

## Food for Thought

Grade Band: K-2

### Student Objectives:

- Learn how calories from food and beverages give the body energy and activities use energy
- Identify what influences their food choices
- Design their own lunch, using what they have learned about healthy eating patterns

### Materials:

- Student Activity Sheet: Give or Take
- Student Activity Sheet: Lunch Tray
- Modeling clay or Play Dough
- Various art materials including magazines with pictures of foods, scissors, and glue, or crayons, colored pencils, and markers

**Suggested Time Frame:** 2-3 class periods (based on 45-minute intervals)

### Instant Expert:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **health literacy** is defined as “the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make healthy choices, to think about and practice health-enhancing skills, to say kind words, and to learn about feelings and how to express them.”

An important foundation of helping children become health-literate is teaching them about **wellness**. Wellness is more than just being healthy. It is the active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life.

In the first set of lessons, students learned about different types of wellness. One of those was **physical wellness**. Physical wellness is wellness related to our bodies. This includes taking care of our bodies, being physically active, having good personal hygiene, having healthy eating patterns and nutrient intake, and being safe.

In this lesson, we will focus on the physical wellness subcomponent of nutrition. Students will explore reasons why we eat and how calories from food and beverages give the body energy we need to function and to be active. They learn that we then use that energy to move, learn, and play. It is difficult for most students at this level to understand the science behind calories so the term is simply introduced during this part of the lesson. For ideas on further exploring the science behind calories, refer to the [link to 3-5 lessons].

In the second session, students explore what influences the food choices we make. As students get older, they will begin to make their own choices about what they eat and be more influenced by peers, the media and other sources. Understanding what influences their choices can help to lay a foundation for making those decisions.

Note: As always, you will want to be sensitive to individual students' unique situations and follow your school's or district's policy when it comes to the collection of personal information related to minors. At this age, students' food choices are often most influenced by their parents and by what is available in their homes and schools. The "family connection" activity at the end of this lesson offers an opportunity to extend what is learned at home.

## Additional Resources

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/data.htm>
- USDA Super Tracker <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodtracker.aspx>
- USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/executive-summary/>
- USDA ChooseMyPlate <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>
- USDA ChooseMyPlate Games <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/games>
- USDA ChooseMyPlate Coloring Sheet <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/sites/default/files/audiences/ColoringSheet.pdf>
- USDA ChooseMyPlate MyPlate Daily Checklist Find your Healthy Eating Style [http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dietary\\_guidelines\\_for\\_americans/MyPlateDailyChecklist\\_1400cals\\_Age4-8.pdf](http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dietary_guidelines_for_americans/MyPlateDailyChecklist_1400cals_Age4-8.pdf)

## Procedure:

### Session 1: Food is fuel for the body like gas is for a car

1. Write the sentence starter, "We eat because ..." on the board and invite students to complete and share answers. Accept all reasonable answers. If students don't identify that we eat to be healthy and to get the energy we need, ask them what they think

could happen if we didn't eat food? Explain that food is important for both our health and to give us energy we need to live, work, and play.

2. Ask: What does a car need to move? What do we need to put in our body to make sure we can work, sleep, play, and move? Explain that gas is fuel for the car, and food is fuel for our bodies.
3. Ask students to think about what is in different foods that gives us energy. Explain that something called "calories" in foods and beverages are a form of energy that fuels our bodies. When we eat and drink foods and beverages that contain calories, those calories give us energy. We can then use that energy to live, work, and play. Let students know that many foods also help us keep our heart healthy, bones and muscles strong, and brain working well so we can learn at school. Instruct students to model several different activities that use energy from foods. Challenge students to:
  - jump up and down as fast as they can for ten seconds
  - point to their hearts and try to feel them beating
  - pretend to sleep or rest
  - take a deep breath in and out slowly
  - make a strong muscle with their arms
  - stand on one foot
  - dance
  - pretend to sneeze or yawn
4. As they do each activity, challenge them to think of one food they ate today that gave them the energy to do it.
5. Reinforce or extend this concept with the "Give or Take" game. (Note: You will need to cut out the cards from the activity sheet ahead of time). Divide students into groups, and distribute a stack of cards to each student group. Place the cards face down in the middle of the table. Inform students that the student with the birthday closest to today will begin by selecting a card from the top of the pile and reading the card to the group. Team members have to decide whether the item on the card "gives" or "takes" energy. Let students know that if the group cannot agree if the item gives or takes energy to put it to the side and come back to it when all other cards are placed in the "Give" or "Take" pile.

6. When all cards have been placed in the piles, instruct students to look at the “Give” pile. Ask: What do you notice about the items in this pile? What food groups are represented? Instruct student small groups to sort the food cards into food groups.
7. Extended learning: Have small groups create their own sets of cards for items that give and take energy. Once small groups have developed their own sets, they can challenge another team and exchange the cards.

## Session 2: What influences our food choices?

1. Give individual students or student groups a block of clay and let them know that they have three minutes to build a model that represents a breakfast food. Give students three minutes to form their models.
2. Debrief: Ask students to share their models and the reasons they chose the foods they did. Was it easy? Is it their favorite? Is it something that represents their culture?
3. Explain that when we choose foods to eat, there is often a person or thing that helps us make that choice. Reinforce the concept by asking students to think about what they ate for breakfast this morning. Have all students stand up. Then, read the following sentences and ask students to sit down when one of the sentences is true:
  - I ate this breakfast food because my parent or caregiver told me to.
  - I ate this breakfast food because I saw a commercial for it on television.
  - I ate this breakfast food because it is something my family loves to eat.
  - I ate this breakfast food because I like the way it tastes.
  - I ate this breakfast food because \_\_\_\_\_. (Invite students who remain standing to come up with other reasons).
4. Explain that there can be many different reasons we make food choices, and those reasons can change over time. Their parents or caregivers may choose most of their foods right now but, as they get older, they may be able to make their own food choices more often.
5. Ask students how what they have learned about balance and variety could help them make eating choices that help them stay well.
6. Ask students to pretend that they can design their own lunch menu for tomorrow. Distribute the “Lunch Box” student activity sheet. Review the directions and explain how they can earn points with their lunch items. Invite students to fill up the lunch box with



the things they would like for lunch. They can draw the lunch items or they can cut out pictures from magazines or web sites.

7. When they are finished, invite them to “share” their lunches with a partner, explaining why they chose the foods they did. If time allows, challenge them to work with their partner to add up their points and make any changes or additions to increase points.

**You Decide:** This feature helps reinforce decision making with students and can be integrated into the lesson or serve as an extension.

Ask students to think about foods they like to eat for dinner and to draw or write down the dinner items on a sheet of paper. Ask students if their drawing includes a balance of all the food groups. If it does, put a star at the top of the page. If it does not, decide what needs to be changed to make it more balanced.

### Family Connection:

Encourage students to share their “lunch boxes” with family members. Discuss ways to make this lunch or to incorporate some of the foods selected. Challenge students to explain to their family members why they chose the foods they did.

For other tools to extend learning outside of the classroom, refer to the School-to-Home activities on TogetherCounts.com. Begin these activities together at school and then encourage students to continue them with their families.

### Community Connection:

Culture often influences our food choices. Invite representatives from different cultural groups in the community to share recipes or to make food items that students can sample or try at home.

### Standards Correlations:

National Health Education Standards

- Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information, products, and services to enhance health.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

## SHAPE(America,(National(Physical(Education(Standards

- Recognizes the “good health balance” of good nutrition with physical activity.

## Common(Core(State(Standards(for(English(Language(Arts

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
- Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by words in text.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.

## Common(Core(State(Standards(for(Mathematical(Practice

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Classify objects and count the number of objects in each category.
- Represent and interpret data.

\*\* Source: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/snapshot-2015-2020-dietary-guidelines-americans>

## Student Activity Sheet: Give or Take

Teacher note: Cut student cards for each small group.



GIVES ENERGY		TAKES ENERGY	
Sleeping	Doing Karate	Walking	Jumping Rope
Dancing	Hopping	Playing Piano	Reading a Book
Playing Soccer	Planting Flowers	Climbing a Tree	Doing a Math Problem
Carrot	Apple	Orange	Broccoli
Rice	Chicken	Peanuts	Cereal
Tortilla	Milk	Cheese	Granola Bar

## Student Activity Sheet: Lunchbox

Draw or glue pictures of what you would like for lunch inside the lunchbox. When you are finished, check off each sentence you have completed. Give yourself one point for each check mark.

- My lunch has a fruit.
- My lunch has a vegetable.
- My lunch has a grain.
- My grain is a whole grain.
- My lunch has a dairy item.
- My dairy item is non-fat or low-fat.
- My lunch has variety (at least two different foods from the same group).
- I like making lunch choices that can help me stay healthy!



**TOTAL POINTS:**

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