

# Lesson Plan: Food Detective Arturo and the Case of the Safe Snacks

## Materials Needed

- Puppets or stuffed animals (one to be "Detective Arturo," others to be friends/family)
- Pictures of foods: some with allergens (peanut butter, tofu/soy milk, hummus/tahini, beans) and some without (apple slices, carrots, rice cakes, sunflower seed butter, grapes, chicken)
- Two bins or baskets labeled "Safe to Eat" (with a green smiley face) and "Ask an Adult" (with a yellow question mark)
- An EpiPen Trainer (**Important: Use a trainer device only, NOT a real EpiPen**)
- An orange or a firm banana
- Paper plate, crayons, or markers
- Ingredients for a safe snack you can make together (e.g., fruit salad, gluten-free crackers with sunflower seed butter)

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Arturo will be able to:

- Identify at least three examples of safe snacks he can eat.
- Demonstrate how to ask an adult if a food contains his allergens through role-play.
- State the two most important steps to take if he feels an allergic reaction starting: 1) Tell a grown-up immediately, and 2) Get the EpiPen.
- Show the correct steps for using an EpiPen trainer on an orange.

## Lesson Procedure

### 1. Part 1: The Food Detective's Mission (5 minutes)

**Goal:** To introduce the topic in a fun, empowering way.

- **Introduction:** Use a puppet to give Arturo his mission. "Good morning, Detective Arturo! We have a very important case to solve today: The Case of the Safe Snacks! Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to learn the secret codes for staying safe and healthy around food. You are in charge of protecting your body, and I'm here to help you learn how!"
- **Identify the "Tricky Foods":** Explain simply, "Some foods are tricky for your body. For you, the tricky foods are beans, sesame, soy, and nuts. They are not 'bad' foods, they are just not safe for *\*your\** body. Our job today is to find all the delicious foods that are super safe for you!"

### 2. Part 2: Sorting the Clues - Safe vs. Unsafe (10 minutes)

**Goal:** To practice identifying safe foods and foods that require caution.

- **The Setup:** Lay out the food pictures on the floor. Place the "Safe to Eat" and "Ask an Adult" bins in front of Arturo.
- **The Game:** Say, "Detective Arturo, let's sort these food clues!" Pick up one picture at a time.
  - For a safe food (like an apple): "This is an apple. Does it have beans, sesame, soy, or nuts? No! It's safe. Let's put it in the 'Safe to Eat' bin."

- For an allergen (like a picture of hummus): "This is hummus. It's made with sesame, which is one of our tricky foods. We should not eat this. Let's put it in the 'Ask an Adult' bin to remember it's a food we avoid."
- For a questionable food (like a cookie): "This is a cookie. We can't see what's inside. It *might* have nuts or soy. What should we do? We ask a grown-up! Let's put it in the 'Ask an Adult' bin."
- **Make a Safe Snack:** After sorting, celebrate his detective work by making a simple, safe snack together from the "Safe to Eat" category, like fruit skewers or rice cakes with sunflower seed butter.

### 3. Part 3: The Detective's Questions - Role-Playing (10 minutes)

**Goal:** To build confidence in self-advocacy.

- **Scenario Setup:** Use puppets or stuffed animals. "Detective Arturo, this is your friend Teddy. Teddy wants to share his snack with you. What is the most important question you need to ask Teddy's mom or dad before you eat it?"
- **Practice the Script:** Guide Arturo to practice asking clearly. Use phrases like:
  - "Thank you! I have food allergies. Does this have any beans, sesame, soy, or nuts in it?"
  - "I am allergic to nuts. Is this safe for me?"
- **Role-Play Different Scenarios:**
  - A friend at a birthday party offers cake.
  - A grandparent offers a special treat.
  - You (the teacher) offer a snack from the kitchen.
- **Reinforce the Rule:** "Great job, Detective! The number one rule is: **If you don't know what's in it, don't eat it until you ask a grown-up.**"

### 4. Part 4: The Emergency Action Plan (10 minutes)

**Goal:** To teach emergency steps in a calm, clear, and practical manner.

- **Listen to Your Body:** "A good detective always pays attention. If you eat something and your body feels funny—like your mouth is tingly, your tummy hurts, or it's hard to breathe—your body is sending you an emergency signal."
- **The Two Super-Important Steps:** "If you feel that signal, you need to do two things right away. Can you remember them? **1. Tell a grown-up immediately. 2. Get your EpiPen.**" Chant this together a few times.
- **EpiPen Practice (The Special Tool):**
  - Show Arturo the EpiPen trainer. "This is your special tool, the EpiPen. It has medicine that helps your body feel better very fast. This one is just for practice."
  - Give Arturo the orange. "Let's pretend this orange is your leg. We always use the EpiPen on the outside of our leg, right here." (Point to the outer thigh).
  - Guide him through the steps (adjust for your specific device, but generally):
    1. **Blue to the Sky:** "Hold the pen in your fist. The blue safety cap points to the sky." (Or color specific to your trainer).
    2. **Orange to the Thigh:** "The orange tip points to the thigh."
    3. Pull off the blue safety cap.
    4. "Swing and push the orange tip firmly against the orange until you hear a 'click'."
    5. "Count slowly to three: 1... 2... 3."
    6. Pull the trainer away. Explain that the grown-up will call 911 right after using it.
  - Let Arturo practice on the orange a few times to build muscle memory and confidence.

## 5. Part 5: Case Closed! The Detective's Safety Shield (5 minutes)

**Goal:** To review the key concepts in a creative and tangible way.

- **Create the Shield:** Give Arturo a paper plate. Say, "Every great detective needs a shield to remember the rules of safety."
- **Decorate with Rules:** Help him draw simple pictures to represent the main rules:
  - A smiley face (for safe foods).
  - A question mark (for asking a grown-up).
  - A picture of a person talking (for "Tell a grown-up").
  - A drawing of his EpiPen.
- **Lesson Recap:** As he draws, review the key lessons. "You did an amazing job today, Detective Arturo! You learned how to find safe foods, how to ask important questions, and what to do in an emergency. You are a food allergy expert!"

## Assessment

- **Observation:** Watch to see if Arturo correctly sorts the food cards into the "Safe" and "Ask an Adult" bins.
- **Role-Play Performance:** Listen to see if Arturo can ask a clear question about allergens during the role-playing activity.
- **Verbal Check:** Ask, "What are the two things you must do right away if you feel sick after eating?" (Listen for "Tell a grown-up" and "Get the EpiPen").
- **Demonstration:** Assess if Arturo can correctly demonstrate the steps of using the EpiPen trainer on the orange.

## Differentiation and Notes for the Teacher

- **Keep it Positive:** The tone should always be empowering, not fear-based. Arturo is the hero in charge of his safety.
- **Adjust Complexity:** If Arturo is getting overwhelmed, focus on just one or two concepts for the day (e.g., just sorting foods and asking questions) and save the EpiPen practice for another day.
- **Repetition is Key:** Repeat this lesson in different, fun ways over time. Use the puppets again, play the sorting game with real food packages at the grocery store, and practice with the EpiPen trainer regularly so it becomes second nature.
- **Be Patient:** Learning to advocate for oneself takes time. Celebrate every small step and effort he makes.