



---

# Food for Life Curriculum Pack

---

## Topic 5: How do we make choices about the food we eat?

In this section we have included activities that will enable children to consider how they might make more active choices about what they eat. These activities can be carried out by individual classes or could form part of a whole school initiative linked to the citizenship curriculum. Discussions could be fed back to a school council, and taken on board by the staff and governors.

We hope that schools can find opportunities for pupils to have an input into the decisions being made about food in their school, for example, establishing rules for appropriate break time snacks, behaviour codes in the dining room, or incentive schemes to encourage healthy eating. The government has recognised the importance of pupil input; the consultation of children about school food policies is a requirement of the National Healthy School Standard (DfES 1999).

### Activities for key stage two

Activity 1: The influence of others...

Activity 2: Taking a closer look at food advertising

Activity 3: Developing a point of view

Activity 4: Making decisions about the food we buy

## Activity 1: The influence of others...

---

### Curriculum Links

Science Sc2 1a, 2b

PSHE 1a, 2a, 2d, 2k, 3a, 5c, 5d

### Objectives

- To enable children to understand that there are a range of people who might influence what they eat
- To help them understand that they should take some responsibility in choosing what they eat.

### Resources

Activity sheet 13 *What would they say?*

### What to do

Brainstorm with the children a list of people who might influence their food choices: themselves, parents, peers, teachers, lunchtime supervisors, GPs, nutritionists, food companies. Who do they think has the biggest influence? Why? Try to put them in order of importance.

In groups ask the children to consider one of these sets of people. Using activity sheet 13, they should write down the typical kind of things they might say to try and influence their food choices. For example, what would their parents say to them? Or a classmate who was eating the latest lunch-time snack product while they ate a brown bread sandwich? Ask them to write up their quotes in the speech bubbles. They then present their ideas to the rest of the class. Ask them to reconsider who has the most influence.

Finally, split the children into two groups. One group will pretend they are a famous sports person, and the other the managing director of a well known food company that sells snack foods to children. They must think of at least two things the person would say to them to try and influence what they eat.

The two halves of the class line up opposite each other and a volunteer walks down a 'conscience alley' between them. As the child walks, both groups say things to try and persuade the child of their point of view. Try again with a few more children. Discuss how this experience made them feel.

## Activity 2: Taking a closer look at food advertising

---

### Curriculum links

Science Sc2 1a, 2b

PSHE 1a, 2a, 2d, 2k, 3a, 3f, 5c, 5d

### Objectives

- To make children more aware of the impact that advertising has on them
- To encourage children to evaluate advertising objectively.

### Resources

1. Examples of magazine adverts for foods promoted to children.
2. Food packaging with promotions and collectables, for example crisp packets, sugary cereals.
3. Activity sheet 14 *Food adverts on TV*.

### What to do

The day before this activity ask the pupils to watch some children's television after school and to fill in activity sheet 14.

In class, show the children the packaging and the magazine adverts and ask for their comments. Ask them what they thought of the adverts they had seen on TV the night before. What do the food companies want them to do? What kinds of foods were being advertised? What is their opinion of advertising these kinds of foods to children?

How do they feel about things such as book vouchers, or sports equipment being part of the promotion for crisps and chocolate? Do they think their school should take part in these kinds of schemes?

### Further activities

Pupils could design adverts for natural and healthy foods using some of the strategies that food companies use, such as collectables and clubs. These adverts could be shown to a class and compared with adverts for high fat/sugar brands.

### Teachers' notes

A detailed summary of the main arguments about advertising to children can be found in Sustain's Grab 5 curriculum pack: Section 11 in 'Improving children's diets'. Go to [www.sustainweb.org/g5cp](http://www.sustainweb.org/g5cp). The Food Commission have produced a 'Guide to Children's Food' poster which looks at the way foods are marketed to children. To order call 020 7837 2250.

## Activity 3: Developing a point of view

### Curriculum links

PSHE 1a, 2a, 2d, 2f, 3a, 5c, 5d

### Objectives

- To express their point of view on a topical issue
- To consider alternative points of view before making a decision.

### What to do

Begin the lesson by placing a statement on the board. For example:

Crisps should be banned in this school

All the pupils in this school should have school dinners

Breakfast should be offered in the dining hall every morning

The school should have a tuck shop selling fruit only

Without any discussion, ask all the children to vote on whether they agree/disagree with the statement. This could be done with eyes closed or on paper as a secret ballot. Reveal the result, and then ask a few children to give a reason for their view. Explain that you are going to have a debate on this issue to explore it further. In pairs ask the children to make a list of the pros and cons. For example:

<b>All the pupils in this school should have school dinners</b>	
Pros	Cons
Everyone eats together and this is good socially – for example children who have school lunches won't feel excluded	Lots of people don't like the food that is served up at lunch time
Parents will know that their child is getting a hot meal every day	Packed lunch type food is more fun to eat than a hot meal
The catering staff could improve the choice of food available	Some people have special diets and need to bring food from home
There would be less rubbish around the school if no one had lunch boxes	Parents like to know exactly what their children are eating at lunch time

After the children have prepared these arguments in pairs, you can ask them to feed back and then summarize on the board. Ask them to think very carefully about what you have all discussed. Repeat the voting process and then discuss with them whether considering the pros and cons helped them to formulate a view. Even if it didn't change their vote, did it make them think more carefully about their view?

## Activity 4: Making decisions about the food we buy

---

### Curriculum links

Geography 3g, 4b, 5a, 5b

Science Sc2: 2b, 5a

PSHE 1a, 2a, 2j, 3a, 4b

### Objectives

- To explore the choices we make about the food we eat and to consider ways of producing and supplying food in a more sustainable way.

### Resources

Teaching resource 13 *Decisions, decisions...* These need to be cut into individual pictures, a set for each group.

### What to do

This activity is intended to bring together the themes of earlier activities including, healthy diet, the environmental impact of farming, and fair trade.

Explain that pupils have to decide how they would choose what food to buy if they were responsible for buying the food for the school canteen. In groups, they need to agree an order of importance for the cards. They should arrange the cards in a diamond pattern with the top card showing the most important and the bottom the least important. They can then choose the two second most important and so on as follows:

```

      1
     2 2
    3 3 3
   4 4
  5
  
```

Discuss with the whole class the factors that are considered when buying food, such as cost, quality, taste, overall value for money. For recording this activity, children could draw their own personal diamond with simple pictures for each of the sentences, or they could each cut up their own copy of the sheet and paste a diamond onto an A3 sheet.

### Teachers' notes

This activity has been adapted from the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) pack *Focus on Farms*, which is available for £10.99. To order call 01753 643104.