

NUTRITION VOYAGE

THE QUEST TO BE OUR BEST

TREK 3 Grade 7

Leading the Way [as Agents of Change]

Subject Focus: English Language Arts

Lesson Overview:

As teachers, we want to empower our students and enable them to make a difference. But middle schoolers often don't recognize the impact they can have on the world. In this lesson, students will see how they can effect change by using the survey results generated in **Trek 2: Field Correspondents** to make a plan to increase healthy eating at their school, and then present that plan to school leaders. (Students who have not completed **Trek 2** can begin by creating their own survey.)

By the end of the lesson, students will have created their own healthy living campaigns, and ideally will have seen results of their campaigns in action.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to...

- Explain how the school environment can influence healthy or unhealthy eating.
- Develop strategies for overcoming barriers to achieving a healthier diet.
- Advocate for healthy and appealing food choices at school.
- Educate family and peers about choosing healthy foods.
- Explain positive outcomes from choosing healthy foods.

Time Required:

Three 40-minute sessions

Sample timing:

First Session – **Investigate**

Second Session – **Challenge: Create a Persuasive Campaign**

Third Session – **Evaluate and Reflect**

Supplies:

Notebooks, pens, pencils, laptops (optional), chart paper or poster-board (optional); Student Printable: **Spread the Word: Write a Healthy Motto.**

Standards:*

Students will...

English Language Arts

- Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples. (7.SL.4)
- Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points. (7.SL.5)
- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. (7.W.1)

Math

- Understand that statistics can be used to gain information about a population by examining a sample of the population. (7.SP.1)

*Sources: Science education standards: National Academy of Sciences, Math and English Language Arts education standards: Common Core.

Questions for This Trek

1. What are the most and least favorite foods at our school? Do students eat enough fruits, vegetables, and whole grains?
2. Does my school offer fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the cafeteria, vending machines, and school store?

Instructional Steps

1 Investigate

- 1. What are the most and least favorite foods at our school? Do students eat enough fruits, vegetables, and whole grains?** Begin by reviewing why it is important to eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. (If you completed **Trek 2: Field Correspondents**, you may skip to step #4.)
- 2. Does my school offer fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the cafeteria, vending machines, and school store?** Revisit your discussion of nutrient-dense foods from **Trek 1: The Path to Fruits and Veggies**. If you did not complete Trek 1, discuss with students how some foods and beverages are *nutrient-dense*. They provide many nutrients per serving but contain relatively few calories. All vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, eggs, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, fat-free/low-fat milk and dairy products, and lean meats and poultry (when prepared without solid fats or added sugars) are nutrient-dense foods.

Explain that some foods and beverages contain *extra calories* from added sugars and solid fats. Foods high in added sugars and solid fats provide many calories, but few, if any, essential nutrients (for example, vitamins, minerals, or proteins). Solid fats and added sugars add extra calories to foods and beverages such as sodas, energy drinks, sports drinks, candies, cookies, and ice cream.

So, the most important thing to remember is that nutrient-dense foods provide your body with the nutrients it needs to grow and stay healthy without too many extra calories.

- 3. Table Talk – School Survey.** Next, invite students to create a survey that will uncover classmates' favorite foods, as well as how often students eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. (Utilize the survey in Trek 2 "as is," or use it to inspire your own.) The survey may be conducted in person or distributed via email, blog, Web site, or by hand. If distributing surveys, let respondents know how, and by when, their surveys will be collected. For example, participants can email them, print them out, or fill them in by hand. Decide on a method beforehand that will make it most convenient for your class and the survey participants.

Ask whether students chose any fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein foods, and fat-free or low-fat dairy foods as their favorites. See <http://www.choosemyplate.gov> for examples of these foods. How often are students choosing fruits and vegetables and whole grains (such as whole-wheat breads and cereals, popcorn, and oatmeal) at school? Do students choose milk as a drink at school? What are some reasons beyond taste (for example, packaging, cost, convenience, time) that people choose the foods they do?

- 4. Does my school offer fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in the cafeteria and in vending machines?**

Ask students to inventory the food sources at your school (for example: the cafeteria, vending machines, school store). What options do these sources offer? How does this analysis compare to the survey results? Are students choosing less healthy options because those are what is available? What's the access to healthy food, and is it presented in appealing ways? You might have students conduct additional research by interviewing food service staff or those responsible for vending machine selections.

Continue



2 Challenge: Create a Persuasive Campaign

5. Challenge small groups to brainstorm healthy changes.

Remind them to refer to survey results and conduct further research, if needed. Each group should identify specific foods they want to see more of, and why, as well as ways to increase the amount of whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits, and vegetables students eat (both school- and student-led solutions). Have the groups present their ideas to the class.

6. Create a campaign for the school community.

Have students use the Student Printable, **Spread the Word: Write a Healthy Motto**, to help jump-start their campaigns. Then, challenge students to turn their mottos into a chant, rap, song, jingle, or some other form of creative communication. You might share samples of existing songs or videos designed to promote healthy eating (for example: the videos available at <http://fruitsandveggies.challenge.gov>). Share students' work online or have them perform for other groups of students and school leaders. Choose the best ideas to form the basis of a healthy living campaign to share with the entire school.

3 Evaluate

7. Analyze. After sharing students' work, discuss the reaction it received from students and from school leaders. Do students think their presentation was effective? Why or why not? Encourage students to brainstorm next steps.

4 Reflect

8. Have students reflect in their journals about their campaign. Ask them to consider:

- Did they inspire change?
- What improvements were made?
What barriers still exist?
- Do they have any ideas for what they can do next?
- How will the campaign influence their own eating decisions?

End of Trek

Extension Ideas

- Have students meet with school leaders and food service staff to discuss changes that can be made in the cafeteria, school store, and vending machines.
- Make a Web video to inspire change beyond the school.
- Read about other schools that have made a change. Start a school-to-school communication campaign, sharing stories, ideas, challenges, and successes.
- Invite chefs and registered dietitians to visit the school and share healthy recipes.



How can YOU inspire change?

Use what you've learned about eating well to create a catchy motto that will motivate your friends, family, teachers, school leaders, and others in your community to embark on their own healthy expedition and do their best by choosing nutritious foods. Cut out the word cards below to use as inspiration. Arrange and rearrange them until you discover a powerful slogan. Use your own words, too—write them on the blank cards.

For example: *"Eat Fruits and Veggies, Be Active, Love Your Life!"*

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| Fruits | Feel | Live | Delicious | Life |
| Vegetables | Best | Champion | Energy | Be |
| Whole Grains | Strong | Winner | Powerful | Discover |
| Low-Fat Dairy | Healthy | Love | Eat | Balanced |
| Lean Protein | Inspire | Active | Do | Food |
| Confident | choice | cook | Smart | Fun |
| Colorful | Energized | Action | Voyage | Trek |
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Write your ideas

Use your motto to create a chant, haiku, song, rap, or jingle to help spread the word even further! Film or perform your routine to share with your classmates, teachers, and school leaders. Post it to your class blog or Web site, or share with a local media station.

