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MY FOOD JOURNAL

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About the Activity

What we eat is both a matter of what’s available to us, and an important piece of our health. In this activity, we’ll reflect on our food choices, our food options, and how to think creatively about what we eat and where it comes from. You’ll get to explore the connection between the food you put in your body and how you feel – all while learning exactly where your food comes from!

Supplies

These simple supplies should get you started. Aside from the printout, you can probably find most of these at home or school.

• Printouts of Journal
• Pencil
• An internet-connected device, and printer
• Supplies for decorating (Crayons, markers, magazines, glue, etc.)

Grades: 3-12

Topic: Food security, Agriculture
Time: 30 minutes each day for 5 days
Activity Steps

This activity is designed to take place over the course of five days, so we’ll list each step based on the day. But before we start, you can either view or download the introductory prompt with accompanying pages to get an overview of what lies ahead.

Find your inspiration

Before you can begin working on your journal, you need a place to document your thoughts and responses. This is where your journal will come into play. Try to complete 1 page per day, in the order in which they appear. Follow the prompts as inspiration for each sheet in your journal:

1. **Day 1: I Am…**

   Food plays a big role in who we are. Certain foods and meals may reflect our heritage, while others may demonstrate our likes and dislikes. With that in mind, the first page of your journal is going to showcase you! Using the first page of your journal, some pictures or markers, and glue or tape, create a collage all about yourself.

   **BONUS TIP:** Here are some ideas of what you can include on your journal page:
   - Draw a self portrait, or include a photo of yourself or even your family.
   - Cut out photos from magazines that showcase your favorite foods or activities.
   - Draw a picture of an activity you like to do in your spare time.

2. **Day 2: Food Is…**

   Food and culture are interwoven: Preparing, serving, and sharing certain foods and drinks might appear simple, but these activities often carry important social and cultural significance. For example, are there certain foods you eat on holidays or birthdays? Use Page 2 of your journal to create a collage of the foods you eat. You can find those images in magazines, or you can print them out from the internet. Then, under each image on your collage, write down why you eat that particular food.
Activity Steps (Continued)

3. **Day 3: You Are What You Eat**
Do you remember what happened the last time you ate too much junk food? Did you have a stomach ache or headache after eating too much candy or ice cream? Or maybe you felt sleepy after eating too much pizza, or maybe you had a hard time sleeping after you ate ice cream.

On Day 3, you will keep a food diary on Page 3 of your journal. In the left column, write down everything you eat throughout the day, including all meals, beverages, and snacks. In the right column, write down how you felt after each time you ate.

**DID YOU KNOW?** The phrase “You are what you eat” is more than just a saying that grownups tell kids to convince them to eat healthy foods – it’s actually true! It has been proven that dietary patterns not only impact your overall physical health, but also your mood and the health of your mind.

4. **Day 4: Farm to Plate**
Have you ever stopped to think about how the food on your plate made it to your house? If you’re eating a fruit or vegetable that didn’t come from your own garden, think about this: Someone had to plant the seeds, water them, care for them, and harvest the food when the time was right. But what happened next? Did someone drive it to the local farmer’s market? Did it have to ride on a boat, plane, or truck to make it to the grocery store?

Similar to the previous day, write down every item you eat throughout the day on Page 4 of your journal, but this time, do some research and find out where your food might have come from. If you think the food came from a local (or nearby or regional) source, write it down in the left column. If you think it had to travel a far distance, like from another country or overseas, write it down in the right column.

**DID YOU KNOW?** It is estimated that in the United States, meals travel about 1,500 miles to get from farm to plate. Choosing foods that are grown closer to home makes for more nutritious and better-tasting foods (because they are fresher), while also reducing air pollution (from the trucks that carry the food) and helping the local economy.

5. **Day 5: Food Truck Challenge**
Now that you have investigated how your food gets from the farm to your plate, it’s time to put that knowledge to use! Brainstorm and come up with at least one menu item for a food truck in Kodiak, Alaska that includes only locally sourced foods. Give it a creative name. Think about how much you would charge for the item.

**TIP:** The food truck specializes in locally caught fish, in addition to locally farmed chicken and produce.
Test Your Knowledge

See how much you’ve learned about surfactants!

QUESTION 1
Can the food you eat change how you feel?
- a. No. Regardless of what I eat, I will feel the same.
- b. Maybe. It depends if I woke up crabby that day.
- c. Yes. Diet can impact our overall health and mental well-being.

QUESTION 2
In the United States, on average, how far do meals travel from farm to plate?
- a. 1,500 miles
- b. 5 miles
- c. 100 miles
- d. 1 million miles

QUESTION 3
Is food part of culture?
- b. Yes, food and culture are often interwoven.

QUESTION 4
Why is it better to eat locally grown food?
- a. It is bigger
- b. It does not require as many resources to deliver
- c. It helps to reduce pollution
- d. It helps the local economy
- e. B, C, and D

Reflection Questions

Bonus questions for your journal:

• What surprised you when researching where your food comes from?
• What could you change about your diet to include more locally produced foods?
• When you think about your dinner, how many workers did it take to get the food from a farm to your plate?
• What makes local foods more nutritious and better tasting?
Investigate & Explore

Take your new knowledge to the next level.

This wasn’t just a one-week journey! When choosing which foods to eat, always consider where each item came from and how it makes you feel. Then think about if you can make a healthier, more local food choice next time you sit down at the table to eat. Feel free to add pages to your food journal so you can continue tracking your progress and revelations.