

LESSON | DELICIOUS STORY ELEMENTS

Dive into a creative activity about healthy eating and smart storytelling.

Objective

Students will read and reflect on healthy eating choices while identifying story elements and aspects of author's craft, then applying them to writing their own story.

Time

20 minutes plus reading time and writing time

Standards

CCSS ELA

RL.3.3 Describe characters and how they contribute to events

RL.4.3 Describe characters, setting, and events using details

RL.5.1 Quote from a text to explain it and draw inferences

W.3-5.3 Write narratives with effective technique and details

W.3-5.3.A Orient the reader by establishing a situation, characters, and event sequence

Materials

- A Party for Aunt Lucia activity sheet
 - Reading Passage A (basic)
 - Reading Passage B (more challenging)
- Avocados Are Awesome family page

1 Ask: *Who likes to celebrate with family? What kinds of foods do you eat?* Have students turn and talk, and then share the special foods and traditions in their families.

2 Encourage the idea that healthy foods can be delicious, and that trying a new dish could mean we find a favorite food. Be sure to welcome all family traditions and foods.

3 Divide the class into groups. Hand out reading passages, matching students with the appropriate leveled passage. Proceed with echo reading, choral reading, and/or partner reading.

4 Have students share what they learned about healthy choices. Ask: *How did the author organize the story to share the information in a clear way?* Tell students they will be detectives to figure out the author's strategies. Ask them to point out different story elements as you write them in a word bank (e.g., characters, setting, problem, solution).

5 Ask students to pair up to discuss how the author made each story element clear to the reader. For example, the author included the relationships of each character—brother, parents, aunt. Have students annotate or take notes on the story elements or strategies as they discuss.

For younger students: Ask what detail the author included to set the scene for a party setting and make it feel more real ("Streamers cascaded from the ceiling..."). Remind students that "showing" is usually more powerful than "telling" in story writing.

For older students: Challenge them to find an example of "showing," not "telling." For example, rather than saying "An avocado looks like _____," the author went right into showing details ("Soft, green flesh surrounded a pit...").

For English language learners: Draw representative visual symbols next to each story element in the word bank. Connect the story elements to a favorite book the class has read.

6 Prompt students to write a sequel to the story, or write their own tale about a festive family event they imagine or have experienced. Encourage them to imagine adding a healthy food, or showcasing one their family already eats. Challenge them to use the story they read as a model for:

- introducing characters by noting their connections to one another (can be beyond family)
- including details that help the reader picture the setting and make it feel real
- including a problem and solution

For older students: using the plot to communicate a message, such as the importance of healthy eating

7 Have students outline a story with these elements, then begin writing. When they revise, direct them to amp up or clarify these details.

8 Celebrate and share student work. Send home the family page to continue the learning at home.

Name _____

A Party for Aunt Lucia

Streamers cascaded from the ceiling. Matilda, her brother Luis, and their parents were having a party. Their Aunt Lucia was graduating as a nutritionist. Even though the party was in her honor, they hoped she would bring something tasty.

The doorbell rang. Matilda raced to open the door. Aunt Lucia stood there beaming. She was still wearing her cap and gown. She had a large bag in her hand.

Luis and Matilda's dad hugged Aunt Lucia. "I was just running out! I forgot the dip!" he said, laughing.

"I came prepared," Aunt Lucia said. She winked. "I brought a few fruits to make a dip with the kids."

They all went to the kitchen. It was full of mouthwatering smells, and steaming dishes adorned every surface.

"This looks amazing!" Aunt Lucia said. "And it looks like I brought the perfect addition." A bowl of chips sat on the counter next to an empty bowl.

Aunt Lucia pulled out peaches, plums, and something green and unusually bumpy from her bag.

"What is that? Is that fruit?" Luis asked.

"It is!" Aunt Lucia said. "It's an avocado." She slid a knife into the fruit. She gently twisted the two sides and it came apart.

Soft, green flesh surrounded a pit on one side. On the other side, there was a perfect half circle where the round, smooth, brown pit had been.

"It's green inside!" Matilda said. Just then, her stomach complained noisily; everyone laughed. Aunt Lucia quickly sliced the peaches and plums in half. Their sweet aroma wafted up and juice dripped into the bowl.

Aunt Lucia showed Matilda and Luis how to chop the peaches, plums, and avocado into little cubes.

They tossed all the fruit together and mixed in olive oil and vinegar. Aunt Lucia let them each try a chip dipped in the sweet and sour snack. It was delicious!

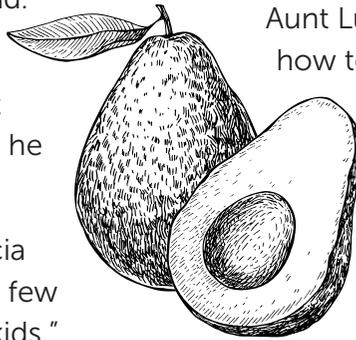
"And it has naturally good fats and vitamins, too," Aunt Lucia said.

"Fat? I thought that was bad for you," Luis said.

"Not all fats. Some are good for you and your body needs them. Avocados have these good fats. These fats even help your body absorb vitamins in the peaches and plums. When you pick fruit, try to eat the rainbow. The more colors, the better!"

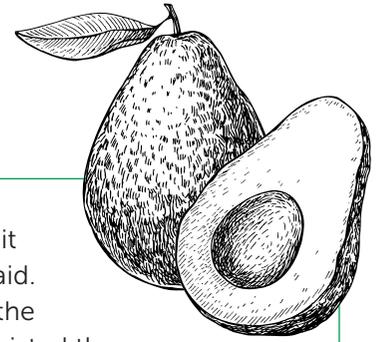
"You're an expert on healthy foods now," said Luis and Matilda's mom.

Then the doorbell rang again. More guests! It was time to celebrate.



Name _____

A Party for Aunt Lucia



Streamers adorned the ceiling. Matilda, her brother Luis, and their parents were having a party. Their beloved Aunt Lucia was graduating as a nutritionist.

The doorbell rang; Matilda raced to open the door. Aunt Lucia stood there beaming, still wearing her cap and gown. She had a large tote bag in her hand. Matilda and Luis's parents hugged her.

"Come in, but we have to run out," they said, laughing. "We don't have any dip. I can't believe we forgot it!"

"Serendipity! I have a solution. I brought some of my favorite fruit, and it makes a great dip," Aunt Lucia said.

Matilda and Luis's parents exhaled. They all went to the kitchen. It was full of wonderful tempting smells, and steaming dishes adorned every surface.

"This looks amazing, but I think I brought the perfect addition," Aunt Lucia said. "Because most of the dishes look salty and sugary, and there aren't many colorful fruits."

"But this is what we always eat," said Matilda.

"I know, but at school I learned that you should include a variety of different-colored fruits in your diet every day," Aunt Lucia said. "Fruits contain important nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and fiber. These nutrients keep your body strong and healthy. And as a surprise, I brought some colorful fruits today!"

Aunt Lucia opened her bag and pulled out furry peaches, smooth plums, and something mysteriously green and bumpy.

"What an unusual-looking... Is that really a fruit?" Luis asked.

"It's an avocado and it is a fruit," Aunt Lucia said. She slid her knife into the avocado. She gently twisted the two sides and it came apart. Soft, green flesh surrounded a pit on one side. On the other side, there was a perfect half circle where the round, brown pit had been.

Just then, Matilda's stomach rumbled and everyone laughed. Aunt Lucia used the same sharp knife to cut up the peaches and plums. Split open, they smelled sweet and dripped juice into the bowl.

She showed the kids how to chop the orange-red peaches, aubergine plums, and bright green avocado into small cubes. They combined the fruit together with a dash of olive oil and vinegar. Aunt Lucia encouraged them to sample a chip dipped in the sweet and savory snack. Their taste buds cheered!

"Yum!" Aunt Lucia said. "And it has vitamins and naturally good fats, too!"

"I thought fat was bad for you," Matilda said.

"Some fats are good for you and your body needs them. Avocados contain a specific fat your body requires. Avocados can act as a 'nutrient booster' by helping your body to absorb vitamins A, D, K, and E from foods that are eaten with them. When you pick fruit, always try to eat the rainbow."

"Wow, you're an expert now," Matilda and Luis's mom said proudly.

Then the doorbell rang again and again, and guests poured in. It was time to celebrate!