



Food Label Logic: Making Healthy Choices by Reading the Label

Lesson Description

The focus of this lesson is reading and interpreting the Nutrition Facts Food Label. Students will gain the ability to use the food label as a tool to make healthy food choices with an emphasis on avoiding sugary foods and drinks. Math concepts include division.

- Time required: 60 minutes
- Location of lesson: Classroom

Learning Objectives

- Identify key selected sections on the Nutrition Facts Food Label (calories, serving size, fat, sugar, vitamins and minerals).
- Interpret the information on the Nutrition Facts Food Label. Understand which nutrients should be high and which should be low on the food label of a healthy choice.
- Calculate grams to teaspoons for sugar in products.

Attitude and Behavior Goals

- Understand that drinking water is important and is a healthy choice.
- Choose water over soda and other sweetened beverages.

Materials and Preparation

- Student water bottles- 1 per student. OR plastic disposable cups- 1 per student
- Pieces of fruit washed and chopped (oranges, lemons, berries) for fruit infused water
- Drinking water- about 1 cup or 8 oz per student
- Spoons, plastic- 1 per student
- Pens or pencils – 1 per student
-  **Sugar Drink Labels**
-  **Food Label Logic PowerPoint Presentation**
- Prepared vegetable snack of the week – 1 for each student
- Water to drink during the Class Warm-up – water dispenser in the classroom and 1 cup or a water bottle for each student

Class Warm-up: Champion Cheer and Veggie Taste Test (5-10 minutes)

- Give each student a cup of water or ensure that they have a filled water bottle in front of them.
- Give each student the prepared veggie snack of the day.
- Lead the students in enthusiastically reciting the  **Champion Cheer**.
- At the end of the cheer, drink water and eat the veggie snack together.
- Have students complete their  **Taste Test Observations** about the vegetable snack of the week.

Review of Last Lesson (2-3 minutes)

- Review the evaluation questions from last week's lesson. Evaluation questions from all lessons are listed at the end of the workbook .

Class Discussion (10 minutes)

Nutrition Facts Food Labels are an important tool. They can help us to make healthy food choices. When we read a Food Label, there are some nutrients that we want to see a lot of; these are things like vitamins and minerals, fiber, protein. There are some nutrients that we generally don't want to see very much of; these are things like fat, sugar, calories.

Sugar is something we really want to look out for. Added sugars are especially bad for us because they have a lot of calories.

Do you remember what a calorie is? (Answer: energy in food) All food has calories. We need calories to survive, but too many calories are not good for us.

Can someone name a food with a lot of calories? (Possible answers: fast food, chips, candy, sodas, etc.)

How about a food with only a few calories? (Possible answers: fruits, vegetables, whole grain cereals, pretzels, etc.)

It can be easy to drink a lot of calories from sugar in sodas, energy drinks, sports drinks and other sweetened drinks. Those calories from sugar will be stored as fat in our bodies and are not healthy for us. Today, we will practice finding how much sugar is on food labels and we will talk about how much sugar is too much sugar.

Activities (40 minutes):

-  **"High and Low on the Food Label" (5 minutes):** Students will
 1. Project the Snickers bar label from the  **Food Label Logic PowerPoint Presentation** teacher resource onto the wall in the front of the class.
 - a. Point out the 3 things to keep low: sugar, calories and fat.
 - b. Point out the 3 things to keep high: vitamins and minerals, protein, fiber.

- c. Remind students of the 5-10-20% Daily Value (DV) rule that helps to know if a nutrient is high or low. 5% = low source of nutrient, 10% = medium source, 20% or higher = high source of nutrient.
 2. *Which nutrients are high and which are low on this Snickers bar label? Is this a healthy choice? Why not?*
-  **“Sugar on the Food Label” (15 minutes):** Students practice finding sugars on food labels.
 1. Refer students to the  **Sugar Drink Labels** page in their workbooks.
 2. *We are going to focus on one nutrient from the food label: sugars. We will practice finding how much sugar is in common drinks by reading the Nutrition Facts Food Labels.*
 3. Work through the first two sugar drink labels in the workbook together as a class. Students will fill in the blanks on their workbook page for grams and teaspoons of sugar.
 4. Allow students time to work through the second page- the next 4 labels by themselves.
 5. Review: *There is a lot of sugar in drinks! Which drink has the most sugar added? Which has the least?*
 - **“Too Much Sugar? (10 minutes):** Students review how much added sugar is too much and practice converting grams of sugars to teaspoons of sugars.
 1. *Sugars have no %DV (percent Daily Value) listed, so how do we know if it is high or low when we see it on the food label? Can anyone guess how many teaspoons of sugar is the daily recommended maximum?*
 - a. **5 teaspoons (or 20 grams) of added sugars is our daily maximum!**
 - b. *Sugars are listed in grams on the food label. If you want to know how many teaspoons of sugar are in the food or drink, you can convert grams to teaspoons.*
 2. *To convert grams of sugar to teaspoons of sugar, we must divide by 4.*
 3. On the board write down, “8 grams of sugar / 4=?”
 4. *What is 8 divided by 4? (Answer: 2) There are 2 teaspoons of sugar in a product that lists 8 grams. Write down “8 grams of sugar/4= 2 teaspoons of sugar.*
 5. Review:
 - a. *If our daily maximum is 5 tsp. of added sugars, which of these drinks from the drinks labels in the workbook have less than 5 tsp of sugar per serving?*
 - b. *Is it possible to drink soda every day and stay under the 5 tsp. of added sugars recommendation? (Answer: No!) This is why drinking water is the best choice always!*

- **Healthy Drinks (10 minutes):** Students make and taste fruit infused water.
 1. *We have looked at many unhealthy drinks with too much added sugar. What are some healthy things we can drink anytime? We're going to make fruit infused water.*
 2. Place a few different types of fruit on the table (lemon slices, orange slices, raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, etc.)
 3. Add one or several pieces of fruit into a cup or water bottle. Press the fruit gently with a spoon. Add water. Taste and enjoy!
 4. Next, allow students to experiment making fruit infused water in their own water bottles. Or, if water bottles are not available, distribute plastic cups.

Evaluation Questions (5 minutes)

1. *What are 3 nutrients we want to keep high on a food label? (Answer: vitamins, minerals, protein, fiber)*
2. *What are 3 nutrients we want to keep low on a food label? (Answer: sugar, fat, calories)*
3. *How do we convert grams of sugar into teaspoons of sugar? (Answer: divide by 4)*
4. *How many teaspoons of added sugars is the recommended maximum we should consume in a day? (Answer: 5 teaspoons)*
5. *What do calories give or provide for the body? (Answer: energy)*
6. *How much water should you drink every day? (Answer: at least 6 cups of water a day)*
7. *How many fruits and vegetables should you eat every day? (Answer: at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day)*
8. *Does gardening connect you to your culture and help you learn new words in your language? (Answer: yes)*

Preparation for Future Lessons – Reminder for the Instructor

- Review the materials and preparation needed for the next lesson.
- Remember that an Elder guest instructor is needed for these Spring lessons: lesson 1 (Eating a Rainbow), lesson 4 (Conserving Water: A Renewable Resource), and lesson 9 (Plant Parts: Flowers and Pollination).

Notes
