

Feed ME: Bringing Food Education to Maine Schools

Lesson 1

Approximate teaching time: 30-45 minutes

Teachers will need:

- Lesson 1 Plan
- Lesson 1 Slideshow, includes pictures of whole foods, pictures of processed foods, and Food Change graphs (*Food Day, 2011*)
- Plate Worksheet
- Colored pencils

This lesson will enable students to:

- Explain the difference between whole and processed foods;
- Describe the health benefits of eating whole foods;
- Identify and compare foods that are whole, minimally processed, and overly processed.

This lesson meets these national and state standards:

Maine State Learning Results, Health Education Grades 3-5

- ✓ A1, Healthy Behaviors and Personal Health: Students explain the relationship between healthy behaviors and personal health.
- ✓ A6, Basic Health Concepts: Students define basic health concepts related to ... nutrition.
- ✓ F1, Decision-Making: Students apply decision-making steps to enhance health. A. Choose a healthy option when making a decision.

CDC's Grades 3-5 Knowledge Expectations

- ✓ HE 1.5.14: Explain the concept of eating in moderation.
- ✓ HE 1.5.16: Describe the benefits of eating healthy.
- ✓ HE 5.5.1: Identify situations which need a decision related to healthy eating.
- ✓ HE 5.5.5: Choose a healthy food or beverage option when making a decision related to healthy eating behaviors.

Key:

Normal font → script

Italicized font → actions

Bold font → questions

What is Nutrition?

Slide 1

Nutrition is everything that you eat and drink. Your body uses nutrients from food and drinks to function properly, so you can stay healthy. Nutrients include carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water. If you eat these things in the right amounts, they give you the energy you need to grow, learn, and play. When you eat healthy foods, you can build strong bones and muscles, concentrate in school, fight off sicknesses, and have enough energy to do your favorite activities.

Over the next four classes, I am going to teach you how to build a nutritious, healthy diet. You are going to learn about whole and processed foods, the Food Pyramid, the importance of fruits and vegetables, and how to read nutrition labels. When we finish these classes, you will be a nutrition expert!

Whole vs. Processed Foods

(This portion of the lesson is adapted from the “Eat Real” section of the *Food Day 2011* curriculum.)

Slide 2

Present pictures of whole foods.

What do you think these foods have in common?

These foods are called whole foods. Whole foods are foods that come from plants and animals. They include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, poultry, fish, dairy products, and legumes. These foods are packed with nutrients. Eating foods that come straight from nature, or close to how they came from nature, helps us get all of the nutrients our bodies need and can help us stay healthy today and in the future.

Can you think of any kinds of food that are missing from these pictures?

Slide 3

Foods like chips, candy, and soda are called processed foods. These foods might contain some ingredients that come from plants and animals, but they are changed, sometimes a little and sometimes a lot, from how nature made them. When foods are processed, they lose their healthy nutrients and are filled with sugar, fat, and salt. Eating a lot of sugar, fat, and salt is not good for our bodies.

Slide 4

Present Food Change graph: orange

This graph shows us how healthy certain foods are. A green bar means that a food is whole and nutritious, and a red bar means that a food is processed and less nutritious. The more processed a food is, the less healthy it is.

Reference orange graph.

Do you think that this food is whole or processed?

This food is a whole food. It comes from nature and has not been changed. Oranges are eaten after they are picked. They are good for our health because they are full of vitamins, like vitamin C, and minerals. You can tell that oranges are a whole food because they have a high green bar and no red bar.

Slide 5

Present Food Change graph: orange juice

Do you think that this food is a whole food?

Orange juice is not a whole food because it has been changed a little. Orange juice has been squeezed from oranges. It is more processed and has less fiber than whole oranges. This means that orange juice is not as healthy as whole oranges. You can tell that orange juice has been processed using this graph because it has a small red bar alongside its large green bar.

Slide 6

Present Food Change graph: orange soda

Can you find this food in nature?

Orange soda does not exist in nature. This means that it is a processed food. Orange soda is carbonated water with sugar, flavoring, and color added to it. It is not good for us because it is filled with sugar and does not contain any of the nutrients our bodies need. You can tell that orange soda is a processed food because it has a large red bar and no green bar.

Processed foods are designed to taste good, so you might really enjoy eating them. These foods are not the best for your body, but that does not mean that you can never eat them again. Instead, processed foods should be enjoyed as “sometimes foods.” Eating mostly whole foods will give your body the vitamins and nutrients it needs and allow you to enjoy processed foods once in a while.

Activity:

Hand out Plate Worksheet.

You all have a picture of an empty plate on the handout in front of you. For the remainder of the class period, I would like you to draw a picture of a meal. Please include as many whole foods on your plate as possible and label them. Don't forget to include a drink! Remember, dairy products like milk are whole foods.

Have students share their whole food meals with a partner or the class and explain their decision-making.