



# Curiosity & the Cat

STEAM-inspired recipes to make mealtime educational





# Build-a-Lunch

Lunch/Supper Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Lunch



Servings  
Makes 10

*Your little future engineers will love this one! How many different combinations can they make by stacking their lunch items together?*

## Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups sliced cucumbers
- 2 ½ cups sliced strawberries
- 5 oz eq. whole wheat crackers
- 1 (16 oz) Monterrey Jack cheese block, cut into 30 (½ oz eq.) slices

## Directions

1. Serve each child ¼ cup of cucumbers, ¼ cup of strawberries, crackers (½ oz eq.), and 3 slices of cheese.
2. Encourage children to build their lunch by using different meal components to make mini cracker sandwiches.
3. Pair with milk for a complete lunch!

## 1 Build-a-Lunch Credits for:



1 ½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



½ oz eq.  
grains



¼ cup  
vegetable



¼ cup  
fruit



# Fast Wheels

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
10 minutes



Serving Size  
4 pinwheel pieces



Servings  
Makes 10

*A fast snack that's full of flavor! Reminder: the cream cheese in this recipe does not credit towards the meat/meat alternate component.*

## Ingredients

- 5 oz eq. turkey pepperoni slices
- 5 oz cream cheese
- 10 (1 oz eq. each) whole wheat tortillas

## Directions

1. Help each child spread one to two tablespoons of cream cheese on one side of their tortilla.
2. After they add pepperoni (½ oz eq.) on top, have them roll up their tortilla.
3. Slice each tortilla for the children into four pieces to look like pinwheels.

## 4 Fast Wheel Pieces Credit for:



½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



1 oz eq.  
grains

# Power Up! Popcorn

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
5 minutes



Serving Size  
1½ cups



Servings  
Makes 10

*Kids will have fun with shaking the bag to coat their popcorn in seasoning! How many shakes do they think it will take?*

## Ingredients

- 15 cups plain popcorn
- Vegetable oil cooking spray
- 4 tbsp parmesan garlic seasoning

## Directions

1. Scoop 1 ½ cups of popcorn into individual bags.
2. Lightly spray the popcorn in the bag with vegetable oil and then add one teaspoon of seasoning.
3. Help the children fold the bag at the top and allow them to shake the bag to disperse all flavors evenly.

**1½ Cups Popcorn Credits for:**



½ oz eq.  
grains

# Math Crunch

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
10 minutes



Serving Size  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup



Servings  
Makes 6

*This activity is great for counting up to nine. You can also work on subtraction by taking away crackers starting at the highest spot to see how many are left.*

## Ingredients

- 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fish-shaped crackers
- 80 cheese square crackers

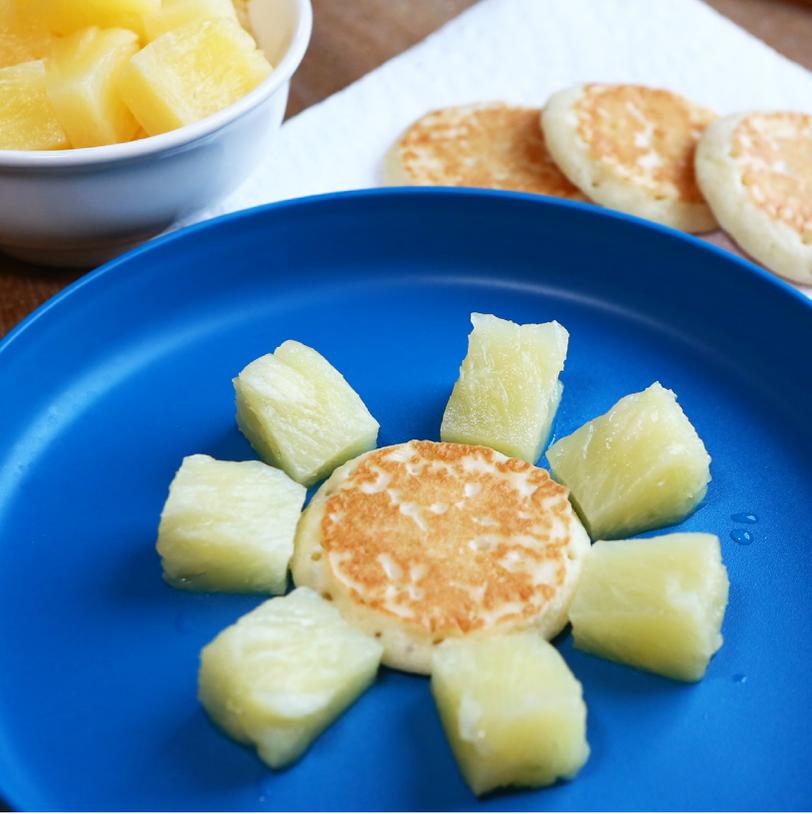
## Directions

1. On each plate, serve  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of fish-shaped crackers and six to eight square crackers.
2. Using the math crunch worksheet at [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org), have the children sort the two shapes and count how many they have of each.
3. Make it a complete snack by serving each a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup full-strength juice.

**$\frac{1}{3}$  Cup Crackers Credits for:**



$\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq.  
grains



# Flower Pancakes

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
20 minutes



Serving Size  
4 Flowers



Servings  
Makes 8

*Get creative with a breakfast classic. How many petals does each flower have?*

## Ingredients

- 1 cup pancake mix
- 1 cup unflavored milk
- 1 large egg
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 (20 oz) cans pineapple chunks, drained

## Directions

1. In a medium bowl, mix pancake mix, milk, oil and egg together. Rest for 1-2 minutes.
2. On the stove top, heat a non-stick pan over medium heat.
3. Scoop 1 tablespoon of pancake batter onto a skillet and cook. Flip when bubbles appear on top. Cook for 30 seconds to a minute more or until golden brown. Repeat until 32 mini pancakes are made.
4. Place 4 pancakes and ½ cup pineapples onto each plate.
5. Using their spoon or fork, instruct children to place pineapples around each pancake as if they were petals on a flower.

**4 Flower Pancakes Credit for:**



½ oz eq.  
grains



½ cup  
fruit

# Piano Keys

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Set of Keys



Servings  
Makes 8



*Kids can assemble their own piano keys and sing their favorite song while they do it, or perhaps sing their scales and their arpeggios.*

## Ingredients

- ½ cup nut or seed butter
- 8 (14 grams each) graham crackers, each broken into 4 rectangular pieces
- 2 cups baby carrots

## Directions

1. Serve each child 4 rectangular pieces of graham crackers, 1 tablespoon of nut butter and ¼ cup baby carrots.
2. Have them spread the nut butter onto each cracker with a butter knife.
3. Then, instruct children to line up the crackers together and place a baby carrot between each one to make their own edible piano keys.

## 1 Set of Piano Keys Credits for:



½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



½ oz eq.  
grains



¼ cup  
vegetable



# Go the Disc-tance

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
2 Discs



Servings  
Makes 8

*This recipe adds fresh, fruity flavor to your favorite rice cakes.*

## Ingredients

- 16 (8 grams each) rice cakes
- 2 cups lemon or berry yogurt
- 4 cups mixed fruit

## Directions

1. Serve each child two rice cakes.
2. Let them scoop and spread  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of yogurt over each rice cake.
3. Place a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of mixed fruit on each of their plates and have them decorate their "frisbee discs" before munching on them.

## 2 Fruity Frisbee Discs Credit for:



$\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



$\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq.  
grains



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
fruit



# J is for Jellyfish

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Jellyfish



Servings  
Makes 8

*Have fun making your own jellyfish! If you would like to serve this as part of a meal, remember to have a PFS or recipe in order to credit the hummus.*

## Ingredients

- 4 (56 grams each) pita bread, halved
- 2 cups hummus
- 4 cups carrots and cucumbers, cut into thin long slices

## Directions

1. Place  $\frac{1}{2}$  a pita bread,  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup hummus, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mixture of carrots and cucumbers onto each plate.
2. Have children place their pita bread at the top of their plate, then line their veggie tentacles under the pita bread to make a jellyfish before dipping these foods into the hummus.

## 1 Jellyfish Credits for:



1 oz eq.  
grains



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
vegetable



# Apple Nachos

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
½ Cup Nachos



Servings  
Makes 8

*Enjoy this nutritious twist on nachos! By using apples, you're providing a sweet instead of savory base for your toppings that's also a good source of fiber.*

## Ingredients

- 4 cups sliced apples
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 cup nut or seed butter, melted and slightly cooled
- ½ cup toasted coconut (optional)

## Directions

1. In a bowl, toss the apples with lemon juice.
2. Serve ½ cup of apples on each plate and have children drizzle 1 tablespoon of melted nut butter over top.
3. They can then sprinkle toasted coconut over their apple nachos.

## ½ Cup Apple Nachos Credits for:



½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



½ cup  
fruit

# Out of This World Oatmeal

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
20 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Fruity Oatmeal



Servings  
Makes 8

*Make this oatmeal out-of-this-world delicious by having children choose their favorite fruit combinations on their own.*

## Ingredients

- 2 cups oatmeal, cooked
- 4 cups various fruits, chopped (i.e. strawberries, bananas, blueberries, kiwi, mango, pineapple)

## Directions

1. Have a variety of fruit, each in separate bowls.
2. Serve each child  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of warm oatmeal and then instruct them to scoop a total of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of their choice of fruits into their bowl.

## 1 Fruity Oatmeal Credits for:



$\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
fruit



# Pasta, Peas!

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
20 minutes



Serving Size  
¾ Cup



Servings  
Makes 8

*Peas are a vegetable that are also a good source of protein, which means this snack will keep kids full and energized!*

## Ingredients

- 2 cups small pasta shells, cooked and chilled
- 4 cups defrosted peas, cooked and chilled
- 1 cup salad dressing

## Directions

1. In individual bowls, scoop ¼ cup of pasta and ½ cup of peas.
2. Have children add one or two tablespoons of the salad dressing and mix it into their pasta salad.

**¾ Cup Pasta, Peas! Credits for:**



½ oz eq.  
grains



½ cup  
vegetable



# Friendship Cup

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Friendship Cup



Servings  
Makes 8

*Work together to build the perfect friendship cup! If the kids don't like an ingredient, can they find a compromise with their friends?*

## Ingredients

- 4 cups ready-to-eat breakfast cereal flakes or rounds
- 2 cups small crackers or mini pretzel twists
- 2 cups dried fruit

## Directions

1. Ask children to decide together which breakfast cereal, cracker/pretzel, and dried fruit they would like in their friendship cup.
2. Lay each ingredient out in separate bowls.
3. Instruct them to scoop a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cereal,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup crackers or pretzels and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup dried fruit to make their own friendship cup.

## 1 Friendship Cup Credits for:



$\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq.  
grains



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
fruit



# Apple Sail Boats

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Apple Boat



Servings  
Makes 8

*Anchors aweigh! Set sail for a flavorful texture adventure. Let the children design their very own sail boat before enjoying it as part of their meal.*

## Ingredients

- 4 apples, halved and core removed
- 6 cups ready-to-eat breakfast cereal, puffed
- ½ cup sunflower seed butter
- 1 (8 oz) cheese block, cut into 8 triangle wedges

## Directions

1. Serve each child ½ an apple, 1 tablespoon of sunflower seed butter, 1 cheese wedge, and ¾ cup cereal.
2. Have children build their apple boat by spreading the seed butter with a butter knife on the flat side of the apple, add the wedge on top of the seed butter for the sail, and then sprinkle cereal on the sunflower seed butter.

## 1 Apple Sail Boat Credits for:



1 ½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



½ oz eq.  
grains



½ cup  
fruit

# Racing Snacks

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Race Car



Servings  
Makes 10

*Ready, set, go! Get crafty with this fun snack that lets kids build the race car of their dreams.*

## Ingredients

- 5 large bananas, peeled and cut in half
- 2 ½ cups sliced strawberries, in discs
- 5 oz eq mini pretzels
- 10 bear-shaped graham crackers

## Directions

1. On each plate, place ½ of a banana, ¼ cup strawberries, ½ oz eq of mini pretzels and a bear-shaped cracker.
2. Build their racing snack by resting two strawberry slices on each side of the banana to make the wheels.
3. The pretzel is the driving wheel, so insert this on top of the banana. The bear is the driver, so insert into banana behind the pretzel wheel.

## 1 Race Car Credits for:



½ oz eq.  
grains



½ cup  
fruit

# Chipotle Yogurt Dip

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
5 minutes



Serving Size  
1/4 Cup



Servings  
Makes 8

*Looking for a new dip to add to your menu cycle? This yogurt-based recipe is packed with flavor, perfect for adventurous eaters!*

## Ingredients

- 2 cups yogurt
- 2 tbsp ranch seasoning
- ½ chipotle pepper from can, seeds removed

## Directions

1. In a blender, add yogurt, ranch seasoning, and chipotle pepper. Blend until smooth.
2. Serve each child ¼ cup yogurt dip and pair it with a ½ cup of mixed vegetable sticks for dipping.

**1/4 Cup Yogurt Dip Credits for:**



½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



# Mathematically Delicious Fruit Salad

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
15 minutes



Serving Size  
1/2 Cup



Servings  
Makes 6

*Fresh lime and mint are the perfect addition to bring fruity flavors to life. This cool fruit salad is perfect for a warm summer day.*

## Ingredients

- 1 cup strawberries, chopped
- 1 cup blackberries, halved
- 1 cup kiwi, peeled and chopped
- ½ lime, juiced and zested
- 1 tbsp fresh mint, minced

## Directions

1. In a medium bowl, have children help add equal amounts of strawberries, blackberries, and kiwi.
2. Then add lime juice, lime zest and fresh mint.
3. Gently mix fruit so the lime juice and mint are evenly dispersed.
4. Serve immediately or allow it to marinate in the refrigerator for one hour before serving.

**1/2 Cup Fruit Salad Credits for:**



1/2 cup  
fruit



# Butterfly Crackers

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
10 minutes



Serving Size  
4-5 Butterflies



Servings  
Makes 10

*The number of butterflies will vary depending on the type of cracker you use. Serve each child the correct ounce equivalency.*

## Ingredients

- 5 oz eq whole wheat round crackers
- 2 ½ cups mandarin oranges or strawberry slices
- 2 ½ cups blueberries
- 5 oz cream cheese

## Directions

1. Serve ½ oz eq of crackers, one tablespoon cream cheese, and ½ cup mixture of blueberries and mandarin orange wedges.
2. Instruct children to spread a little cream cheese on each cracker with a butter knife so it acts like glue for when the children add the fruit.
3. They can use the blueberries to make the body of the butterfly and the orange slices as wings.

## 4-5 Butterfly Crackers Credit for:



½ oz eq.  
grains



½ cup  
fruit



# Smooth Jazz Cheese Sauce

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
10 minutes



Serving Size  
1/8 Cup



Servings  
Makes 18

*Using cottage cheese makes this a high-protein dip, which will help keep bellies full after snack time.*

## Ingredients

- 16 oz cottage cheese
- 1 cup shredded semi-soft cheese (Colby Jack, Mexican)
- 1 tsp taco seasoning
- 1 (4 oz) can diced mild green chilis, drained (optional)

## Directions

1. In a blender, add cottage cheese, shredded cheese, chilis, and seasoning. Blend until smooth.
2. Serve each child 1/8 cup of cheese sauce in a small container and pair with pretzel bites, apple slices, or broccoli florets.

**1/8 Cup Cheese Sauce Credits for:**



1/2 oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



# Yogurt Breakaways

Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
4 hours



Serving Size  
1 Yogurt Square



Servings  
Makes 10

*Kids will have a blast sprinkling the granola over the yogurt earlier in the day before enjoying the fruits of their labor for snack time!*

## Ingredients

- 3 cups vanilla Greek yogurt\*
- 1 cup loose granola, optional

\* Yogurt must meet CACFP sugar limit.

## Directions

1. On a small sheet pan, lay down parchment paper.
2. Spread Greek yogurt evenly in sheet pan. Have children sprinkle granola over the yogurt. Cover the pan with foil.
3. Freeze until firm, about three to four hours. Remove parchment paper and cut into 10 equal pieces.
4. Serve one yogurt breakaway on a plate for each child and pair with a favorite fruit.

## 1 Square Credits for:



½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



# Tomato Alphabet Soup

Lunch/Supper Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
30 minutes



Serving Size  
1/2 Cup



Servings  
Makes 14

*Alphabet soup is a hit with kids! What words can they spell out with the letters that they find in their bowl of soup?*

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 (7 oz) package alphabet pasta
- 1/4 cup yellow onion, diced
- 8 oz can tomato sauce
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cube vegetable bullion
- 1/8 cup cilantro, finely diced

## Directions

1. Over medium heat, warm oil in a four-quart saucepan.
2. Add pasta and stir constantly until all sides of pasta are slightly brown.
3. Place onions in pan and sauté for two minutes or until translucent.
4. Add tomato sauce and warm for a minute. Then add the broth, bouillon cube, cilantro, and then salt and pepper to taste.
5. Raise to high heat until liquid starts to boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and place a lid on top. Cook for 15-20 minutes or until pasta is tender.
6. With a slotted spoon, scoop 1/4 cup noodles into each bowl and then add the broth.

**1/2 Cup Soup Credits for:**



1/2 oz eq.  
grains



# Turn Up the Beet! Smoothie

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
5 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Smoothie



Servings  
Makes 1

*Different colors come together in this smoothie. It's a great way for kids to think about how colors combine to make a new color!*

## Ingredients

- 1/8 cup milk
- 1/4 cup yogurt
- 1/4 cup frozen berries
- 1/2 large banana
- 1/8 cup canned beets, liquid drained

## Directions

1. Add all ingredients one by one into a blender and ask the children what color each ingredient is.
2. Before blending, have children guess what color it will be when all the ingredients blend together.
3. Puree all ingredients until smooth. Serve immediately. This smoothie makes one serving.

## 1 Smoothie Credits for:



1/2 oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



1/8 cup  
vegetable



1/2 cup  
fruit



# Pumpkin Asteroid Muffins

Breakfast/Snack Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
30 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Muffin



Servings  
Makes 28

*These muffins have an uneven and rough looking surface, just like an asteroid! Teach your children some fun facts about outer space, including asteroids.*

## Ingredients

- 3 cups old fashioned rolled oats
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup 100% pumpkin puree
- ¼ cup honey or maple syrup
- 2 large eggs
- 1 ¼ cups unflavored milk or milk alternative

## Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Have children help you add all the dry ingredients together in a medium bowl. In a separate large bowl whisk together the wet ingredients.
3. Slowly add and whisk dry ingredients to the wet ingredients until combined.
4. Scoop 2 tablespoons into each greased or paper lined mini muffin tin.
5. Bake for 15 to 16 minutes or until the fork comes out clean.

## 1 Muffin Credits for:



½ oz eq.  
grains



# Citrus Sunshine Salad

Lunch/Supper Crediting for Ages 3-5



**Total Time**  
15 minutes



**Serving Size**  
1 Salad



**Servings**  
Makes 10

*This simple salad is a great way to get fresh produce in during lunch or supper. What other fruits do your kids like on salad?*

## Ingredients

- 5 cups baby spinach
- 2 (15 oz) cans mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 ¼ cups raspberry vinaigrette

## Directions

1. Have children scoop a ½ cup of spinach and a ¼ cup of oranges onto their plate.
2. They can then drizzle one to two tablespoons of salad dressing over their salad.

## 1 Salad Credits for:



¼ cup  
vegetable



¼ cup  
fruit



# Harmony Bowl

Lunch/Supper Crediting for Ages 3-5



Total Time  
25 minutes



Serving Size  
1 Bowl



Servings  
Makes 10

*Southwestern flavors combine harmoniously to create these colorful bowls. What other vegetables would be a good addition?*

## Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups colored bell peppers, thinly sliced and sautéed
- 2 ½ cups brown rice, cooked and warmed
- 1 lb lean ground beef, cooked and warmed
- taco seasoning
- 1 ¼ cups shredded cheese

## Directions

1. In a bowl, toss the warm rice and season with taco seasoning to taste.
2. Have children assemble their bowl by instructing them to scoop ¼ cup brown rice, 1 oz eq ground beef, ¼ cup bell peppers, and two tablespoons cheese.

## 1 Harmony Bowl Credits for:



1 ½ oz eq.  
meat/meat alternate



½ oz eq.  
grains



¼ cup  
vegetable