

Learn about Whole Grains



An original song from the Oldways Whole Grains Council and Grammy-award winning musicians Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer

plus related curriculum ideas

Geography (grades 1-3)

Creative Writing (grades 2-4 and 3-5)

Math (grades 2-3)

Listening Skills (preschool-K)

Teacher's Guide for Whole Grain Geography

Audience: Grades 1-3

Teacher Script:

Today we are going to learn about whole grains around the world, and some of the different countries that eat whole grains. First, we're going to listen to a whole grain song.

[Play the whole grain song for students. MP3 files of the song, sheet music, and printable lyrics can be downloaded at <http://wholegrainscouncil.org/resources/song>]

Have you heard of any of these grains before? Have you tried any of them?

In America, some of our favorite whole grains are popcorn, whole wheat bread, brown rice, and whole wheat noodles. But whole grains are eaten in countries all over the world.

[Below is some background information that you can tell students. If you have a large map or globe available, point out the different regions as you talk about them. You may also want to have some tasting samples available, to add another sense to the learning experience: whole wheat pitas, quinoa – or even oatmeal.)]

North America

- Amaranth is popped like popcorn and mixed with honey in **Mexico**.
- In the **United States**, corn is used in a creamy porridge called grits, which is eaten with eggs at breakfast, or with shrimp at dinner.

South America

- Quinoa is grown high in the mountains of **Bolivia**.

Africa

- Barley bread is popular in **Morocco** and other north African countries.
- In **Egypt**, whole wheat pita bread is very popular.
- In **Ethiopia**, sorghum is mixed with another whole grain called teff to make *injera*. Injera is a thin bread that is used to pick up foods, instead of forks or spoons.

Asia

- In **India**, millet is used instead of rice as a base for lots of spiced vegetable dishes, and is also used to make thin, savory pancakes called *dosas*.
- Rice is grown in **China**, and is eaten at nearly every meal. Brown rice is whole grain.

Europe

- Oatmeal is a popular breakfast during cold, rainy mornings in **Scotland**.
- In **Russia**, buckwheat is made into pancakes called blini.

Whole Grains Around the World

Draw a line to match each grain to one of the countries where it is often

1

In the **United States**, corn is used in a creamy porridge called grits, which is eaten with eggs at breakfast. or with shrimp

2

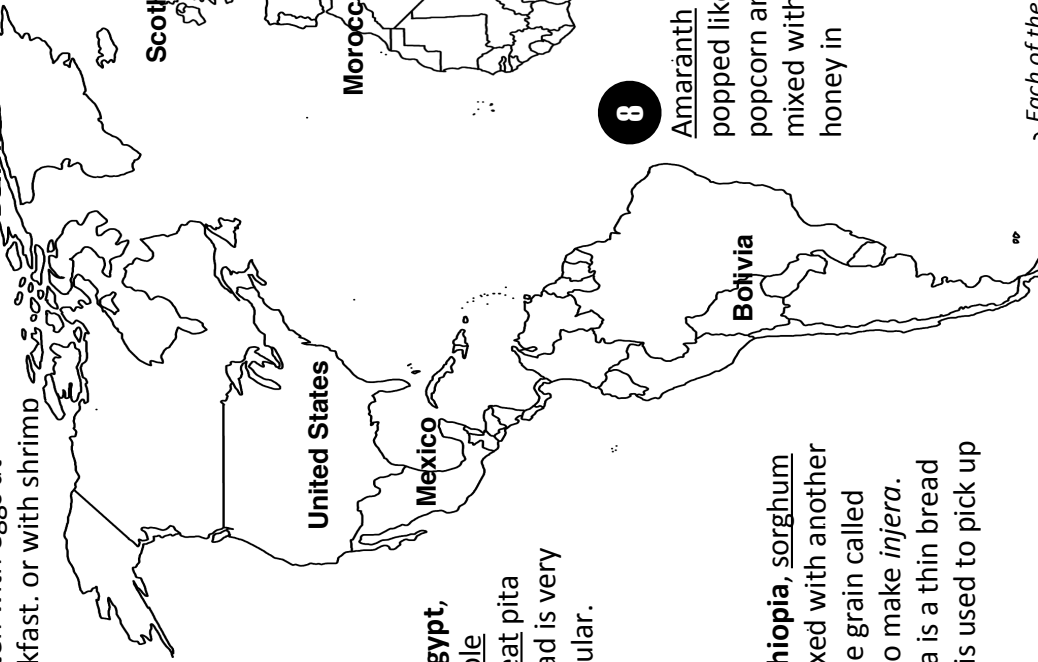
Quinoa is grown high in the mountains of **Bolivia**.

3

Barley bread is popular in **Morocco** and other North

4

Oatmeal is a favorite breakfast during cold, rainy



5

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7

Rice is grown in **China**, and is eaten at nearly every

8

Amaranth is popped like popcorn and mixed with honey in

Each of these grains is mentioned in the Whole Grain Train Song. To learn more about the Whole Grain Train Song, visit <http://WholeGrainsCouncil.org/resources/song>.



Teacher's Guide for Whole Grain Creative Writing

Audience: Grades 2-4 and Grades 3-5

Teacher Script:

Many of the foods we eat, like bread, cereal, and rice, start out as grains growing in the fields. A grain is the seed of certain plants in the grass family. How many grain foods can you name?

[As children volunteer grain foods, write them on the board.]

When grains grow in the field, they have three main parts. The bran is on the outside, like the jacket you wear out to play. It protects the seed. The germ is way inside. It's the part that can grow into a new plant, if it's put into the ground. The rest of it is called the endosperm. Think of it as the lunch the germ will eat while it grows into a new plant.

[Show children a large picture of the three parts of a grain.]

All three parts of the grain are good for us. However, if we eat white bread, white rice, or white pizza crust, we are missing the healthy bran and germ, which have been taken out. When we eat whole grain foods we get all three parts

Today we are going to listen to a whole grain song, then write about some of our favorite whole grains and the benefits of eating whole grains.

[Play the whole grain song for students. MP3 files of the song, sheet music, and printable lyrics can be downloaded at <http://wholegrainscouncil.org/resources/song>]

Have you heard of any of these grains before? Have you tried any of them? What are your favorite whole grains?

[Follow up with the Sentence Elaboration or Creative Writing exercises, depending on your class's writing skill levels.]

Sentence Elaboration (Grades 2-4)

Write the three starter sentences and the example on the board, then ask students to write a much longer sentence (or two sentences) that's much more colorful and interesting.

Creative Writing (Grades 3-5)

Write the three starter partial sentences on the board, and ask students to pick one, then write at least 5 sentences. Ask them to include the names of at least three different whole grain foods in their story.

Whole Grain Creative Sentences

Write a colorful, creative sentence: Use some of the words in the whole grain song to make these sentences more colorful and creative. Don't forget to use lots of descriptions and adjectives.

Example: They cooked breakfast.

The two smiling sisters cooked a delicious breakfast of whole wheat pancakes topped with strawberries, blueberries, and granola, to treat their mom to breakfast in bed after she sprained her ankle skiing.

1. He baked bread.

2. Dinner was served.

3. They ate grains.



Listen to the Whole Grain Train Song,
then write about whole grains.
<http://WholeGrainsCouncil.org/resources/song>

Whole Grain Creative Stories

Write an interesting story: Use some of the words in the whole grain song to write a short story (5 sentences). Choose one of the prompts below to get started.

1. Whole grains are important to eat everyday because...

2. When I help my parents at the grocery store, I ask for...

3. I would love to help cook a healthy dinner with...



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Teacher's Guide for Whole Grain Math

Audience: Grades 2-4

Teacher Script:

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[As children volunteer grain foods, write them on the board.]

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[Play the whole grain song for students. MP3 files of the song, sheet music, and printable lyrics can be downloaded at <http://wholegrainscouncil.org/resources/song>]

Have you heard of any of these grains before? Have you tried any of them? What are your favorite whole grains?

[After discussion, pass out the math worksheet.] *We should all try for three or more servings of whole grains daily. On your paper, you'll see examples of what counts as a "serving." Sometimes when you eat foods, the amount you eat may be more than one serving. Compare the servings at the top of your page with the foods at the bottom, and write in the amount of servings for each food.*

Make at least Half Your Grains Whole!

Try for three or more servings of whole grain daily.

Each of these equals one MyPlate serving of whole grain.



3 cups of popcorn



5 whole wheat crackers



1/2 cup of oatmeal



1 slice bread



1 cup of cereal

How many servings of whole grain would you get, if you ate each of the foods below?



Sandwich = _____ servings



10 crackers = _____ servings



Movie Popcorn = _____ servings



Toast = _____ servings



1 cup oatmeal = _____ servings



2 cups cereal = _____ servings



To get inspired, listen to – and sing along with – the Whole Grain Train Song available at www.WholeGrainsCouncil.org/resources/song. Discuss the importance of eating three or more servings of whole grains daily, then do the math!

Teacher's Guide for Listening Skills

Audience: Preschool-Kindergarten

Teacher Script:

Today we are going to listen to a whole grain song, then think about some of our favorite whole grain foods. Listen carefully for the names of whole grain foods.

[Play the whole grain song for students. Students will internalize more of the song's message if they're encouraged to sing along and learn some of the words. MP3 files, sheet music, and printable lyrics can be downloaded at <http://wholegrainscouncil.org/resources/song>]

What whole grain foods did you hear in the song?

[Students might mention corn, popcorn, brown rice, pizza, noodles, bread, oats, sandwiches.]

Many of the foods we eat, like bread, cereal, and rice, start out as grains growing in the fields. A grain is the seed of certain plants in the grass family. How many grain foods can you name?

[As children volunteer additional grain foods, repeat them or – for older children – write them on the board. Make clear which foods are whole grain and which are not.]

Grains called whole grains help our bodies grow strong. Whole wheat bread and brown rice are whole grain foods. White bread and white rice are not whole grains.

Now that we've talked about whole grain foods, I'd like you to make your own Whole Grain Train. Can you think of five whole grain foods you like to eat, and draw pictures of them in each one of the train cars?

[After the children have completed their pictures, ask them to talk about what they've drawn.]

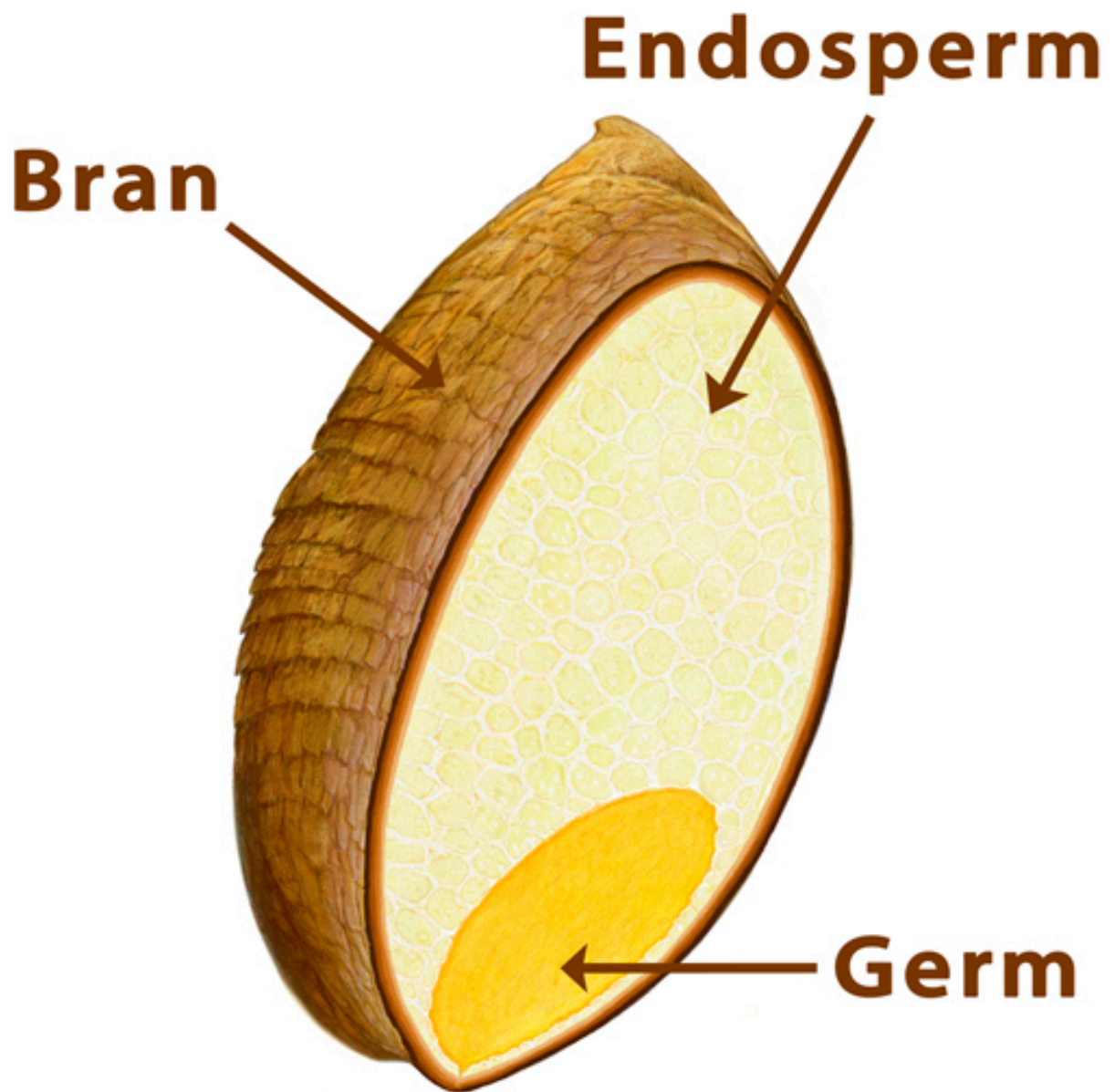
WHOLE GRAIN TRAIN



What are your 5 favorite whole grain foods? Put them on the train!



Get the Whole Grain Train Song from the Oldways Whole Grains Council at www.WholeGrainsCouncil.org/resources/song.
MP3 files, sheet music, and curriculum ideas available free to educational organizations.



Grain Anatomy

WHOLEGRAINSCOUNCIL.ORG