

Exploring Where Food Comes From

Grades 3-5

Overview

This lesson supports the development of student food literacy by exploring the origin of a variety of foods and reflecting on how they may be harvested, prepared, or eaten. Helping students build their connection and relationship to a variety of foods is one of the best ways that nutrition education can support students in developing positive relationships with food (i.e. their comfort, confidence and relationship with food) and increase food literacy.

What Students Will Learn

- Students will identify and describe the origins of a variety of foods.
- Students will reflect on and describe how a variety of foods may be prepared and eaten.

Time



- 40 minutes - 1 hour (varies by grade level and whether extension activities are included)

Materials

- Activity Sheet (provided below)
- Coloured pencils
- Chart paper or chalk board



Curricular Links

- Physical & Health Education
- Science
- English Language Arts

BC Curriculum Competencies 3-5

- Identify and describe factors that influence health choices
- Exchange ideas and perspectives to build shared understanding
- Make observations about living things in the local environment

TEACHING TIP

Be sensitive to your students' diverse food experiences, interests and community, family and cultural contexts by teaching about the origins of foods in a neutral way. This also supports student development of positive attitudes to and relationship with food.

Exploring Where Food Comes From Activities

1. Discuss as a class where food come from, how it's grown and where it is found in nature:

For example, fish live in water, clams live on the beach, deer in the woods, carrots grow in the ground in a garden, rice in lakes and apples grow on a tree.

Educator prompts:

Consider guiding questions like: What vegetables grow underground?; Which fruits grow on trees?; What animals does milk come from?; What kind of foods can be found in the water (e.g. oceans, rivers, lakes)?

2. As a class, or in groups or pairs, use the list of foods and the landscape illustration on the student activity sheet to build on the above discussion: for example, where on this landscape drawing does corn come from?

- Have students draw pictures of the foods onto the food landscape where they think each food comes from (e.g. ocean, lakes, rivers, forest, shoreline, field or farm area, on/in the ground, in trees). For foods on the list that students are unfamiliar with, use chart paper or chalk board to create a master list they can add to.
- Have a class discussion about the origin of each of the foods on the activity sheet.

3. Working in groups or pairs, have students choose a food on the list that they have tried and liked or that they would like to try:

- If it's a food they have tried and liked, have students describe what they liked about it (e.g. taste or texture, because it's associated with a special occasion). If it's a food they would like to try, have students describe why they would like to try it.
- Have students think of one or more ways the food may be prepared or eaten in a meal or snack (e.g. deer is used in a stew with potatoes; wheat is used to make flour which is used in bread to make sandwiches), and have them present their idea(s) to the class.

Note for Navigating Food Talk: When discussing foods, there are no "good" or "bad" ways to eat. Eating looks different to everyone, so it is important to keep nutrition and food education sensitive to and inclusive of foods that hold cultural, personal or religious significance to students and their families. It's important that students feel respected and safe. To learn more about these important concepts, visit teachfoodfirst.ca.

Grade Specific Considerations:

- **Grade 3:** Have students describe a food or meal that is of special interest to them (e.g. a cultural or traditional favourite; one they like to eat with friends; one they saw advertised), including a description of the origins of the food/all the foods in the meal.
- **Grade 4:** Have students create a meal. What foods are included in their meal? Where do they come from? Which ones have they never tried?).
- **Grade 5:** Have students identify an Indigenous food that is local or seasonal to their community. Describe the food, including its origin, and describe its appearance and its taste (as described by others if student doesn't know and needs to research), and 3 ways it can be prepared or eaten.

Extension Activities

- Have a class discussion around the different ways in which foods can be categorized by their origin, and have students work in groups to brainstorm lists of food for categories e.g. land vs. water, grown in the ground vs. on a tree, eaten fresh vs. eaten cooked, grown in the wild vs. farmed (some foods may fall into either category e.g. blueberries may be farmed or wild).

Additional Resources

- [Teach Food First: An Educator's Toolkit for Exploring Canada's Food Guide](#)
- [Fresh Stories by BC Agriculture in the Classroom](#) – activities about BC vegetables, fruits and milk
- [Grow BC by BC Agriculture in the Classroom](#) – BC products from origins to table
- [Traditional Food Lesson Plans](#)

Fill in the blank with a favourite food you don't see here. Draw on the picture where you think all these foods come from.

| | | | | | |
|------|---------------|----------|-------|------|--------|
| corn | salmonberries | wheat | milk | deer | salmon |
| rice | blueberries | soybeans | clams | eggs | _____ |

