. The first clue led them to bowls of lettuce while another clue led students to select a dressing. At the end of the activity, students ate their healthy salads in their classrooms. Many students tried unfamiliar vegetables, with one student proclaiming, "That was the best salad I ever tasted!"

At **Orchard Park Elementary School in Indianapolis, IN**, students went on a scavenger hunt to find rooms featuring healthy food choices from different food groups. Food items such as garbanzo beans, pomegranates, and sugar snap peas were featured in clues, and students had the opportunity to taste them all when they discovered which rooms had samples of the foods. The school offered both clues that were appropriate for students in kindergarten through first grade and clues appropriate for students in second through fifth grade. After the scavenger hunt, students gathered in the gym to do yoga exercises.



[Photo] An **Orchard Park Elementary School** student shows off his scavenger hunt find: a sugar snap pea.