

## **EAT**

### **CAFETERIA CONNECTION**

Ask the students to examine the MyPyramid Poster in the cafeteria. Tell them to look for one healthy food or beverage in each of the five food groups that they might enjoy either at home or in school. Discuss their observations and ideas when the students return back from lunch after they’ve had an opportunity to review the poster.

## **LEARN**

### **CLASSROOM ACTIVITY**

#### Objective

Students will explain why breakfast is important.

#### 10 Minute Lesson

Through teacher-guided discussion, children will explore the meaning of the word “breakfast.” Discussion will enable students to identify the negative consequences of breakfast skipping. Students will gain understanding that eating breakfast will help them feel and learn their best.

## **LIVE**

### **HOME ACTIVITY**

Instruct the students to survey 3 adults at home and in their extended life (immediate and extended family members, coaches, scout troop leaders, friends’ family, etc.) about whether or not they eat breakfast every day. Keep a tally of the number of adults who do and don’t eat breakfast and discuss the survey results as a class. Decide if the majority of people surveyed take advantage of the benefits of breakfast.

# Teacher's Notes

## Background

**Research shows that students who do not eat breakfast may experience:**

- Increased depression and anxiety
- Increased fatigue, restlessness and sleepiness
- Increased hyperactivity
- Decreased attention span
- Decreased class participation
- Decreased time spent on task
- Increased need for discipline
- Increased visits to school nurse: headaches, stomach aches
- Increased absenteeism
- Overall poorer grades, in particular in arithmetic
- Decreased ability to distinguish between similar images
- Slower memory recall

## LEARN 10 Minute Lesson

**Lead Group Discussion-** discuss the meaning of the word “Breakfast”

**According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of BREAKFAST is “the first meal of the day.”** *Tell the students you want to examine the word a little more closely: “Let’s break the word down into 2 separate words: ‘break’ and ‘fast’.”*

**BREAK** means “to stop or bring an end to.”

**One meaning of FAST** is “to abstain from food.” **In other words, go for a long time without eating.** *Ask the students if they ever heard of a hunger strike- explain these people are on a “fast.”*

**Now ask students to combine the meanings of both words.** *Breakfast now means to end the fast- or more simply, the meal that ends the long period of time we go without food overnight.*

**Ask students what might happen if they did not eat breakfast before coming to school. What could happen on the weekend if you skip breakfast (think about if you were going to play a sport, or go outside and play with your friends in the morning)?** *If you don’t eat breakfast you might feel tired. You might not be in a good mood. It would be harder to concentrate in class and do your best in school. These problems are because your brain is not being properly fueled by food. Without food you will have less physical energy because your muscles are fasting, too. You might experience other physical symptoms like a headache or stomach ache.*

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

## Optional Enrichment Ideas

Have the students calculate how long they would fast if (1) the last time they ate was a snack at 8:00 PM and (2) they did not eat again until they went to lunch at school. To help students complete the activity, write “8:00 PM snack” and the “lunch period start time” on the blackboard. Or, provide students with a blank 8 ½ x 11” piece of paper. Have them copy the words “Break Your Fast- Eat Breakfast!” on the top of the paper. Instruct students to create mini posters advertising the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast every day. Display the mini posters in the classroom or in the school cafeteria.