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# Food for Life Curriculum Pack

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## 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, but hopefully these activities will get them started.

### Activities for key stage two

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?

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### Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b, 2c

PSHE 3a, 5d

### Objectives

- To give pupils the opportunity to evaluate their own diet, comparing it with other children's and the government's recommendations on healthy eating
- To take part in a national survey (on the Channel 4 website) of children's diets.

### Resources

1. Activity sheet 8 *The balance of good health plate*.
2. Activity sheet 10 *Food diary*.
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 go to [www.foodstandards.gov.uk](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk). They normally send them through quite quickly.

### What to do

In order to assess what they are currently eating, pupils can carry out a food diary (activity sheet 10) for a week. They will need to keep a tally of everything they eat during those seven days.

Before they complete the diary, the children should have time to familiarise themselves with the 'balance of good health plate' (activity sheet 8). They will need to understand which food goes in which group, as they will have to make decisions about how to record the food they eat at home as well as at school. It would be good to model filling in a couple of meals, choosing what group to put things in.

You can show them a large poster (see resources) and bring it to life with real examples of foods from each group. 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 8a.

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

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

### Further activities

To help children get to grips with which food goes in which group, they could complete the activity described in the '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](http://www.sustainweb.org/g5cp)

### Teachers' notes

Before the results from the food diaries can be entered onto the Channel 4 website, schools need to register.

Go to <http://www.channel4.com/apps/ict/ourbodies/health>

You need to click on 'enter data' and then 'register'.

Also, it would be good to check out the way the data is presented by going back to the page above and choosing 'show results'. This will show two pie charts, one showing the average for children who have already entered their data, and one with the government's guidelines. You may be shocked at the difference between them!

When your pupils come to enter their own data, they will see three pie charts showing the results of their own personal diary as well as the other two pie charts.

## Activity 2: Do we have a balanced diet?

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### Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b

PSHE 3a, 5d

### Objectives

- To give pupils a chance to evaluate their own diet, comparing it with other children's and 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 10 *Food Diary*.
2. Activity Sheet 11 *So what does our food diary tell us?*
3. Access to the internet for the whole class.

### What to do

When the diaries have been completed, pupils can input their results onto the Channel 4 website at:

[www.channel4.com/apps/ict/ourbodies/health](http://www.channel4.com/apps/ict/ourbodies/health)

*Make sure that you have registered your school on the website before the pupils input the data (see activity 1 from this topic).*

They can then answer the questions on activity sheet 11 *So what does our Food Diary tell us?* This involves comparing their own results with those of everyone else who has entered into the database, and also what the recommended diet is. The pie charts provide a simple visual way of comparing diets, and the children can reflect on which food groups they need less of, and which they need more of. Children usually find that they are having far too much food with fats and sugars and not enough fruit and vegetables.

### Teachers' notes

There are plenty of free IT based resources that can be used to reinforce the 'balance of good health plate'. The government's Wired for Health site (go to [www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk)) links to a site that promotes healthy eating. Go to [www.galaxy-h.gov.uk](http://www.galaxy-h.gov.uk)

The Food Standards Agency has a free CD ROM called *Dish it up*. Telephone 0845 606 0667 or go to [www.foodstandards.gov.uk](http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk). The British Heart Foundation has the free *Nutrition Mission* CD ROM. Go to [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk) and click on 'young people' to order.

## Activity 2: Do we have a balanced diet? continued

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### 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! Emphasize 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](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk)) site links to a site that promotes healthy living and would provide good reinforcement at [www.welltown.gov.uk](http://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](http://www.bhf.org.uk) and click on 'young people' to order.

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

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### Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b

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

1. Teaching resource 10 *Healthy kids*.
2. Activity sheet 12 *Nutrition expert*.

### What to do

Ask pupils if they know why certain foods are good for them. Write the ideas on the board. Use the 'healthy kids' to introduce the fact that there are a range of nutrients that have an important role in keeping us healthy.

Children then read activity sheet 12 to find out more about nutrients. They can underline the key facts in colour. The pupils then have to summarize the key facts in the table.

Another way to do this would be to split the children into groups, and give them the information on only one food group from activity sheet 12. They would then present the benefits of their food group to the rest of the class, perhaps in the form of a simple poster with bullet points highlighting the nutrients and what they do.

### 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 talking 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](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

## Activity 4: How could we adapt our diet?

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### Curriculum links

Science Sc2 2b

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

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After this, add in the recommendations for getting round these problems. Pupils could then work in groups to think of three of 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 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](http://www.sustainweb.org/g5cp)

## Activity 5: Spread the word!

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### Curriculum links

Science Sc2, 2b

PSHE 3a, 5d

### 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 would be an excellent starting point for discussion (teaching resource 11), and their posters/leaflets could adapt these seven recommendations.

### 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.