

Dietary Requirements Episode: Teaching Guide

For Ages 5-8 | Compatible with Episode “Learning About Food Allergies & Dietary Needs”

Free Download at changetheworldwithkaryn.com

WHAT'S INCLUDED

This free educational package includes:

3 Printable Activity Worksheets:

1. *Safe Food Matching Game - Character cards + food cards*
2. *Party Planning Plate - Design an inclusive menu*
3. *Food Detective Maze - Navigate to safe foods*

Plus This Complete Teaching Guide

Worksheets are designed for easy, cost-effective printing. Character cards feature color illustrations, while food cards and other worksheets are black and white outline style.

Optional: *Teachers and parents may choose to laminate worksheets for repeated use, but single-use printing works perfectly.*

Age Guidance: *These materials are designed for ages 5-8. Younger children (ages 5-6) may need adult support with reading and completing activities, while ages 7-8 can typically work more independently after watching the episode.*

Episode Length: *Just under 10 minutes*

Where to Watch: *YouTube channel "Lets Learn With Karyn" or changetheworldwithkaryn.com*

HOW TO USE EACH WORKSHEET

Worksheet 1: Safe Food Matching Game

What children do:

- Cut out character cards (6 friends with different dietary needs)
- Cut out food cards (24 different foods)
- Match which foods each friend can safely eat at Karyn's party
- Sort foods into piles for each character

Skills developed: Category sorting, decision making, reading comprehension, fine motor skills

Key teaching point: Nuts and peanut butter are unsafe for *EVERYONE* at this party because the whole party is nut-free to keep Sam safe.

Age-specific guidance:

- Ages 5-6: Adult reads character cards aloud, helps with sorting decisions
- Ages 7-8: Can work independently using the answer sheet to self-check

Time needed: 15-20 minutes

Worksheet 2: Party Planning Plate**What children do:**

- Draw or write foods on a large blank party plate
- Must include at least one safe option for *EACH* friend
- Check boxes to confirm each friend has something safe
- Complete the Super Challenge: find one food *ALL* friends can eat

Skills developed: Problem solving, inclusive thinking, planning, empathy, creativity

Usage tips:

- Complete *AFTER* watching the episode (requires recall)
- There's no "right number" of foods - focus on whether everyone is covered
- Can be sent home for families to complete together

Age-specific guidance:

- Ages 5-6: Work alongside adult who asks guiding questions
- Ages 7-8: Can plan independently, using checklist to self-monitor

Time needed: 10-15 minutes

Worksheet 3: Food Detective Maze

What children do:

- Complete 3 separate mazes helping characters find safe foods
- Navigate paths while avoiding foods they can't eat
- Apply their knowledge of dietary needs to choose correct paths

Skills developed: Visual tracking, problem solving, knowledge application, critical thinking

Important: This is an assessment activity. Children apply what they've learned independently without visual cues. Food illustrations match Worksheet 1 to aid recognition. Mistakes create valuable teaching moments.

Age-specific guidance:

- Ages 5-6: Work together - adult points to each food, child decides which path to take
- Ages 7-8: Independent work that tests knowledge recall

Time needed: 10-15 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the episode and activities, children will be able to:

- Identify 6 common dietary requirements (pescatarian, vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant, gluten-free, nut allergy)
 - Understand that some dietary choices are preferences and others are for safety
 - Recognize that nut allergies can be life-threatening (age-appropriate language)
 - Practice empathy by considering others' needs
 - Learn inclusive behavior: making sure everyone has safe options
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PRE-VIEWING DISCUSSION (5 minutes)

Opening questions:

- "Have you ever been to a party with lots of food?"
- "Did you know some friends can't eat certain foods?"
- "Today we're going to learn how to make sure **EVERYONE** at a party can have fun and be safe!"

Key message: Being a good friend means making sure everyone can join in safely.

POST-VIEWING DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Recall Questions:

1. "What was Karyn planning?" (A summer party)
2. "Why was Karyn confused?" (Her friends had different food needs)
3. "Who helped Karyn understand?" (Bobbie!)
4. "Which friend has a nut allergy?" (Sam - emphasize this is very serious)
5. "What does vegetarian mean?" (Doesn't eat meat from animals)

Critical Thinking Questions:

- "Why is it important to ask about food before a party?"
- "How would you feel if there was nothing you could eat at a party?"
- "Can you think of a food that EVERYONE at Karyn's party could eat?" (watermelon, apples, carrots, rice)

Empathy Building:

- "If your friend couldn't eat dairy, how could you help them feel included?"
 - "How do you think Sam feels when parties are made nut-free to keep them safe?"
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KEY TEACHING POINTS

Understanding Different Dietary Needs

Pescatarian (Laura)

- Eats fish and seafood but not meat from land animals (no chicken, beef, pork)
- **CAN eat:** Fish, prawns, vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy, eggs
- **Help children pronounce:** "Pes-ca-TAR-ee-an"

Vegetarian (Gavin)

- Doesn't eat meat from animals
- **CAN eat:** Fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, eggs
- **Reason:** Personal choice or belief

Vegan (Maya)

- Doesn't eat ANY animal products
- **CAN eat:** Fruits, vegetables, grains, plant milk
- **CAN'T eat:** Meat, fish, dairy, eggs, honey
- **Reason:** Personal choice or belief

Lactose Intolerant (Jamie)

- Can't digest dairy (milk from cows)

- **CAN have:** Dairy-free alternatives (oat milk, almond milk, soy milk)
- **Reason:** Body doesn't make the enzyme lactase

Gluten-Free (Lucy)

- Can't eat gluten (protein found in wheat, barley, rye)
- **CAN'T eat:** Regular bread, pasta, cereals with wheat
- **CAN eat:** Rice, corn, potatoes, gluten-free products
- **Reason:** Celiac disease or gluten sensitivity

Nut Allergy (Sam) ⚠

- Even tiny amounts can cause severe reaction
- Requires entire party to be nut-free
- **Reason:** Life-threatening medical condition
- **This is different from the others - it's about safety, not just comfort**

Safety vs. Preference

Preferences/Choices:

- Vegetarian, vegan, pescatarian are personal decisions
- Won't get sick, but food doesn't align with beliefs/choices

Medical Needs:

- Lactose intolerant, gluten-free, nut allergy
- Body reacts to these foods
- Can cause discomfort or serious danger

Age-appropriate language:

- "Some friends CHOOSE not to eat certain foods, like Gavin chooses not to eat meat"
- "Some friends' bodies can't handle certain foods, like Jamie's tummy can't digest milk"
- "Some friends could get very sick from certain foods, like Sam with nuts - this is why we're extra careful!"

Nut Allergy Safety Education ⚠

The facts:

- 1 in 13 children has a food allergy
- Nut allergies can cause anaphylaxis (life-threatening reaction)
- Even trace amounts can trigger reactions

What to teach children:

- *"Nut allergies are very serious"*
- *"Even tiny bits of nuts we can't see can make Sam very sick"*
- *"That's why the WHOLE party is nut-free - to keep Sam safe"*
- *"Nuts spread like glitter - they stick to everything"*

Avoid fear tactics:

- *Don't say "Sam could die" to young children*
- *Instead: "Sam could get very sick and need to go to the hospital right away"*
- *Focus on keeping the environment safe, not catastrophic outcomes*

Symptoms to recognize:

- *Trouble breathing or wheezing*
- *Swelling lips, tongue, or face*
- *Tummy ache and throwing up*
- *Red, itchy skin or hives*

KEY MESSAGE: *"If this happens to ANY friend, get a grown-up IMMEDIATELY."*

ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Observe whether the child can:**Knowledge:**

- *Name at least 3 different dietary requirements*
- *Identify foods safe for a vegetarian*
- *Explain the difference between a choice and a medical need*
- *Understand that nut allergies are very serious*

Application:

- *Sort foods correctly for different dietary needs*
- *Plan a menu with options for everyone*
- *Explain why we ask about food needs before parties*

Social-Emotional:

- *Show empathy when discussing friends with dietary restrictions*
 - *Use respectful language about dietary differences*
 - *Demonstrate understanding of inclusive behavior*
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REAL-WORLD APPLICATION

For Classroom Teachers:

Daily integration:

- Review snack list: "Which snacks are nut-free today?"
- Assign "Dietary Needs Helper" classroom job
- Create visual poster: "Our Class is Nut-Free!"

Before class parties:

- Send note home reminding families of dietary needs
- Involve students: "What should we serve so *EVERYONE* can enjoy the party?"
- Celebrate when you achieve fully inclusive events

For Parents:

Before playdates:

- Always ask: "Does [child's name] have any food allergies or dietary needs?"
- Share your own child's needs clearly
- When in doubt, stick to fruits and vegetables as safe options

Teaching moments:

- At restaurants: "Let's see if they have options for everyone!"
 - At birthday parties: "Notice how they have regular and dairy-free cake? That's inclusive!"
 - Model respect: "We're choosing dairy-free milk to respect Jamie's needs"
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COMMON QUESTIONS CHILDREN ASK

"Why can't Jamie drink regular milk?"

Jamie's tummy can't digest cow's milk, so it would hurt. But Jamie can have oat milk or almond milk instead, and those taste great!

"What happens if Sam eats a nut by accident?"

Sam would feel very sick very quickly and need special medicine right away. That's why we're so careful - we want Sam to stay healthy and safe!

"Can Maya eat chicken nuggets?"

No, Maya chooses not to eat any meat or animal products. Maya eats foods from plants. There are even plant-based nuggets that taste similar!

"Is it mean to eat meat in front of Gavin?"

No! Gavin understands that people eat different foods. What's important is that Gavin ALSO has yummy food to eat. Being kind means making sure everyone has food they can enjoy.

"Why do we have to make the *WHOLE* party nut-free for just one person?"

Because even a tiny bit of nut that we can't see could make Sam very sick. Nuts are like glitter - they stick to everything and spread around! Making the whole party nut-free is how we keep Sam safe so everyone can have fun together. That's what friends do!

SENSITIVITY & INCLUSION TIPS

Language matters - Say this, not that:

- ✓ **Say:** "Jamie drinks oat milk instead of cow's milk"
- ✗ **Not:** "Jamie can't have REAL milk"

- ✓ **Say:** "Maya chooses not to eat animal products"
- ✗ **Not:** "Maya's diet is so limited/weird"

- ✓ **Say:** "We keep our classroom nut-free to keep everyone safe"
- ✗ **Not:** "We can't have peanut butter because of Sam"

Creating an inclusive environment:

DO:

- Normalize dietary differences as interesting, not weird
- Celebrate children who have dietary needs as experts
- Focus on what children CAN eat, not restrictions
- Involve ALL children in planning inclusive events

DON'T:

- Single out children with dietary needs as "difficult"
 - Make dietary restrictions the child's identity
 - Allow children to complain about accommodations
 - Use food rewards that exclude any child
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CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- **Health & Safety:** Understanding food safety, recognizing emergencies, practicing safe behaviors
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** Empathy, inclusive behavior, respect for differences
- **Life Skills:** Problem-solving, decision-making, basic label reading, communication

- **Literacy:** Vocabulary development, following directions, reading comprehension
 - **Math:** Sorting, categorizing, counting, matching
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SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

Total time: 45-60 minutes

- 5 min: Pre-viewing discussion
- 10 min: Watch episode on YouTube (Lets Learn With Karyn)
- 10 min: Post-viewing discussion
- 20-30 min: Complete 1-2 worksheets
- 5 min: Closing reflection

Shorter format (30 minutes):

- 10 min: Watch episode
 - 5 min: Quick discussion
 - 15 min: One worksheet activity
 - Assign other worksheets as homework
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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. **Connect to real experiences** - Ask if children know anyone with dietary needs
2. **Use real food examples** - Show actual dairy-free milk, gluten-free bread if possible
3. **Make it personal** - If children in class have dietary needs, celebrate their expertise
4. **Follow up regularly** - Revisit concepts at snack time, lunch, future parties
5. **Model respect** - Your attitude toward dietary differences sets the tone

For parents with children who have dietary restrictions: This episode helps your child feel seen and normal while building confidence and self-advocacy skills.

For teachers with students who have dietary restrictions: Preview the episode, prepare the child in advance, and create opportunities for them to share their expertise if comfortable.

Thank you for teaching children to be inclusive, empathetic, and safe friends!

Watch the full episode and download these free resources at:

changetheworldwithkaryn.com

YouTube: Lets Learn With Karyn

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This teaching guide is designed to accompany Episode 1 of "Lets Learn with Karyn" - “Learning About Food Allergies & Dietary Needs” All materials are free to download and use in homes, classrooms, and educational settings.