

### SMART SNACKS LESSON

## EXPERIENCE: LABEL LITERACY



Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Children 7-10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children 11-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed Ages	<b>Virginia Standards of Learning</b> English 3.1, 3.2, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 8.2, 8.6 Health 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.2, 7.3
Setting	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Camp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Either	
Location	<input type="checkbox"/> Outside	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Either	

**Project Skill:** Reading food labels to find out nutrition information

**Success Indicators:** As a result of this activity, children will be able to:

- find different nutrients on the Nutrition Facts panel
- identify healthy snacks

**Life Skills:** Decision-making, Learning to learn, Self-discipline

**Preparation Time:** Obtain packages, containers, and prices of popular snack foods.

### SUPPLIES:

- Boxes or containers of snack items.

Examples include:

- Granola bars
- Popcorn
- Tortilla chips
- Pop Tarts™
- Baked chips
- Pretzels
- Cookies
- Potato chips
- Peanuts
- Can of soda
- Fruit drink box
- Chocolate bar
- Candy
- Energy bars

### HANDOUTS:

- *Label Literacy* (VCE Publication 348-247)
- *MyPlate:* <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/MyPlate/GraphicsSlick.pdf>

### STEPS

1. Divide students into small groups of three to five.
2. Give each group one or two packages of snack foods.
3. Begin by asking each group to identify the food group(s) that the foods belong to from MyPlate.
4. Then, have them read the nutrition facts label, filling in the information on the Label Literacy handout.
5. Ask each group to report the number of fat grams. Write down the numbers and percentages on the chalkboard.
6. Have the class arrange all of the packages in front of the class from “lowest” amount of fat to the “highest” amount of fat for one serving. Talk about the concept of a “serving size” versus “eating size.”
7. Discuss the difference between “total fat,” “saturated fat,” and “trans fat” with the class. Would the foods be placed in a different order based on “saturated fat” or “trans fat”?
8. Now, conduct this activity again, looking at the “total sugars” this time.
9. After that has been done, look at “dietary” fiber and other nutrients like vitamin C and calcium.
10. Then, focus on the price of the different items. Relate the price to the amount of fat and sugar in

the items. Compare the prices of these items to a piece of fruit or vegetable. How do the prices compare? The nutrition?

## TIPS

- Reinforce messages from Smart Foods in this lesson by using MyPlate. Be sure to talk about nutrients.
- With older children, strengthen math skills by asking them to multiply the serving size by different integers to determine total fat, saturated fat, sugar, and/or fiber in a container.
- Use this lesson as a lead-in to the Smart Drinks activities.

## OTHER IDEAS:

- Using fat and sugar tubes, demonstrate the amount of fat and sugar in selected foods and drinks.
- Measure out the number of teaspoons of fat that are in each food, using shortening and the equation: 4 grams of fat = 1 teaspoon of shortening. Place them on a plate. Using sugar, do the same thing. A teaspoon of sugar has 15 calories and 4 grams of carbohydrates.
- Have students measure out the number of servings in “real” foods.
- Create and make some healthy snacks. Have students compare these snacks to the ones you looked at for this lesson.

## SHARE:

- What did you do in this activity?
- What was difficult about the activity? What was easy?
- Did the activity get easier once you had done it once?
- Some food packages now contain “front of package labeling.” This labeling is designed to simplify the Nutrition Facts panel information and help consumers make healthier choices. Example include NuVal, Smart choices, as well as others. Discuss with the class what these numbers or symbols mean and how they can help them make healthier choices when they are shopping.

## PROCESS:

- What food groups did most of the snacks belong to?
- Which foods were the highest in fat? Saturated fat? Sugar? Fiber?
- Which foods were the lowest in fat? Saturated fat? Sugar? Fiber?
- How was price related to the amount of fat, sugar, or fiber in an item?
- What were your thoughts about the snacks fitting into MyPlate? Which choices were better/worse across the different food groups?

## GENERALIZE:

- What are some healthy snacks?
- What can you do to eat more of the “healthiest” snack foods?

## APPLY:

- What will you tell your parents and friends about this activity?
- How will you use the information from this activity?

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