

Grade 3

Lesson 3

Unit Name: Healthy Decision-Making

Lesson Title: Local and Cultural Food

Curriculum Expectations

- A1.6, D1.1, D3.1

Materials

- Map of the world
- Paper for Exit Cards (1 per student)
- Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart

Learning Goals

- We are learning where food comes from and how it can affect the environment.
- We are learning how local fresh foods and foods from different cultures can expand our healthy eating choices.

Overall Assessment

Teacher observation of students' ability to use thinking skills as they demonstrate an understanding of how the origins of food affect its nutritional value and environmental impact and explain how local fresh foods and foods from different cultures can be used to expand their range of healthy eating choices using an Anecdotal Recording Chart.

Minds-On

Ask students to brainstorm what they think of when they hear the words "local food." Record their responses on the board.

Discuss the benefits of buying local foods. The following are examples:

- Food travels a shorter distance to get from the farm to the plate. When food is in season, this can be healthier for the environment because there might be less pollution from transportation.
- It helps our communities by supporting local farmers.

- Money is put back into the community by supporting local farmers and businesses.
- Food is fresh and tastes good.

Share a picture of the world map with students and point out different geographical areas and regions.

Teacher prompt: “When foods cannot be grown, raised or produced in Ontario, where do they come from?” Have students identify different food items and identify where they are most commonly grown, raised or produced (e.g., oranges are from Florida).

Student responses:

- Bananas from the Caribbean or Central or South America
- Kiwi from Italy, New Zealand or Chile
- Mangoes from Mexico, Asia and the Caribbean
- Olives from the Mediterranean
- Plantain from the Caribbean, Vietnam and Africa
- Bamboo shoots from China
- Rice from many parts of Asia
- Shellfish like shrimp from the Gulf of Mexico

Many foods may have originated from one country, but are now grown in many countries around the world. A number of vegetables and fruit typically grown in other parts of the world are now being grown in Ontario. Because of our cold winter season, some foods are grown in greenhouses that provide the right environment for growing.

Action

Share with students that when we try foods from different cultures, we enjoy new flavours and textures of food and try different ways to prepare food. Homemade meals tend to be prepared in a healthier way than food purchased from restaurants or from the frozen foods section of a grocery store. Homemade meals are often made from scratch, may be less processed and may contain more vegetables and fruit, whole grains and a variety of protein foods. Including cultures and food traditions as part of healthy eating can help you choose foods that you enjoy with your family, learn about other cultures and food traditions, and keep your food traditions alive.

The following section can be adapted to the level of cultural diversity in the classroom.

Ask students to identify their or their family’s cultural background and to record it in the center of a piece of paper creating a Mind Map. Ask them to write or draw a food or dish they commonly eat at home or at a restaurant and the origin of that food (e.g., Where is it grown, produced or cooked). Alternatively, ask students to write or draw a food or dish from a different culture, what culture it is from and whether they have tried this food

before. Ask them to identify the origin of the food (e.g., how it is grown, produced or cooked). Students present their work to the whole class. Lead a large group discussion on the benefits of trying foods from different cultures (e.g., chance to try new foods never eaten before, learn more about other cultures).

Consolidation

Have students brainstorm how they could learn about different types of foods enjoyed by different cultures? (e.g., visit local cultural supermarkets or restaurants, ask their classmates or other friends to suggest recipes they can try at home, have a multicultural food day at school where students and their families bring in a cultural dish for others to sample). Students write their ideas on an Exit Card.

Notes to Teachers

- For additional information on food cultures, reference [Canada's Food Guide](#).
- For additional information on local foods, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/foodland/foodland-ontario>
- Avoid food-shaming language like “good food” or “bad food” and focus instead on making healthier food choices.
- If students suggest foods that do not fit within the food groupings of Canada’s Food Guide, respond by acknowledging their contribution and re-directing them to suggest a food that fits within Canada’s Food Guide. Emphasize that some foods are more helpful than others at helping our bodies grow, learn, and play.
- Be mindful of the “do no harm” approach to teaching about healthy eating:
- Avoid labelling food as “good” or “bad.”
- Avoid sharing personal views about food and body weight. Healthy bodies come in many shapes and sizes.
- Keep messages about food positive and avoid negative or fear-based statements (e.g., “X food isn’t healthy.”)