

PLANNING, SELECTING, STORING, PREPARING & SERVING FOOD TO MEET NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

Selecting Foods to Meet Nutritional Needs

Grade Levels: 7-12

Concept: Fast Food

Comprehensive Standard: 6.3 Demonstrate planning, selecting, storing, preparing and serving of foods to meet nutritional needs of individuals and families across the life span

Technical Standard(s): 6.3.2 Select, store, prepare and serve nutritious and aesthetically pleasing foods that meet the health and wellness needs of family members based on available resources

LESSON COMPETENCIES

- ? Identify the nutrient content of fast food choices
- ? Recognize the nutritional risks of fast food and other eating establishments

Anticipated Behavioral Outcomes:

- ? Students will select healthy alternatives at fast food restaurants

Resources Needed:

- Copies of handouts for all students
- 3 x 5 note cards
- Internet access for all students

References for teachers and students:

Schlosser, E. (2002). Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal. Perennial (HarperCollins) publishing.

An overview of *Fast Food Facts* from the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General is available at www.olen.com/food/book.html

A Fast Food Nutrition Fact Explorer with a search function that allows you to explore 8 different fast food restaurant menus to compare calories, calories from fat and the nutrient composition of menu items. The site is www.fatcalories.com/

The Real Truth About Fast Food and Nutrition is an entry in the ThinkQuest library of websites developed by adolescents for adolescents and can be found at www.thinkquest.org/library/winners.html?year=1998&contest_id=2 This site focuses on the nutritional value of fast food restaurant items and how these restaurants get you to buy the food. There is an online quiz for students comparing menu items called *Which Meal is Healthier*, as well as nutrition information and links to some fast food restaurants.

A database called *Fast Food Facts* with over 1,300 menu items from 24 restaurants can be found at www.kenkuhl.com/fastfood/ It also compares food categories such as burgers from all of the restaurants for calories and nutritional value

Background Information:

Fast food has become a part of the busy American lifestyle. It is convenient, predictable, and fast. It is also often high in calories, sodium, fat and cholesterol and low in vitamins and minerals.

According to Eric Schlosser in his book Fast Food Nation, Americans spend more on fast food a year than they do movies, books, magazines, newspapers, videos and records combined. Americans spent more than \$100 billion on fast food in 2000 compared to \$6 billion in 1970. Every month more than 90% of American children eat at McDonald's; the average American eats three hamburgers and four orders of fries every week. Schlosser links fast food to the rise of obesity and raises concerns about the safety of fast food.

Fast food can be a part of the American diet as long as choices are made wisely considering the Food Guide Pyramid and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and if limited. The Ohio State University Cooperative Extension Service offers guidelines for fitting fast food into healthy eating. They suggest that a fast food can be a part of healthy eating if:

- ? it is part of one or all of the basic food groups (the Food Guide Pyramid)
 - 2-3 servings of milk/dairy
 - 6-11 servings of breads, cereals, grains
 - 2-4 servings of fruit
 - 3-5 servings of vegetables
 - 2 servings of meat or meat substitutes equal to 6 ounces
- ? it allows you to keep the following nutrients low in the diet
 - sugars
 - fat, especially saturated fat
 - salt
 - calories
- ? it allows you to choose fewer calories and more nutrients

Learning Activities:

Middle School Level

- ? Ask students to place an order for their favorite fast food meal by writing out the meal on a restaurant order form or 3 X5 note card.
- ? Review the *Life in the Fast Lane* handout/transparency with students. As you go through the 4 key points for making choices at a fast food restaurant, cover the suggestions given and ask students to offer suggestions as to how they could accomplish the guideline, then reveal the suggestions on the transparency.
- ? Ask students to visit the *Real Truth About Fast Foods and Nutrition* ThinkQuest website (see reference section). Click on McDonald's/Burger King/Wendy's section to compare the nutrition content, calories and calories in similar menu choices at these restaurants by completing the *Fast Food Frenzy - How Do the Fast Foods Compare?* activity.

- ? At the same site, students will complete the activity above by clicking on Fast Food Restaurants. Students should select their favorite from the list and complete a nutritional analysis of their favorite fast food meal using the handout, *Your Favorite Fast Food Meal*.

Extended Learning Activities

- ? **Field Trip without Fast Food** - Pack nutritious sack lunches for a class field trip and avoid the fast food choices. Consider food safety principles.
- ? **Nutrition on the Go** – Plan and pack nutritious sack lunches for the school athletic teams and give to them as they leave for a competition. Consider food safety principles