A study (Schwartz, 2007) showed that when cafeteria staff asked children, “Would you like fruit or juice with your lunch?,” 90% of students took a serving of fruit at lunch, compared with 60% when children were not prompted. Working with children in the lunch line gives you the opportunity to encourage them to make healthy decisions.

By asking, “Which vegetable would you like?” instead of “Would you like a vegetable?,” you imply that you expect the child to want a vegetable. Similarly, when you ask, “Which would you like, fruit or fruit juice? You can influence children to choose fruits, vegetables, and other healthy options when they might not have done so on their own.

To be an excellent role model for healthy eating, try these tips in the cafeteria:

- **Encourage children to try new foods**
  - “Good for you. I see you picked a new food!”

- **Compliment children on healthy selections**
  - “I noticed you are eating more fruits and vegetables. Good job!”

- **Tell children how much you love eating healthfully**
  - “Whole grains give me energy.”

- **And remember to be positive!**
  - “Apples are naturally sweet and crunchy. Enjoy!”

**Role Playing Script**

**Food Service Staff:** Hello! Would you like pears or peaches today?

**Student A:** Umm, peaches, I guess.

**Food Service Staff:** Peaches are a great choice! They’re filled with nutrients that will make you healthy and help you grow. Peaches are one of my favorite fruits. Who is next? Would you like some peaches?

**Student B:** No.

**Food Service Staff:** Which other fruits and vegetables would you like? How about trying something new?

**Student B:** I won’t like something new.

**Food Service Staff:** If you don’t like it, you don’t have to eat all of it. But you’ll never know how great it can be unless you try! Which fruits or vegetables would you like?

**Student B:** I guess I’ll try the sweet potatoes.

**Food Service Staff:** Great, enjoy! I think you’ll be glad you tried them. How about you? Would you like peaches or pears?

**Student C:** Pears, please.

**Food Service Staff:** That’s a great choice! Would you also like to choose some vegetables?

**Student C:** Sure, I’d like sweet potatoes, too.

**Food Service Staff:** Okay! You’ll have to let me know what you think!

**Now It’s Your Turn!**

Now it’s time to practice. Using as many elements of verbal prompting as you can, work in pairs to write your own script. Be creative!