

Lesson Plan

TEACHER COPY

BEFORE CONVENIENCE FOODS Traditional foods of our Native Land

CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

Describe the diets, and the characteristics of food-production methods, of aboriginal peoples in various parts of Canada.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- A. Prepare a food list for an aboriginal family based on traditional foods.
- B. Analyze the food list to determine nutritional content.
- C. Identify past and present nutrition and health concerns for aboriginal people.

RESOURCES:

Print Materials:

- Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide First Nations, Inuit, Metis¹
- Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide²
- Student Handouts



Software:

- FoodFocus software for nutrition education



PROCEDURES/ACTIVITIES:

A. Traditional Food List

1. Students research traditional foods of Canada and the aboriginal diet of the early 20th century. This can be done in groups. They will choose a specific geographical location and try to be as accurate as possible in identifying foods which were available in that area. The students should assume that foods are plentiful for the purpose of this exercise.
2. Students enter the food list into FoodFocus program.
3. Each student saves food list to a file.

B. Analysis

1. Enter data using People on Menu Line: Students will determine if it is possible to meet the DRIs for someone of their age and gender on this traditional diet.

Make sure that students click on **PEOPLE** on the menu line and enter the correct data before they move to the next step.



2. Analyze diet using Analysis on Menu Line: Students proceed to enter food data and then click on **ANALYSIS** and have a look at the data under the three buttons: **scientific units**, **daily DRIs**, and **nutrient balance**.



3. Answer Questions: Students answer the questions regarding the analysis on the assignment sheet.

4. Discuss: Results are shared and discussed with the whole class.

C. Identify past and present nutrition/health concerns for aboriginal people

1. Using the information from the analysis of the food lists and the discussion with their classmates, students will discuss in essay format, the following topics:

- **Nutrition strengths and challenges of traditional food diets of the past and the resulting health concerns.** Include a description of aboriginal approaches to preserving food (drying and smoking fish, pemmican, etc.) as well as a description of special traditional knowledge of natural ingredients necessary for health. (In reality, food was often not plentiful and scarcity was an issue. Traditional foods in their natural state are often inherently high in fibre and low in fat and sodium. Wild game has much less fat than many cuts of beef. The physical effort in hunting, fishing, or gathering helped to ensure that obesity was not a widespread problem.)
- **Present diets of aboriginal people and the current nutrition and health problems.**

(Aboriginal people suffer both from dietary deficiencies and excesses like other Canadians. Remote communities suffer from the high cost of imported food, a poor selection of food and the loss of traditional use of local foods. There is also the challenge of reduced access to health care in the community. Sedentary lifestyles, obesity and poor diets are associated with the rapid growth in diabetes among aboriginal people.)

EXTENSION/ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES:

Have students work in groups to produce a visual representation of the location, type of food gathering methods and varieties of foods they have selected. They will then present this to their classmates.

Students could interview an aboriginal person concerning the current nutrition challenges.

Invite an Elder to talk about traditional foods and food gathering and preparation.

Students could prepare traditional food to be shared in the class.

REFERENCES:

1. Health Canada 2007, Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide - First Nations, Inuit and Métis; HC Pub.: 3426, Cat.: H34-159/2007E-PDF ISBN: 978-0-662-45521-9; <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/fnim-pnim/index-eng.php> accessed 2012-01-16

2. Health Canada 2011, Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide; HC Pub.: 4651, Cat.: H164-38/1-2011E-PDF, ISBN: 978-1-100-19255-0 http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/order-commander/eating_well_bien_manger-eng.php accessed 2012-01-16

BEFORE CONVENIENCE FOODS

Traditional foods of our Native Land

A. TRADITIONAL FOOD LIST



Use **FOOD BY TYPE** or **BY SEARCH** on the menu line to select foods and proceed to identify the quantity you consumed.

Long before the advent of convenience, processed or fast foods, the aboriginal people of Canada gathered and hunted for food for their diets. For this assignment, you will need to do some research on the nature of these traditional foods.

- Choose a geographical area of Canada
- Determine what foods were available there
- Build a food list covering a period of one day which would represent the diet of the aboriginal people who lived there. Consult Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit and Metis for food examples.
- Enter that food list into the FoodFocus program
- Save to a disk

Hint: Wild game is listed under Food by Type/Meat.

Assume that food is plentiful.

Remember, every fruit we now buy grew wild.

Click on **SAVE TO FILE** under **FILE** to save your data



B. ANALYZE

You are now ready to analyze the food list you have created to determine if this list meets the nutrient intake required for someone of your age and gender.

Use **PEOPLE** on the menu line to select the appropriate gender and age.



After you have selected the category of person, have a look at the different representations of nutrients in the diet.

Use **ANALYSIS** on the menu line to see the detailed analysis. You can click on **scientific units, daily DRIs, and nutrient balance** to view the different representations.



Using the data from the analysis of the food list you created, answer the questions on page 2 of the handout. You can also check the data on the main screen - the pictographs and the percentages of calories and fibre - for information.

BEFORE CONVENIENCE FOODS: Traditional foods of our Native Land

Question Sheet

1. What percentage of food energy was reached? _____
2. Describe how well the four food groups were represented:

Fruits & Vegetables:

Grains:

Milk Products:

Meats & Alternatives:

3. Compare the **scientific units** of the food list with the DRIs required by a person of your age and gender. What deficiencies do you notice?

4. The following question is to be answered in essay format. It will require you to make some conclusions about the analysis of the traditional food list and will require more research on traditional practices and the health issues for the aboriginal population.

Based on your understanding of the analysis of the traditional food list and your research, identify and discuss PAST health concerns of the aboriginals and compare that to the PRESENT nutrition and health challenges for the aboriginal population. Also include in the essay a discussion of the strengths of traditional food preparation and the special knowledge which aboriginal people possessed with regards to the healing features of natural ingredients.