



Food for Life Curriculum Pack

Topic 3: What do we eat and how could we make our diet healthier?

This topic provides an opportunity for children to record what they currently eat and how their diet compares with government recommendations. They will think about healthy eating and how it affects our long term health. Helping the children understand how to eat well and make positive choices will be an ongoing process; hopefully these activities will get them started.

Activities for key stage one

Activity 1: What do we eat at the moment? Keeping a food diary

Activity 2: Do we have a balanced diet? Analysing a food diary

Activity 3: What are the benefits of a healthy diet?

Activity 4: How could we adapt our diet?

Activity 5: Spread the word! Promoting healthy eating in our school

Activity 1: What do we eat at the moment?

Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b, 2c

PSHE 3a

Objectives

- To give pupils the opportunity to evaluate their own diet, comparing it with the government's recommendations on healthy eating.

Resources

1. Activity sheet 8 *Balance of good health plate*.
2. Activity sheet 9 *What I ate today*.
3. If possible, examples of food from each of the five groups.
4. Large colour posters and smaller leaflets showing the 'balance of good health' are available free from the Food Standards Agency on telephone number 0845 606 0667 or visit www.foodstandards.gov.uk. They normally send them through quite quickly.

What to do

Make a huge 'balance of good health plate' with coloured paper for each of the sections. You will need a range of fresh and processed foods for each of the five food groups. Children should sit around the plate in a circle and volunteers can come up and place foods in the correct section.

Don't make too much of the different sizes of the sections at this point (although this may of course come up in discussions).

It is useful to introduce the idea that each food group is represented by a colour. Children could use these as a guide for colouring in activity sheet 8.

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Red: | Meat, fish and alternatives |
| Green: | Fruit and vegetables |
| Blue: | Dairy products |
| Orange: | Breads, cereals and potatoes |
| Yellow: | Foods containing fat and sugar. |

Activity one: What do we eat at the moment? continued

In order to assess what they are currently eating, pupils can keep fill in activity sheet 9 *What I ate today*. They will need to keep a record of everything they have eaten during the day. For this reason, it would be best to do this activity first thing in the morning, so that they can record what they had for breakfast. They will need to understand which food goes in which group. It would be good to model filling in a couple of meals, choosing what group to put things in. The children will need to make a note of what they eat that evening – it would be good to send a note home, and ask their parents to write it down so that the children can come in the next day and complete their food diary.

Further activities

To help children get to grips with which food goes in which group, they could complete the activity described in ‘Developing understanding’ section of the excellent Sustain Grab 5 curriculum pack. The activity is called ‘the balance of good health plate’, and includes a list of foods and the groups they go in (see p.13). The activity sheet to use is number 3. The Grab 5 pack is full of ideas for getting children to eat the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. All this is available *free* at www.sustainweb.org/g5cp.

Activity 2: Do we have a balanced diet?

Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b, 2c

PSHE 3a

Objectives

- To give pupils a chance to evaluate their own diet, comparing it with the government's recommendations
- To understand that they need a balance of food from each food group in order to have a healthy diet.

Resources

1. Completed copies of activity sheet 9 *What I ate today*.
2. Activity sheet 8 *The balance of good health plate*.

What to do

Pupils should total their scores for each of the groups and then find out which group they have eaten most of and least of. This can then be recorded on activity sheet 9 *What I ate today*. Children could now write sentences such as "I should eat more...", "I should eat less..." on the bottom of the sheet.

The teacher can then discuss that the recommended diet includes a large amount of fruit and vegetables, as well as starchy foods such as potatoes and rice. Show them how these food groups have very large sections on the 'balance of good health plate' and this should be reflected in how much they eat of these foods: lots! You could explain the target of eating five fruit and vegetables a day. Explain that in comparison they should eat only a very small amount of foods containing fats and sugars. How does the plate compare with what they found?

Further activities

Children should be shown the importance of eating a variety of food within the groups. It is not OK to just eat sausages for the meat food group! Emphasise that a balance is needed. Children could design a whole day's meals, making sure they get their five portions of fruit and vegetables and a range of foods within the other groups.

The government's Wired for Health (Go to www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk) site links to a site that promotes healthy living and would provide good reinforcement www.welltown.gov.uk. The British Heart Foundation has the free *Nutrition Mission* CD ROM which would be suitable for year 2 pupils. Go to www.bhf.org.uk and click on 'young people' to order.

Activity 3: What are the benefits of a healthy diet?

Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b, 2c

PSHE 3a, 5d

Objectives

- To consider the health benefits of each food group
- To appreciate the need for a balance within the food groups
- To help pupils understand that they have to take responsibility for the food they eat, and that this has long term implications for their health.

Resources

Teaching resource 10 *Healthy kids*

What to do

Ask children if they know *why* they should have a healthy diet. Ask pupils if they know why certain foods are good for them. Write the ideas on the board. Can the pupils describe what someone who has a healthy diet might look like? For example, shiny hair, clear skin, good teeth. Explain that some foods like potatoes and pasta give them energy, and that others such as milk and cheese are good for their teeth.

Use the *Healthy kids* resource to introduce the fact that there are a range of nutrients that have an important role in keeping us healthy. Children could then draw a picture of a child who has a healthy diet and label it with descriptions such as 'strong bones', 'lots of energy' and so on.

Further activities

Try to find ways to link the need for a balanced diet to the need for exercise, for example: take pulse rate after exercise, or talk about how activities such as skipping and jogging help maintain a healthy heart. The British Heart Foundation has lots of excellent resources. Go to www.bhf.org.uk

Activity 4: How could we adapt our diet?

Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2c

PSHE 3a 5d

Objectives

- To discuss the reasons why children don't eat enough fruit and vegetables
- To help pupils see how they could make big improvements to their diet without a great deal of effort.

What to do

When evaluating their diets, most of the children will have found that they have too many foods in the fats and sugars section and not enough in the fruit and vegetables section.

Begin with a discussion about why people don't eat enough fruit and vegetables. On the board write a list. For example:

| Why we don't eat enough fruit and veg | Recommendations |
|--|--|
| We don't like them | The more you try, the more you'll like. Try a new fruit or veg each day. |
| We can't get hold of them | Ask the school to sell them at break time. |
| They don't fill us up | Eat fruit and vegetables combined with other foods as well: an apple with cheese, banana on toast. |
| The vegetables at school are soggy and bland | Ask the cooks not to overcook the vegetables, and to serve more salads and raw vegetables such as carrots. |

Activity 4: How could we adapt our diet? continued

After this, add in the recommendations for getting round these problems. Pupils could then work in groups to think of three or four changes they could make to improve their diet. For example, they could have a carrot and a piece of cheese instead of a packet of crisps; a piece of fruit instead of sweets; a banana milkshake to keep them going till dinner when they get home from school. Children could write an action plan with three ideas for introducing fruit and vegetables into their diet.

Further activities

Learn to like challenge (from the Sustain Grab 5 curriculum pack). Ask the children to choose a fruit or vegetable they don't like or haven't tried. The challenge is to learn to like it. Brainstorm ideas for how this might be achieved. For example: eat a small amount of it each day; include the vegetable in a sandwich or on a pizza; include the fruit in a fruit salad or as a garnish for another pudding.

Teachers' notes

The three main obstacles to eating enough fruit and vegetables are:

Acceptability: Many of the highly branded, high fat and sugar foods are seen as the cooler option.

Accessibility: Healthy foods are not always available when choosing a meal or snack. Convenience stores often have a poor selection of fruit and vegetables.

Affordability: Fresh produce is sometimes thought of as expensive.

The chart and the information from this activity comes from the Sustain Grab 5 curriculum pack, available *free* at www.sustainweb.org/g5cp.

Activity 5: Spread the word!

Curriculum links

Science Sc2, 2c

PSHE 2h, 3a

Objectives

- To consolidate pupils' learning about the importance of a healthy diet
- To consider how people might be persuaded to change their diets.

Resources

Teaching Resource 11 *Seven tips for healthy eating.*

What to do

Pupils design leaflets or posters to be put up around the school to show the benefits of a balanced diet and what this means. Start with a discussion about what things make them want to change their diet. Is being strong and full of energy for sport something that motivates them? What about having shiny hair and healthy skin? Would it influence them if they saw a poster of a famous person telling them to eat more fruit and veg?

The posters could simply show the Balance of good health plate, or could explain the benefits of a number of nutrients. The seven government recommendations for healthy eating are a useful resource and can be discussed with the pupils.

Teachers' notes

This activity links very well with non-fiction persuasive writing in Literacy, and could therefore be developed into a whole week of literacy lessons looking at information leaflets on a range of health and safety issues. A good place to pick up this type of leaflet is your GP's surgery or a chemist.