

Lesson 6: Fruits, Vegetables and A Healthy Lifestyle

Lesson 6 is the finale lesson of the ATOAH program, and it covers fruits, vegetables and central components of a healthy lifestyle. Vegetables are a part of every ATOAH lesson, and Lesson 6 offers a deeper look at the wide variety of African heritage vegetables and their powerful nutrition. Most teachers make Lesson 6 a potluck class, inviting students to bring in any of their favorite recipes from or inspired by the program. For more information and last day ideas, look at the Teacher's Guide **Graduation Day** sheet.

Oldways Tip #1: Use the pyramid to review all of the plant-based foods covered to date and to discuss healthy lifestyle practices. As a review of the prior five weeks, walk students through all of the food groups you have explored together. Ask students to share discoveries and new favorite foods in each category. The pyramid shows that, along with consuming plenty of leafy greens, enjoying a healthy lifestyle is at the foundation of the African Heritage Diet. Ask students to share about the activities they enjoy with respect to exercise, artistic expression, outdoor fun, and family rituals, using the pyramid.

Oldways Tip #2: Take your time with the Healthy Lifestyle Activity. Students and teachers alike enjoy and appreciate this holistic addition to the ATOAH program. We nourish ourselves with more than just food—we thrive on treating our minds and bodies well and spending time in meaningful, fulfilling ways. Take time for this exercise. If you need more than the allotted time, consider having your students fill out their Healthy & Happy Life scale during the lesson, sharing their answers later in class, over your last meal.

Oldways Tip #3: Use fruits and vegetables that are in season. Depending on where you are and what season you're teaching in, certain fruits and vegetables may or may not be available. The after-chop fruit salad is a wonderful template for any seasonal fruits. If you can't find ripe mangoes or papaya in your area, you can substitute with just about any types of fresh fruits. Peaches, berries, bananas and fresh cherries pair especially well with coconut milk.

Oldways Tip #4: Review the key messages of the ATOAH lessons. Take the opportunity to review all or a select group of key messages from the program. Reiterate these messages and discuss ways to put them into practice. Ask each student to share the most valuable thing that he/she learned over the course of the program. Ask your students to share one goal for the future (e.g. eating more vegetables every day, cooking X times per week, etc.).

Help students measure their success. It sometimes happens that a student will share in her short-answer response that she is eating more vegetables (or beans or whole grains) after taking the ATOAH program, but then she might circle *fewer* vegetables (or beans or whole grains) in her Exit frequency scale than in her Entrance. After six weeks of classes, it's easy to forget how often you initially reported cooking or eating vegetables upon your first day, compared to the last. To help ensure accuracy, include each student's Entrance

survey when you pass out their Exit surveys. Ask students to think about how their eating habits have changed over the six weeks. Have they seen increases in cooking or eating vegetables since starting the series? If so, they should indicate so in their frequency rating. Explain to students that they should base their Exit answers on their eating habits overall, not just what they cooked/ate during that particular week.

Tips and Comments from Fellow Teachers:

- I highlighted two key messages from every lesson and reviewed them with my class. We discussed each message as a group, and what it means to eat traditionally. I asked every participant to share one thing that they learned in this program, something that they will take on with them. It was a wonderful way to end the series.
- This class was combined with our night out at an East African restaurant that offered yucca, cabbage, and okra.
- Had a hard time locating fresh okra, ripe mangoes and papaya – used frozen okra and made a watermelon, tomato and mint salad instead of the papaya/mango after-chop
- Every time I teach this class, I gain more knowledge about African Heritage foods. My trips to the grocery store start and end in the fresh produce section ... Sankofa!
- At our last session, we had a potluck after my demonstration of the class recipes. All the dishes brought were simply delicious.
- Overall, the classes and material went very well. It allowed lots of discussion and each week we had a blast. Everyone enjoyed their homework assignments and took them seriously and shared photos with class each week.
- At the end of Lesson 5, I asked all of my students to have a goal ready to share on our last day. Our goal sharing session was very motivating and supportive.

Additional Recipes

[Oldways Brussels Sprout and Collard Green Sauté](#)