

Why Are Food Choices Important?



Focus: Students learn why making good choices about what to eat and drink is important to their growth and development.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes

Students will be expected to:

- 48.0 examine the implications of food choices and eating habits on human growth and development [GCO 1/3]

Performance Indicators

Students who achieve these outcomes will be able to:

- communicate how making healthy food choices and healthy eating habits have a positive effect on human growth and development

NOTES:

Attitude Outcome Statements

Encourage students to:

- be sensitive to the needs of other people, other living things, and the local environment [GCO 4]
- show concern for their safety and that of others in carrying out activities and using materials [GCO 4]

Cross-Curricular Connections

English Language Arts

Students will be expected to:

- interact with sensitivity and respect, considering the situation, audience, and purpose [GCO 3]
- interpret, select, and combine information using a variety of strategies, resources, and technologies [GCO 5]

Getting Organized

Components	Materials	Before You Begin	Vocabulary
• Science Card 11 • BLM <i>Supermarket Scavenger Hunt</i> • IWB Activity 8 • BLM <i>Food Journal</i> • IWB Activity 9	• selection of food for artifact box • box • food magazines and grocery flyers • craft materials such as poster board, construction paper, markers, glue, scissors	• Collect food-related items for the Curiosity Centre. • Arrange for a field trip to a local supermarket. • Arrange for a visit from a dietitian. • Arrange for a visit from an Elder or an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper to discuss traditional ways of eating and cooking.	• Canada Food Guide • food groups • grains • dairy • allergy • diet

Safety

- Be aware of any allergies in the classroom and ensure no food is brought in that could endanger a student.
- Remind students to wash their hands before and after handling food.

Science Background

- Canada's Food Guide is based on current evidence about healthy eating. Detailed information about the Guide can be found by searching the Health Canada website. The following table summarizes the recommended number of Food Guide servings per day for children aged 4–8.

Recommended Number of Food Guide Servings per Day

Serving Type	Number of Recommended Servings (Children Aged 4–8)
Vegetables and fruit	5
Grain products	4
Milk and alternatives	2
Meat and alternatives	1
Oils and fats	30–45 mL

(Canada Food Guide, 2007)

- Health Canada also produced a companion guide that reflects the values, traditions, and food choices of Canada’s Indigenous peoples. This guide is called *Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis* and can also be accessed online.

Possible Misconceptions

- Not all foods with the same name are alike. If students have heard that “yogurt is healthy,” they may believe that all yogurt types are equally good choices. In fact, many flavoured yogurts have large amounts of sugar and are therefore less healthy choices than plain yogurt. Plain yogurt can be sweetened and flavoured with a little maple syrup and fruit and still be much healthier than store-bought flavoured yogurt.
- Students may not understand what is meant by a serving size. Consider bringing in some foods in pre-measured serving sizes. For example, a serving of vegetables and fruits is 125 mL of fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables or fruit, 125 mL of 100% juice, 250 mL of leafy raw vegetables, or 1 piece of fruit. (Further serving size examples are found on the Healthy Canada website.)

ACTIVATE

Artifact Box

Assemble an artifact box with a variety of foods—some of which support good health, and some of which do not. Try to include something from each food group. For example, your artifact box could include the following:

- leafy greens such as kale
- fruit such as an apple
- canned fish
- hard-cooked egg
- bag of grains such as quinoa
- container of yogurt
- candy
- chips
- soda

- water (in a reusable bottle)
- sports drink

As each item is produced, allow students time to make observations and ask questions. For each item, ask:

- **How would you describe this item? How does it look and smell?**
- **Have you eaten something like this? If so, how did it taste? How was it prepared? If not, would you like to try eating it? Why or why not?**
- **Is it healthy or unhealthy? Why?**



Display Science Card 11 and invite students to discuss the items shown. Ask:

- **Which food choices are healthier?**
- **What makes some food choices healthier than others?**

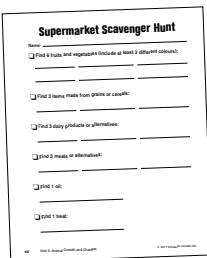
Invite students to create a healthy lunch menu from the items on the card.



Curiosity Centre

Collect books and (non-perishable) items that relate to food. Include cookbooks, a variety of menus from different restaurants, plastic food toys, and food magazines as well as items such as dry goods (beans, rice, and pasta in sealed containers) and canned goods (vegetables, fruits, fish, etc.). Allow students time for exploration. Encourage students to add questions that arise to the I Wonder Wall.

CONNECT

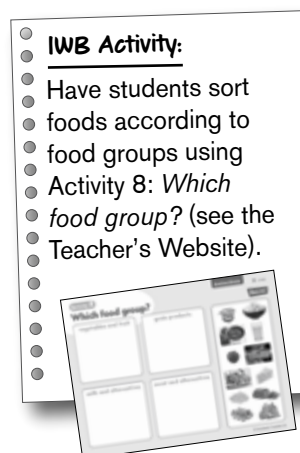


Supermarket Field Trip

If possible, take a trip to a local grocery store to observe a wide variety of foods from all food groups. Bring one or more devices that can take digital photos, and allow students to take turns photographing different types of food. Bring along copies of BLM *Supermarket Scavenger Hunt* and challenge students to find and check off all of the items. Alternatively, you could provide grocery store flyers. Remind students to store their completed BLMs in their Science Folders.

Back in the classroom, introduce the concept of the current Canada Food Guide. Display a copy of the food guide. Then show the photographs of the different foods that you photographed at the grocery store. Ask:

- **What food group does this food belong to?**
- **How do you know?**
- **What other foods did we find in this part of the supermarket? Were they from the same food group?**
- **Is this food healthy or unhealthy? Why?**





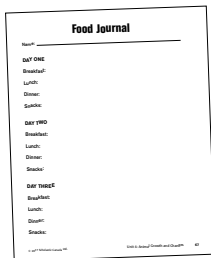
Visit from a Dietitian

Arrange for a dietitian or the school health nurse to visit the class and discuss the Canada Food Guide and how healthy eating—and unhealthy eating—can affect children’s growth and development. Consider collecting a few questions from the I Wonder Wall that the visitor might be able to help answer.



The Allergy Challenge

As a class, brainstorm different food allergies that people can have. Split the class into small groups and assign each group a different food allergy. Have each group decide on one person who will record information in their Science Journals. In their groups, students can brainstorm and list ways that students with food allergies can stay safe, and what kinds of foods they can eat to replace the foods that are off-limits for students with those food allergies. Students can then produce posters to display that information. (They may choose to use a T-chart or a different graphic organizer, such as a concept map with pictures.) Record questions that arise on the I Wonder Wall.



Food Journal

Have students keep a food journal for three days using copies of BLM *Food Journal*. Students can use words and pictures to record what they ate. At the end of the three days, set up a food journal Gallery Walk. Encourage students to ask questions about unfamiliar foods and to have an open attitude towards the food choices of others.

CONSOLIDATE



“Eat Well Diner” Menu

Set up a station with craft materials, including magazines and grocery flyers with pictures of food. Have students plan a lunch menu in their Science Journals for the “Eat Well Diner,” with different healthy food and drink options that include ingredients from the various food groups. Provide students with the option of creating a menu that would be appropriate for an Indigenous person. Invite students to come up with fun names for their menu items. Students can then use the craft materials to create colourful versions of the menus with menu item names, and brief descriptions that note the food groups included in each item.

Make a Poster for the Cafeteria

Challenge students to come up with ideas for healthy lunches that they could bring to school. Have them try to include at least one item from each food group in their lunch ideas. Students can then make “Healthy Lunch Idea” posters to put up in the school cafeteria.

Label a Bottle of Water

Have students make an illustrated label for their reusable water bottles listing reasons why water is important for healthy living.

IWB Activity:

- Challenge students to
- create a healthy lunch
- and to explain their
- choices using Activity
- 9: *What’s for lunch?*
- (see the Teacher’s
- Website).



Class Visit

Invite an Elder or an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper to the class to talk about traditional ways of eating and cooking using local plants and animals. Students can use what they have learned to describe a healthy meal including only items that can be found growing or living wild locally. This person could also discuss with the students why there is a guide especially for Indigenous peoples, and how Indigenous peoples' health has been affected by eating foods that are not part of their traditional diets.

EXPLORE MORE

A Commercial Break

In pairs or small groups, challenge students to plan and record brief (15 second) videos as advertisements for healthy food or drink items or categories, e.g.,

- water
- fruits (or a specific fruit)
- vegetables (or a specific vegetable)

Students could share their video with classmates and/or other classes in the school.

Supermarket Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____

☐ Find 6 fruits and vegetables (include at least 3 different colours):

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

☐ Find 3 items made from grains or cereals:

_____	_____	_____
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☐ Find 3 dairy products or alternatives:

_____	_____	_____
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☐ Find 3 meats or alternatives:

_____	_____	_____
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☐ Find 1 oil:

☐ Find 1 treat:

Food Journal

Name: _____

DAY ONE

Breakfast:

Lunch:

Dinner:

Snacks:

DAY TWO

Breakfast:

Lunch:

Dinner:

Snacks:

DAY THREE

Breakfast:

Lunch:

Dinner:

Snacks: