ROUTINE ESSENTIALS

SNACK/MEALTIME – ROUTINE INSTRUCTIONS

SNACK/MEALTIME ROUTINE GOAL

Students participate in the snack or mealtime routine by identifying food choices, using dishware and utensils appropriately, and following the established classroom mealtime procedures.

EMBEDDED SKILL TARGETS DURING THIS ROUTINE

Learning Spectrum

Curricular Area	Increased support needs	→	Extended learning
Receptive and Expressive Language	Attending Matching pictures Following one-step directions Imitation	Receptive/expressive identification of nouns Following two-step directions Requesting	Variety of ways to request Asking and answering questions
Social Communication and Play Skills	Joint attention Turn-taking Responding to simple social cues	Commenting with one or two words Answering questions	Commenting during mealtime

TEACHER GUIDES AND STUDENT VISUAL SUPPORTS

Getting Started

Guides

Routine Instructions

Vocabulary Teaching Guide

Student Visual Supports Guide

Data Collection

Custom Routine and Data Collection Form

Routine Planning Form

Pre-Teaching

Vocabulary

Vocabulary Assessment Instructions

Vocabulary Assessment

Vocabulary Flashcards (Small and Large)

Lessons

Vocabulary Pick-Up Game

Routine Sequencing

Student Visual Supports

During Routine Instruction

Routine Steps

Sequence Strip Template

Routine Pictures: Snack and Meals in the Classroom

Routine Pictures: Using the Cafeteria

Routine Pictures: Tube Feeding

Communication

Visual Request Templates

Written Request Templates

Allergy Cards and Poster

ID Number Card Template

Food Choices

Choice Board

Snack Pictures

Mealtime Pictures

Meal Choice Chart

"Trying New Foods" Choice Wheel

Routine Supports

Place Mat

Mealtime Material Pictures (Small and Large)

Reinforcement and Behavior Supports

Routine Essentials: Behavior Supports

Guides

Prompting Strategies

Reinforcement Strategies

Instructor Visual Supports

The Power of Visual Supports

Common Language Poster

Generalization Poster (Standard and Large)

Snack/Mealtime Routine Quick Guide:

1. **Determine the routine activities (e.g., gather placemat, gather water bottle, move to snack area, request snack, etc.) you will include in your snack or mealtime routine, and write down each activity as a separate step on a routine data form.**

   Use the STAR Program Level 1 and 2 snack routine forms or the Level 3 cafeteria lunch routine form, or use the provided Custom Routine and Data Collection Form to list the steps of the routine.

   Routine tip: Incorporate social, communication, turn-taking, and choice-making opportunities, as well as opportunities for students to generalize recently learned language and academic skills.

2. **Print student visual supports.**

   Use the Student Visual Supports Guide to create the provided student visual supports. Post visual supports in the snack/mealtime area for quick access.

3. **Observe the student during the routine.**

   Record baseline data on student independence using the prepared routine data forms.

4. **Review baseline data to determine instructional needs and individualize the routine for each student.**

   Use the Routine Planning Form and suggested routine modifications and adaptations below to individualize the routine for students, and share with all staff.

5. **Identify a reinforcement system for the routine.**

   Reference the Reinforcement Strategies guide to determine effective reinforcement for students. Visit the Routine Essentials Behavior Supports page to review and prepare reinforcement materials for student use.

6. **Train staff to use routine instructional strategies.**

   Use the provided guides to train staff. Print and post the instructor visual supports.

Generalization tip: Use the provided Generalization Poster (available in standard and poster sizes) to list recently acquired language, academic, and social skills. Staff can reference the poster as a visual reminder of skills to target during routines. Choose to download and complete the fillable fields before printing, print and use a pen or marker to update, or print and laminate the poster to update with a dry erase marker.

7. **Collect data once per week.**
   Use the prepared routine data forms to collect weekly routine data.

Data collection tips: Determine routine data collection days (e.g., on Tuesdays collect snack routine data), and/or assign staff members to take routine data for specific students. Place routine data sheets on a clipboard, and post the clipboard in the routine area, or near the door, for quick access.

8. **Increase the complexity of the routine.**
   As students become more independent during the routine, revise the steps of the routine to focus on greater independence or more complex routine steps.

Routine Modifications and Adaptations:

Customize provided student materials.

1. Create individualized routine sequence strips by selecting the routine pictures that best fit your routine and students.

2. Some visual supports provide templates for adding student pictures, names, and/or other student- or classroom-specific details. Use those templates to customize the routine to your students and classroom.

Support communication.

1. The snack/mealtime routines provide many opportunities for students to communicate preferences and make choices. Students may respond verbally using complete sentences, short phrases, and/or 1–2 words or word approximations. As needed, provide verbal and visual prompts to assist students in communicating during the routine.

2. For students communicating through pictures, print and prepare additional visual supports:

   • Prepare additional copies of the provided Vocabulary Flashcards to assist students in answering snack/mealtime routine-related questions.

   • Prepare additional visual supports (e.g., snack/mealtime pictures, mealtime materials, etc.) as needed to support students in answering related questions and communicating choices during the routine.

3. For students using augmentative communication devices, prepare the device(s) and model communication:

   • Program each student's device with the names and pictures of preferred snacks and meals.

   • Program each student's device with any unit language that is not already included in the device's vocabulary (e.g., specific unit vocabulary words, meal options, etc.).

   • Model using the device to ask and answer questions.

Accommodate for accessibility.

1. Consider alternative actions and language when planning for your routine to allow for representation and participation.

   • Replace language in cues as needed to include your students (e.g., Say, "Come to the table" instead of "Sit down" if your student uses a wheelchair).

2. Support fine motor accessibility.

   • Assist students with the fine motor skills needed for eating independently:

     ◦ Use adapted utensils.
     ◦ Provide easy-to-open containers and bags, or partially open the container prior to giving it to the student.

   • Parts of the snack routine require students to take a picture off of a choice board or chart. For students with fine motor needs, consider these options:

     ◦ Allow an alternate response by having the student point.
     ◦ Attach the picture to foam board for easier gripping.
     ◦ Attach a Popsicle stick to the picture so it's easier for the student to remove.

3. Support accessibility for students navigating food preferences and eating.

   • For students with limited food preferences, use the "Trying New Foods" Choice Wheel to encourage interaction with non-preferred foods.

   • Assist students who eat through a G-button:

     ◦ Create a sequence strip representing the student's feeding routine using the provided tube feeding routine pictures.
     ◦ Teach students the names of their materials using the Mealtime Material Pictures, and have students match the object to the picture.

4. Support visual accessibility.

   • For students requiring visuals larger than provided, consider these options:

     ◦ Adjust the size of the image or document prior to printing (if technology allows).
     ◦ Enlarge the image or materials using a photocopier.
     ◦ Utilize online web apps to resize images.