

# Responsible Eating

## Overview:

In this lesson students will learn responsibility by:

- Examining the principles of nutrition and health through the food pyramid (pursuing excellence)
- Assessing nutritional values of food (pursuing excellence)
- Analyzing the importance of self-control in their eating habits (exercising self-restraint)
- Tracking their eating habits through keeping a journal (being accountable)
- Participating in a whole class activity where each is responsible for providing a food that represents a part of the food pyramid (being accountable)

## Materials:

- Food Pyramid (download from website)
- Paper for creating a Food Journal

## Handouts:

- [Food Pyramid](#)

## Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining that puberty is a period of growth second only to infancy. Discuss what kinds of foods they ate as babies. What did they like? Dislike?
2. What foods do they like or dislike now? (Be aware that parents may not be the main care providers and that responsibility for what they eat may lie partially or wholly with the students themselves). Compare this to when they were infants. Discuss food sources such as school cafeteria, fast-food outlets, restaurants, friends, and relatives. Prepare a graph illustrating the various sources for the class.
3. Ask students to chart their daily food intake. Hand out papers and ask them to write times during the day that they eat or drink something. Tell them to complete it over the course of one day or more. Have them bring the completed journal to the next class.
4. Distribute the Food Pyramid handout. Have students work in groups and identify foods that fit into each food pyramid group.
5. Discuss what physical activities they participate in. Which activities burn the most energy?

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6. Introduce the concept of metabolism and how one's diet should keep pace with one's metabolic rate. Distribute definitions if necessary:
- Diet: Everything that is consumed. A balanced diet is based on scientific principles that determine which foods and nutrients should be consumed each day.
- Metabolism: The number of calories burned at any given moment. An individual's basal metabolic rate (BMR) measures the number of calories needed while the body is at rest.
7. Write the BMR calculation where everyone can see it and have students calculate their BMR using the following formula. Stress that although every body is different, everybody should and can take responsibility for his or her own diet.
- Women:  $661 + (4.38 \times \text{weight in pounds}) + (4.33 \times \text{height in inches}) - (4.7 \times \text{age}) = \text{BMR}$
- Men:  $67 + (6.24 \times \text{weight in pounds}) + (12.7 \times \text{height in inches}) - (6.9 \times \text{age}) = \text{BMR}$
- To estimate the total number of calories your body needs each day, multiply your BMR by the appropriate number given below:
- 1.2 for people who get little exercise
  - 1.3 for people who get a moderate amount of exercise
  - 1.7 for people who are very active
  - 1.9 for people who are extremely active
8. Compare their Food Journals with the Food Pyramid. How many of the students think they are eating healthily? As a class, investigate strategies that could improve the students eating habits and diet.
9. Encourage them to follow these strategies for the same period of time in their original journals.
10. Discuss how their changes went. Was it easy to take more responsibility for their food choices? What made it difficult for them? Highlight the three aspects of pursuit of excellence: diligence, perseverance, and continual improvement. Remind students to consider these when making future food choices.
- This lesson is adapted from the Connect With Character kit for 11-13 year-olds. Visit our online store to purchase the full product at [charactercounts.org/store](http://charactercounts.org/store).

## Responsible Eating

### McREL standards

### Physical Education

### Standard 4.

**Level III, Benchmark 7.** Knows how to interpret the results of physical fitness assessments and use the information to develop individual fitness goals

<http://www.mcrel.org/Standards-benchmarks/>