

EAT

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Instruct students to find at least one whole grain food on the nutrition poster in the cafeteria or that may be offered with the school meal. Decide if there are any whole grain foods on the poster or on the menus that were not mentioned in class during the meal planning activity. Discuss your findings when the students come back to class.

LEARN

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objective

Students will be able to plan a healthy breakfast that includes whole grain foods.

10 Minute Lesson

The teacher will lead a short discussion about the benefits of whole grain foods. Through teacher-guided discussion, students will identify possible whole grain foods they could eat at breakfast.

LIVE

HOME ACTIVITY

Have students examine the ingredient labels of the various breakfast grain foods they eat at home, in order to determine if they are a whole grain food. Ask the students to discuss their findings in class.

Teachers Notes Background

Whole Grains are Considered “Super-Foods”

- **Super for Your Waistline** People who regularly eat whole grains are more likely to maintain a healthy weight. This might be because they are high in fiber which makes you feel full longer, so you may be less likely to over eat.
- **Super for Your Insides** The fiber in whole grains exercise your intestines and keeps you “regular.” Whole grains contain B vitamins, iron, vitamin E, magnesium, special phytochemicals, and unique antioxidants, too- so besides being super nourishing, they may even protect you from heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers.
- **Super Natural** Whole grains are so nourishing because, unlike refined grains contained in foods like white bread or rice, they still contain all the naturally occurring parts of the grain- the bran, germ, and endosperm. That’s where many of the special nutrients in whole grains are found.
- **Super Easy to Find** Food labels list ingredients in descending order. The most prevalent ingredient is first, the least prevalent is last. To determine if a food item contains a significant amount of whole grains, look for these words to appear first or second on the ingredient section of the food label: whole grain [name of grain, such as wheat or corn], stone-ground whole [grain], brown rice, oats, oatmeal (including old-fashioned oatmeal, instant oatmeal) or wheat berries.
- **Super Tasty** Whole wheat, corn, brown rice, oats, barley, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, rye are key ingredients in many delicious foods. More and more whole grain products are available to buy than ever before. Whole grains even include popcorn!

LEARN 10 Minute Lesson

Begin leading a discussion by asking the students questions about whole grains: What is a whole grain food? Why are they considered to be healthy? How can you identify one? *Refer to the background information above for answers.*

How many servings should you have each day? *The Dietary Guidelines for Americans say “make half of your grains whole.” Most teens should have 6 – 10 servings of grain per day, so that means 3 – 5 servings of whole grain per day.*

What are examples of foods you could eat that may contain whole grains? *Examples are could include oatmeal, breakfast cereals made with oats (for example, Frosted Mini Wheats, Cheerios or Life) , whole wheat toast, tortillas, bagels, or sandwich buns, granola or cereal bars containing oats, and whole grain crackers.*

Introduce and explain the EAT Cafeteria Connection and LEARN Home Activity to the students.

Optional Enrichment Idea

Prepare and eat a breakfast trail mix in class made with whole grain cereal(s), plain popcorn, dried fruit like raisins, and a small amount of chocolate chips and/or mini marshmallows. Students can look at the ingredient labels for the cereals to identify the whole grain ingredients. Toss the ingredients in a large mixing bowl using a spoon, spray sparingly with a liquid margarine spray, and sprinkle with cinnamon.

Enjoy!