

# UConn Husky Reads - Preschool Lesson 7: Power Up with Protein

**Theme: The Protein Group** *Protein foods help build strong muscles so we can move our bodies!*

This lesson associates eating lean proteins with helping to build strong muscles. Children will also learn to associate the color purple in MyPlate with protein and that protein starts with the letter 'P'.

## **Learning Objectives:**

1. Children will recognize protein as a food group in MyPlate.
2. Children will be able to identify two protein foods.

## **Introduction: 5 minutes**

- Greet the children and ask them if they remember last week's lesson on grains.
- Ask 1-3 students to share a food they remember was in the grain group.
- Hold up the MyPlate poster and review it, making sure to name the different food groups and have the children give examples of foods in each group.
- Point out that all the sections of MyPlate have a food character doing a different exercise. Tell the students that in order to do these fun exercises they need to eat protein to make their muscles strong.
- Then point out the **purple** section and explain that it represents the protein group (begins with 'P', have them repeat the word "protein" after you).
- Hold up the protein poster showing different types of foods rich in protein and have them name each one.
- Tell the children that protein helps us build strong muscles so that we can exercise, play, and grow big and strong. Have the children show you their strong muscles!



## **Read Aloud: 8 minutes** *Choose one book from the Book List provided*

- Introduce the book title and author.
- Show children the cover of the book and ask them to make a prediction about the story.
- Utilize Book Guide provided and ask children questions before, during, and after the story when appropriate.
- After finishing the book, ask the children if they enjoyed the story. Conclude by making a connection between the story and lesson objectives.

## **Activity: 8 minutes** *Protein Memory Game*

Set up the felt board with 12 numbered cards, 6 matching pairs of protein-rich foods. The cards in the bottom row will have a protein food with an exercise described on them. Ask the children to pick one of the cards (raise hands, using their words) from the top row and one from the bottom row and flip them over (a form of memory game). If the cards match, do the suggested exercise together. If the cards do not match, turn the cards back over and have the children flip again. Be sure to say what muscle(s) the exercise is strengthening and have the children name the food that is being matched.

**Modification:** if you are running short on time, begin the game by turning over and naming the cards in the top row and match to the bottom row.

### **Tasting: 5 minutes** *Petite Baby Carrots and Hummus*

Please be sure to have the children wash their hands before eating; wear food service gloves while preparing and serving food; and clean surfaces before and after your lesson. Place a teaspoon of hummus and a few carrots in a tasting cup. Explain that hummus is made out of a type of bean and is a protein-rich food. On the count of three, ask the children to pick up a carrot, dip it in the hummus, and take a bite together (or try a “no thank you bite”). If they don’t like it, thank them for trying (as in the story *Green Eggs and Ham*). Suggest that they may eat the carrots alone.



### **Review: 4 minutes**

While children are sitting at the table, review the learning objectives of the lesson. Ask if they can name a healthy food or exercise that they learned about that day. Thank the children for spending this time with you and let them know you will be back next week with a new story, activity and food to try! Distribute stickers to the children or the teacher before leaving the classroom.

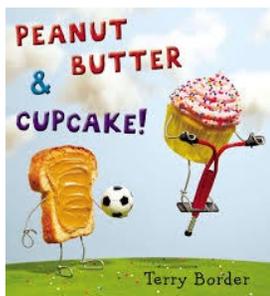
### **Materials needed:**

- MyPlate & Protein poster by Learning Zone Express
- Felt board with food image cards, 12 matching protein foods
- MyPlate or Protein Stickers
- Hummus and petite baby carrots
- Small plates, napkins, and serving spoon
- Sanitation kit (disinfecting wipes, disposable gloves, paper towels, first aid, hand sanitizer)

## Lesson 7 Book List and Book Guide

### *Peanut Butter & Cupcake* by Terry Border

**Age Range:** 3-7 yrs    **Grade Level:** Preschool - 2<sup>nd</sup>    **Length:** 32 pages



This is fun and whimsical story about Peanut Butter Toast and Cupcake looking for the perfect food friends to play with. Students will be able to see all kinds of foods in the protein group both animal-based and plant-based as well as foods from other food groups.

**Before reading:**

Explain to the students that peanut butter is a type of protein and reinforce the message that protein helps our muscles grow strong so we can move and play!

If our muscles are healthy, we can jump, run, and dance!

What is this called? Point to the cover and ask the students what the foods are doing (playing soccer and bouncing on a pogo stick.)

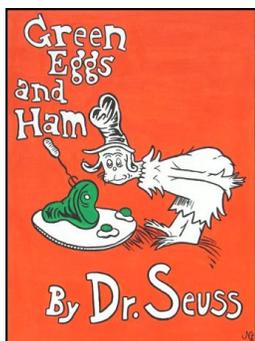
**During the reading:**

Throughout the story, point out the foods that are in the protein group like peanut butter, meatball, hamburger, and hot dog.

Explain that Peanut Butter is looking for a good friend and talk about the importance of making friends.

### *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss

**Age Range:** 3-7 yrs    **Grade Level:** Preschool - 2<sup>nd</sup>    **Length:** 65 pages



This rhyming book follows the story of Sam I Am who insists that green eggs and ham are a delicious snack that everyone in every place must try!

**Before reading:**

Most children are familiar with this book. Before you read, ask the children if they have heard the story and if so, what do they remember? Tell them that you might need their help reading it!

**During the reading:**

This is a long book - take your time and have fun with it. Although it seems repetitive to you, the children will remain engaged if you stay enthusiastic. (Have them join in and help you read the repeated lines!)

Remind children while reading that ham and eggs are both proteins in the protein food group. We get protein from all kinds of animals like chickens, cows, and pigs.

When finished, ask the children what happened when he tried the green eggs and ham. Point out that we won't know that we like foods until we try them. We should keep this in mind later at snack time!