



For The Student

Upper Primary Years 5 & 6

Week 15

Title: Understanding Food Packaging

Theme: Healthy Eating

Overview

Many of the foods we buy at the supermarket come in packaging. Packaging helps us to identify brands we like. Bright packaging might be appealing, so we are more likely to buy that product. Packaging also helps to keep food safe from contamination, and also extends the shelf life of the food. The information on food packaging can be confusing. Let's work out what it all means.

Learning Activity 1 – Scan The Packet

There is a wide range of information on the labels of packaged food that can make it easier for you to make healthier choices about what you eat. A nutrition information panel must be listed on nearly all packaged foods. These panels will list how much energy (kilojoules), protein, total fat, saturated fat, carbohydrate, sugar and sodium (salt) is in the product.

Can you find the nutrition information panel on your food package?

There might also be other nutrients listed in the nutrition information panel. Can you find any other nutrients listed on the nutrition information panel? What are they?

Other nutrients in the food packaging:

The food packaging will also have an ingredients list.

Can you find the ingredients list?

Did you know that the ingredients are listed in order of weight from the greatest to the smallest that is in the food?

First ingredient listed:

Last ingredient listed:





Generally speaking, foods with only a small number of ingredients are healthier as they haven't been as processed and have as many additives as foods with more ingredients.

How many ingredients does your food have?

Listed as part of the ingredients, there is information on food additives, which are represented by numbers. Lots of numbers and letters in the ingredients section may mean that the food has many additives. These are included to help keep the food longer, add flavour, and colour. It is important to try to avoid as many additives as you can from your everyday foods.

Does your food package have any additives?

If so, how many does it contain?

Finally, don't forget that some of the healthiest foods do not come in packaging and are not labelled – fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, fresh meat, chicken and fish are all extremely important foods that contribute to good health. These are the types of foods we should include every day in our diets.

Do you think that your food is a healthy choice or not?

Can you think of other examples where food doesn't come in a package or have a label?





Learning Activity 2 – Poster Power

In groups, design and prepare an educational poster to advise fellow students what the information on food packaging means. Use the food packaging, nutrition information panels, and pictures from magazines to help tell the story.

The information for this lesson has been adapted from:

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/labellingoffood/>

Support materials and references

For Kids

1Seven article: [Kitchen Clean Out](#)

For Parents & Teachers

1Seven article: [Sneaky Parents, Healthy Kids](#)

1Seven article: [Develop a Taste for Home-grown](#)

