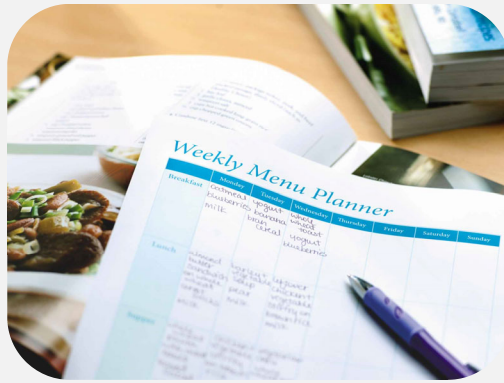


Grade 8: Planning for Meals Away from Home



Developed by AHS, Nutrition Services in consultation with the Body Image Research Lab at the University of Calgary's Werklund School of Education - April 2025



Approximate time for completion:

Lecture portion with discussions will take approximately 30-40 minutes, in addition to a multi-class project.

Speaker Notes:

- When we start thinking about planning meals away from home, whether it is lunches for school, snacks throughout the day, or time away with friends, there are a few things to consider and think about.
- We will be looking at what is involved with planning for meals and snacks away from home.

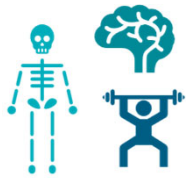
Teacher Background:

- For a PowerPoint version of this presentation, please contact:
publichealth.nutrition@ahs.ca

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What does
your body
need?



What does
balanced
look like?



Why plan
ahead?



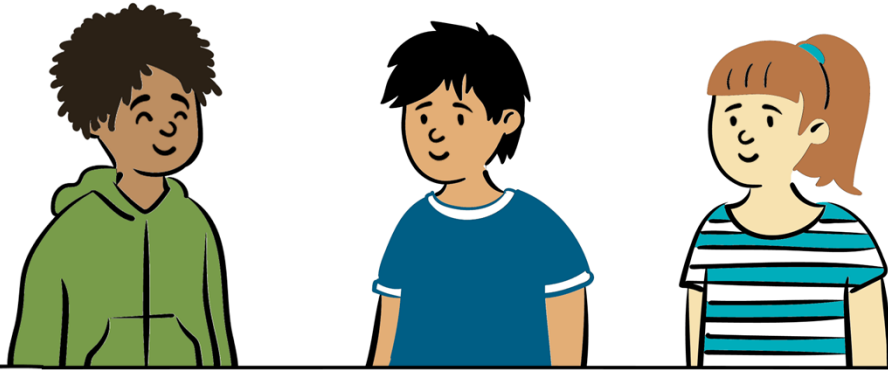
What do
you need to
consider?



Speaker Notes:

- We will be looking at what your body needs
- What does a balanced meal or snack look like and why it is important?
- Benefits of planning ahead
- Things to consider when packing food.

Meet Jesse and their friends, Max and Hailey.



If you could choose 1 food to eat every day, what would it be?

Speaker Notes:

The foods we enjoy varies, depending on your family, culture, age, and many other factors.

Ask: If you could choose 1 food to eat every day, what would it be?

Answers: answers will vary.

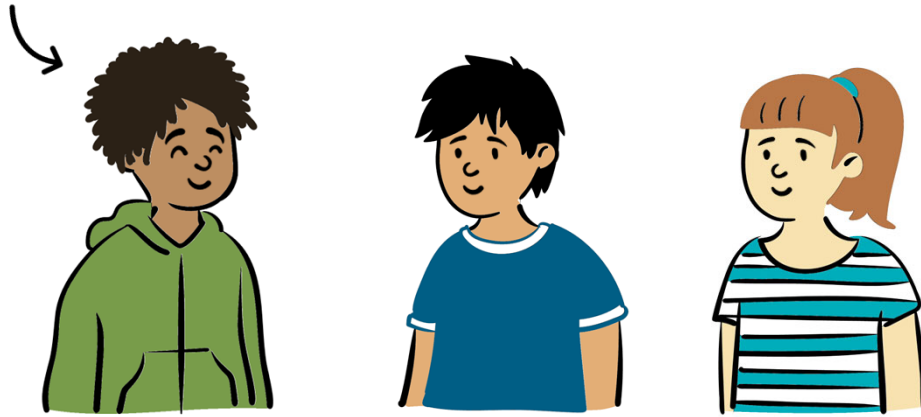
Ask: Have you ever had a food that you loved to eat all the time and then got tired of it?

Answers: answers will vary.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Jesse started packing their own lunch last month.



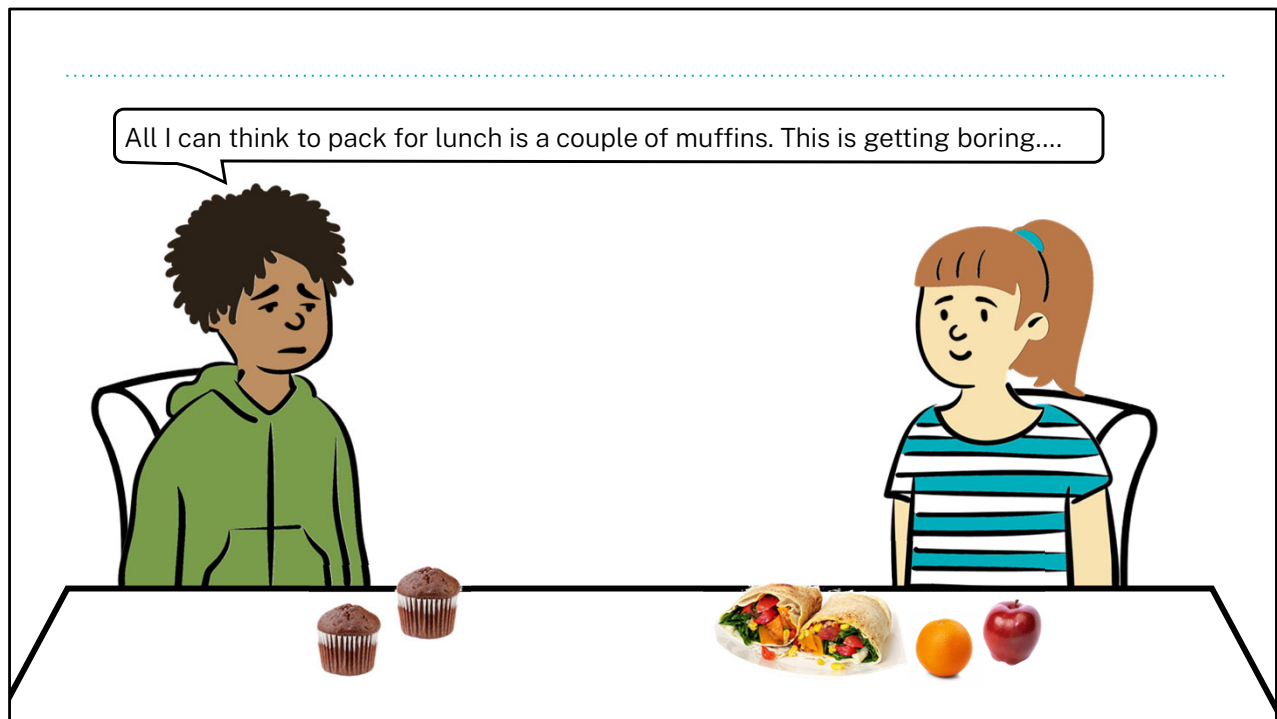
Let's see how it's been going...

Speaker Notes:

Jesse started packing their own lunch last month. Let's see how it's going...

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

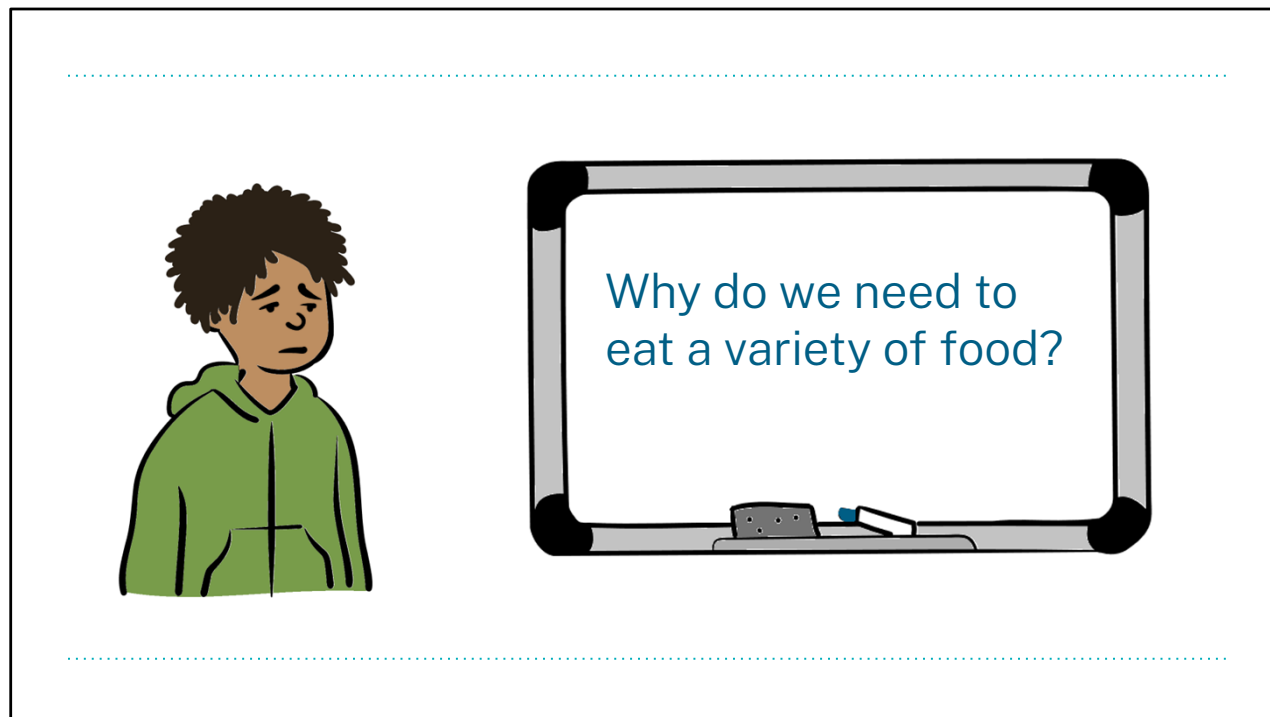


Speaker Notes:

Jesse has been running out of time in the morning to pack a lunch. Although Jesse's family has lots of options at home, usually Jesse will grab a couple of muffins on their way out the door.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images



Speaker Notes:

Ask: Why do we need to eat a variety of food?

Answers: Answers will vary. Refer to the following slide for some suggested answers.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Benefits of Eating a Variety of Foods



Don't get bored of eating the same thing



Help get the nutrients our bodies need



Experiment with different foods and flavours



Feel good: not too much or too little of a specific nutrient

Speaker Notes:

Answer will vary. Below are some sample answers.

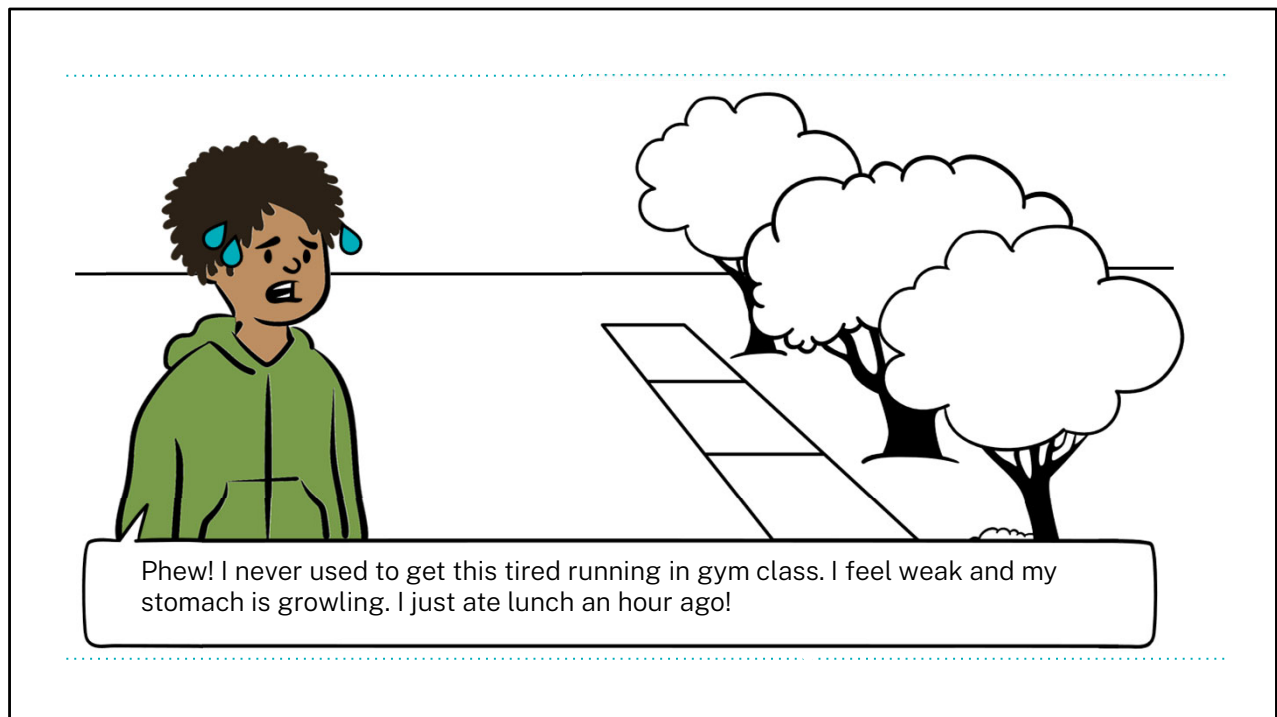
(Adapt answers and/or language according to student audience. Some students may not have access to enough food or a variety of food at home.)

There are many benefits to eating a variety of foods. Some possible answers include:

- Don't get bored with eating the same thing
- We need to eat a variety of foods to get all the different nutrients our body needs to function.
- Experiment with different foods and flavours. There are 5 different basic tastes, including sweet, sour, salty, bitter and savory (umami). Eating a variety of foods can help you try different tastes and textures and expand your food preferences.
- Getting an excess or too little of a nutrient is not good for our body and can impact how we feel and our health.

References:

- Health Canada. Enjoy your food. October 14, 2020. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/enjoy-your-food/>
- Health Canada. Make it a habit to eat vegetables, fruits, whole grains and protein foods. May 24, 2022. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/make-it-a-habit-to-eat-vegetables-fruit-whole-grains-and-protein-foods/>
- InformedHealth.org. In brief: How does our sense of taste work? January 24, 2023. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279408/>

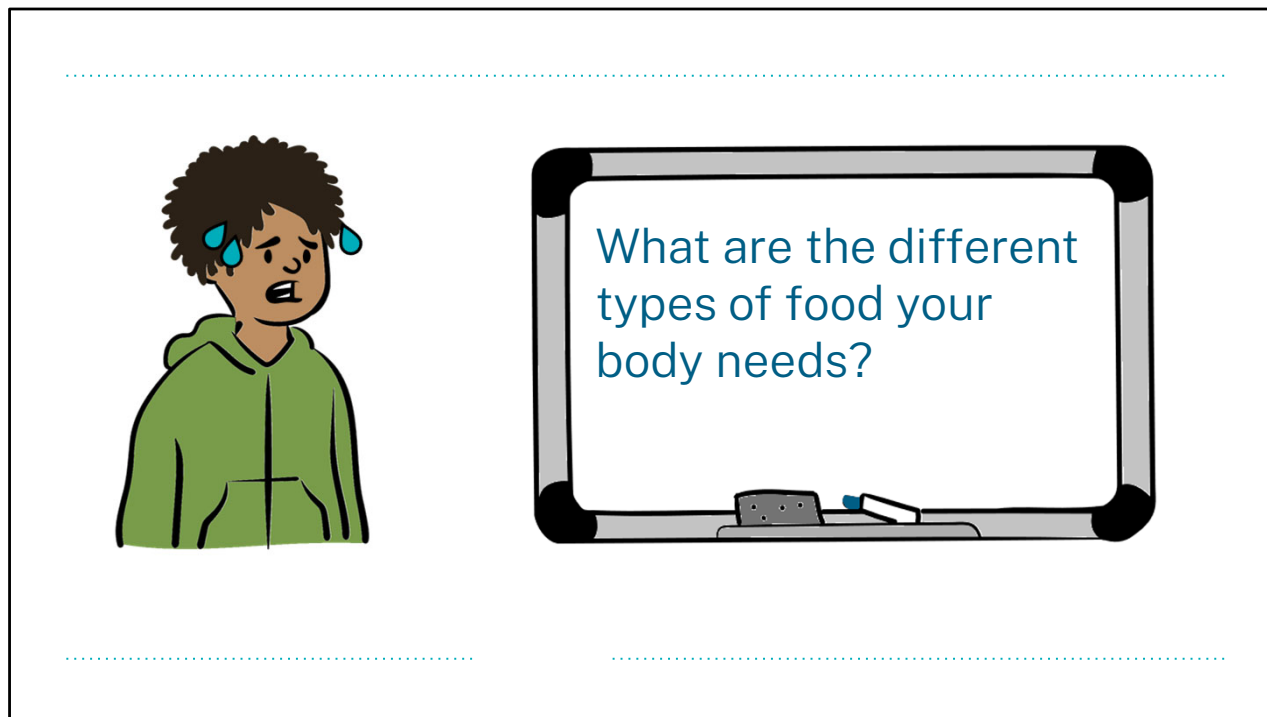


Speaker Notes:

Since packing their own lunch, Jesse has been getting tired and hungry in the afternoons.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images



Speaker Notes:

Ask: What are the different groups of food your body needs?

Answers: Refer to the following slide for some suggested answers.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images



Speaker Notes

Use the notes below as a brief refresher on the different groups of food found on Canada's food guide.

Vegetables and fruits: our bodies need more vegetables and fruits compared to any other food.

- Vegetables and fruits contain important nutrients that help keep our bodies working well, help prevent sickness and support growth and development.
- Fruits and vegetables are fibre-rich foods. Fibre is important for keeping your digestive system healthy. It slows down the digestion of the foods it is with, so it can keep us have more lasting energy. It also has benefits to keep our heart healthy.

Protein foods: are important sources of protein, some are good sources of iron, while some provide calcium and vitamin D

Examples of protein foods include:

- Animal-based: meats and poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs, milk, and milk products like cheese and yogurt.
- Plant-based: nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, chickpeas, split peas, tofu, soybeans, and fortified plant-based beverages.
- Protein helps build and maintain muscles and other body tissues. Protein foods can be good sources of iron. Iron is needed to make an important part of our blood (hemoglobin), which carries oxygen throughout our body.
- Calcium and vitamin D work together to build and maintain strong bones and teeth. A variety of protein foods have calcium, and some have vitamin D.

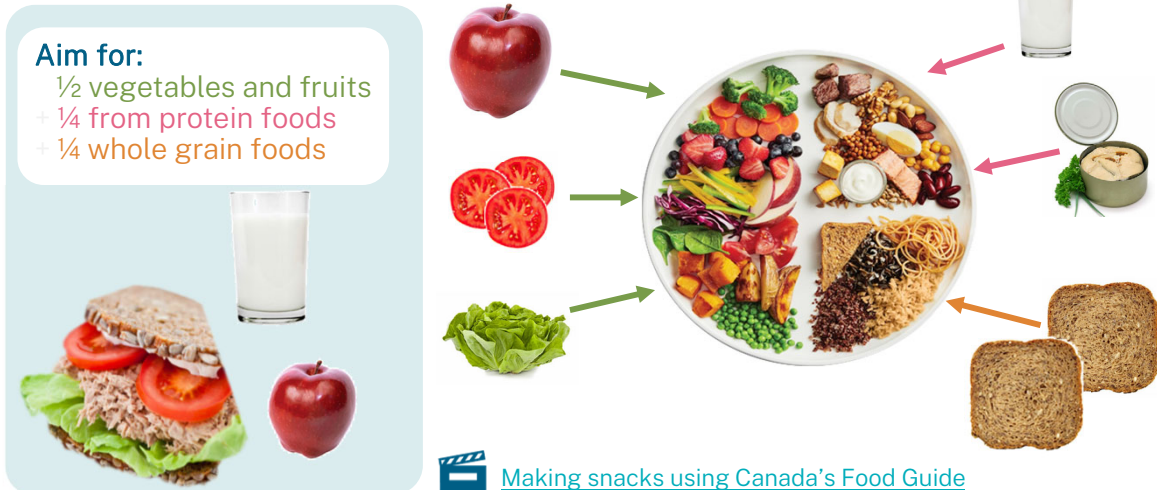
Whole grains provide vitamins and minerals, fibre, and energy that fuels our body and brain

- Some examples of whole grain foods include oats, brown rice, wild rice, quinoa, teff, buckwheat, amaranth. Foods made with whole grains include whole wheat breads, tortillas, pastas, etc.
- The vitamins in grain products can help our body use the energy we get from food.
- Whole grains have more vitamins, minerals and fibre compared to refined or “white” pastas, breads, rice, etc. This is because the layers that have fibre, vitamins and minerals are removed when these foods are processed. However, all grain products are a good source of carbohydrates, which is the main source of energy for our bodies, especially the brain.

References:

- Health Canada. Make healthy meals with the eat well plate [Internet] 2019 May 28. Available from <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/make-healthy-meals-with-the-eat-well-plate/>
- Health Canada. Eat more vegetables and fruits [Internet] 2023 Sept 29. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/make-it-a-habit-to-eat-vegetables-fruit-whole-grains-and-protein-foods/eat-vegetables-and-fruits/>
- Health Canada. Carbohydrates [Internet] 2019 Jan 22. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/nutrients/carbohydrates.html>
- Health Canada. Eat whole grains [Internet] 2022 May 22. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations/make-it-a-habit-to-eat-vegetables-fruit-whole-grains-and-protein-foods/eat-whole-grain-foods/>
- Health Canada. Iron [Internet] 2022 May 22. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/nutrients/iron.html>

What Does Balance Look Like?



Speaker Notes:

- Since we know that each group of food in Canada's food guide has a different function in our body, it is important to try and eat a variety of foods from all 3 groups of foods.
- The Canada's food guide plate shows the types and proportions of food that can help you get all the nutrition your body needs. Aim for 1/2 your meal to be vegetables and/or fruit, 1/4 from protein foods and 1/4 whole grains. Eating this way will help ensure you are getting a variety of foods and balanced meals and snacks.
- If we look at this lunch with the tuna sandwich, apple and milk, we can see how it can represent the Canada's Food Guide plate. There are foods from all 3 groups and more vegetables and fruits then the other two groups of foods.
- A snack can include one or more foods from the guide, depending on how hungry you are. It is best if the general pattern of eating over the day represents the proportions modelled on the plate (1/2 vegetables and fruits, 1/4 protein foods, 1/4 whole grain foods), including when planning snacks. If you are planning to prepare a larger snack, try to include foods from the different groups of foods in Canada's food guide.

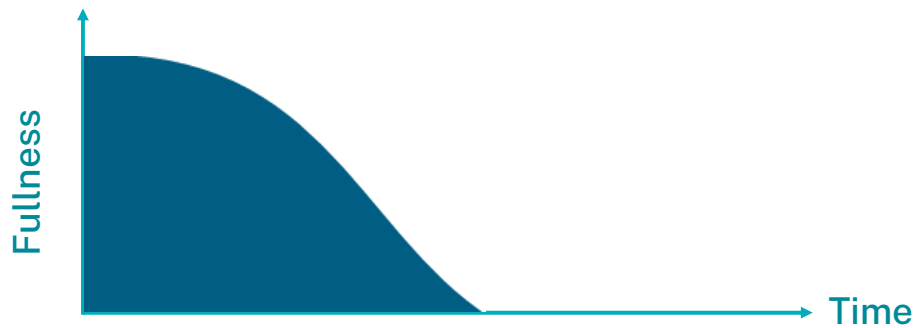
References:

Health Canada. Healthy snacks. March 13, 2025. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-snacks/>

Health Canada. Make healthy meals with Canada's food guide plate. March 31, 2025. Available from: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/make-healthy-meals-with-the-eat-well-plate/>

Balanced Eating for Lasting Energy

Fibre: Whole grain foods and vegetables/fruit



Modified from Ellyn Satter "Foods that Help Regulate." Degree of fullness felt and length of time can vary by individual, food form, and combination of foods co-ingested.

Speaker Notes:

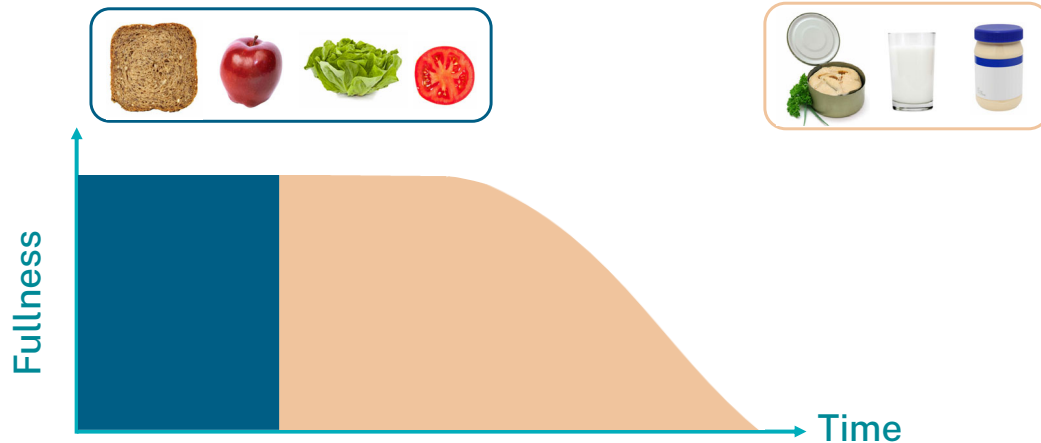
- Balanced meals and snacks don't just give your body the nutrition it needs, but eating a variety of foods together helps make you feel full and satisfied for longer. Let's review why combining a variety of foods will help us feel our best.
- Choosing foods that have fibre, like whole grains and vegetables/fruits, will take you further in your day. As mentioned before, fibre slows down the digestion of the foods it is with. This means that your body will get energy from the food over a longer period of time, rather than quick energy that does not last.
- In this lunch example, the fibre would come from the whole grain bread, apple, lettuce and tomato.

Reference:

- Ellyn Satter Institute. Figure G.5 Satiety from consuming sugar, starch, protein and fat. Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family. 2008

Balanced Eating for Lasting Energy

Fibre: Whole grain foods and vegetables/fruits AND Protein foods and fats/oils



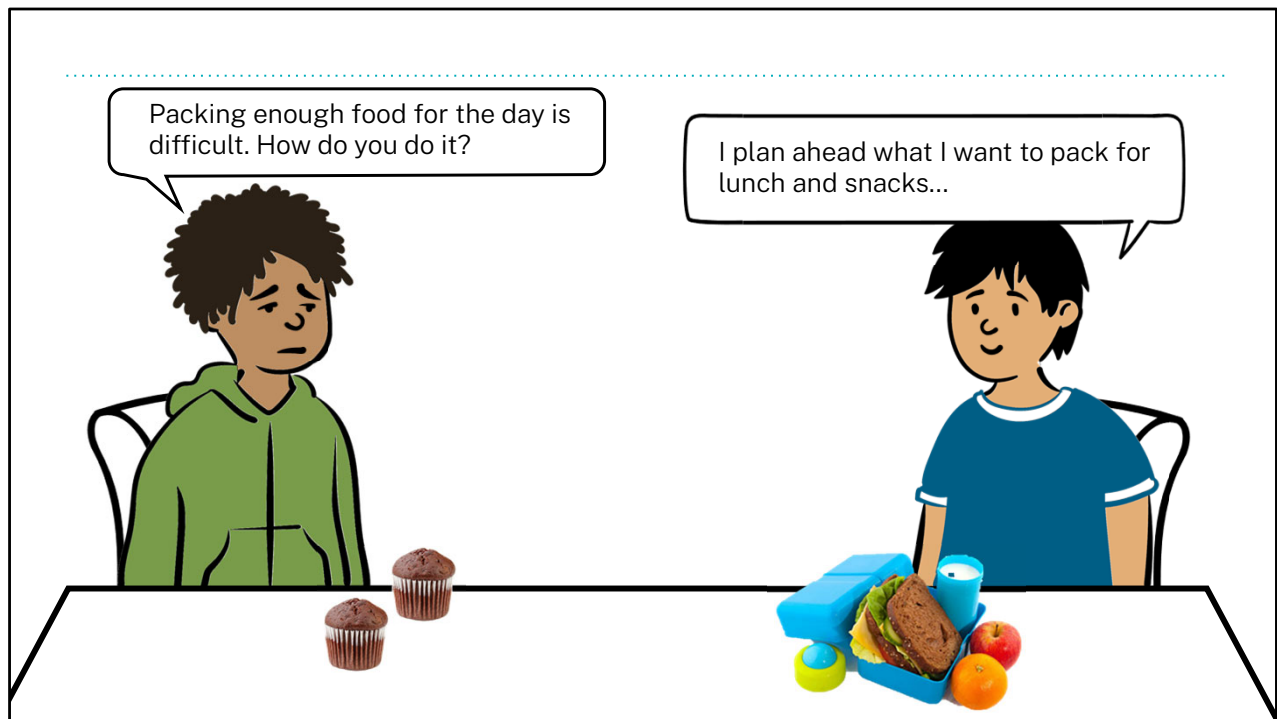
Modified from Ellyn Satter "Foods that Help Regulate." Degree of fullness felt and length of time can vary by individual, food form, and combination of foods co-ingested.

Speaker Notes:

- Adding in protein and fat will help you feel satisfied and full even longer. Protein takes time to digest (~1-2 hours) and fat takes even longer to digest. This also helps to spread out the energy we get from food over a longer period of time.
- The protein and fat from this lunch would come from the tuna, milk and a spread on a sandwich, like mayonnaise.
- We can see that combining different types of food will best help get us through to our next meal or snack. This allows us to focus on our assignment, test, or activity instead of being distracted by growling stomachs or the brain fog that comes with hunger.

Reference:

- Ellyn Satter Institute. Figure G.5 Satiety from consuming sugar, starch, protein and fat. Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family. 2008
- Alberta Health Services. Sports Nutrition for Youth: A Handbook for Coaches [Internet] 2023 Mar. Available from: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-sports-nutrition-for-youth.pdf>

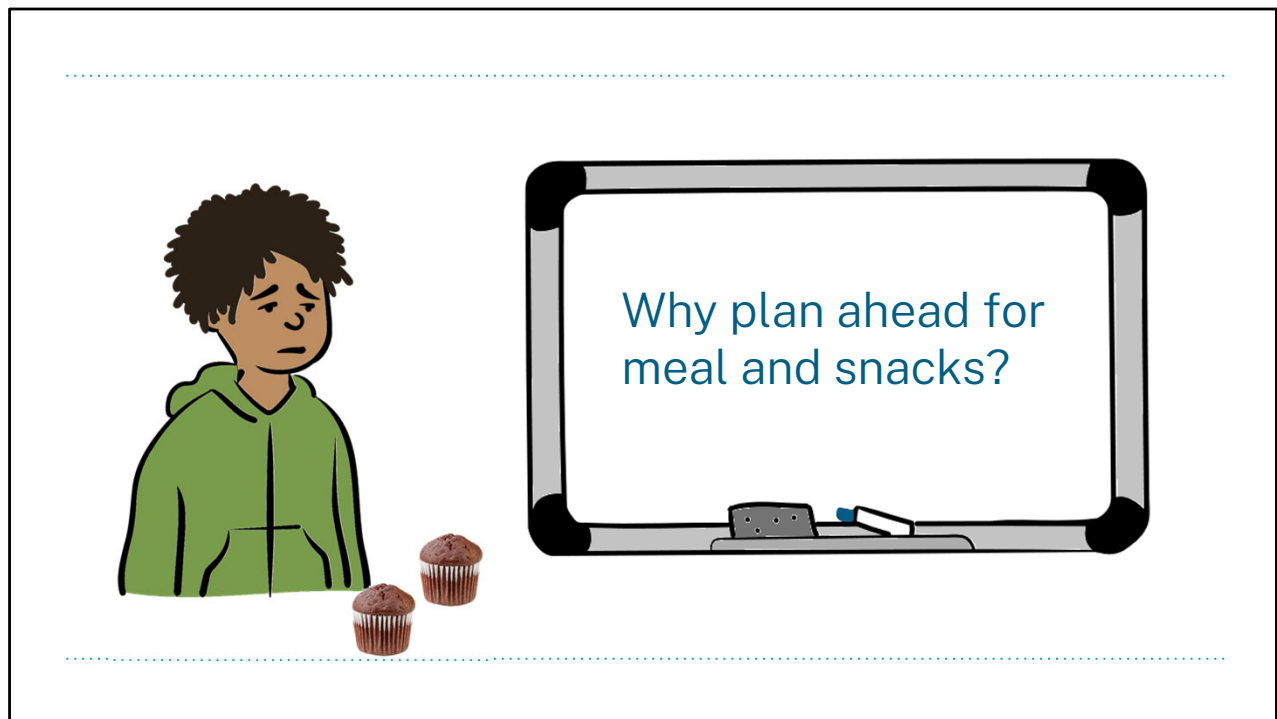


Speaker Notes:

Jesse noticed that their friend seems pack a variety of foods that keeps them energized throughout the day.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images



Speaker Notes:

As grade 8 students, you are often on the go either at school, practices, clubs, activities, or visiting with friends. Thinking about eating away from home adds another level of considerations for eating a variety of balanced meals.

Ask: What are the benefits of planning ahead for lunches/snacks?

Answers: Refer to the following slide for some suggested answers.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Why Plan Ahead?



Fueled for the day



May eat more variety of foods



Have the foods you enjoy



Help the environment



Save money

Speaker Notes:

Answer will vary. Below are some sample answers.

(Adapt answers and/or language according to student audience. Some students may not have access to enough food or a variety of food at home.)

Fueled for the day

- Avoid midday slumps, loss of concentration during your afternoon test, or low energy at your after-school activities by ensuring you have enough to eat.

May eat more variety of foods

- When we plan ahead, we are more likely to eat a variety, more balanced meals/snacks (help get the nutrients you need)

Have the foods you enjoy

- Planning ahead can help make sure that you have access to foods that you like and enjoy instead of needing to choose from options that you might not like the taste, texture, or amount. This can also help reduce stress!

Help the environment

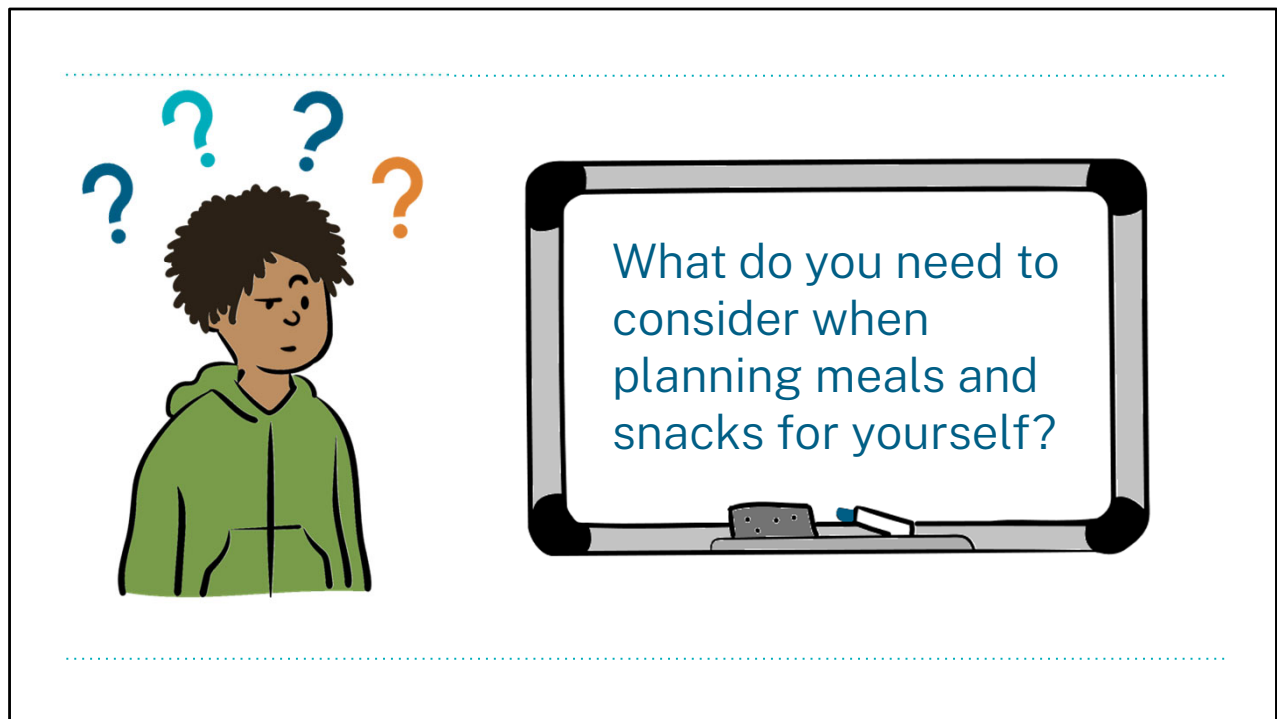
- Helps you use up foods and limit food wastage as foods are used up rather than spoiling. Also, likely less packaging used when bringing foods from home.

Save money

- Buying meals and snacks away from home tends to be more expensive than bringing your own food. If you have cash, this allows you to save it for other things you enjoy.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images



Speaker Notes:

Besides thinking about foods to pack, is there anything else to consider.

Ask: What do you need to consider when planning lunches and snacks for yourself?


Answers: Refer to the following slide for some suggested answers.


Image sources:


Microsoft 365 Stock Images

What Do I Need to Think About?




 Availability

 Schedule

 Access to appliances

 Food likes

 Food safety

Speaker Notes:

Answer will vary. Below are some sample answers.

(Adapt answers and/or language according to student audience. Some students may not have access to enough food or a variety of food at home.)

Availability

- What is generally available in your home or community. As well as what is available when planning and what needs to be purchased. In addition to what is available at home, you may consider if you have access to a breakfast or lunch program at school that fills a need if you don't have time or ability to eat before heading to school in the morning.

Schedule

- How much time do you have to prepare lunches and snacks? Can you set a reminder to yourself to make time? How much time do you have to eat? How many activities are squeezed into your day? Would you need to pack more food for the activity (e.g. sports)? Your schedule can influence how much and the types of food you pack for school and other activities.

Access to appliances

- Do you have access to a microwave, or do you need to keep food warm in a thermos? If you have access to a microwave is there always a long line that prevents you from heating your food during lunchtime? Do you need to bring cutlery?

Food likes

- What foods you like or dislike. How does the food taste if it is not eaten right away? Does this affect whether you would bring it or not?

Food Safety

What needs to happen to keep your food at a safe temperature (ice packs, freeze water/smoothie/yogurt, pack in thermos, insulated lunch bag, etc.)?

Image source:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Assignment: Eating Away From Home Menu

Scenario: Jesse has after school activities 3 days this week. On the other days Jesse goes home to start on homework.

Jesse needs to plan what foods to pack for the school day (lunch and 1-2 snacks), as well as an after-school snack.



Speaker Notes:

Note: See Eating Away from Home Menu Planning Assignment – Student Instructions.

- Discuss key information about the assignment.
- Students are invited to use their imagination to decide details of this student's life and way of eating. See next slide for further details.

Teacher Background

Please note that this assignment is developed around a fictional character. This is intentional. Having students track their personal eating habits is not recommended. Access to food varies and tracking personal eating habits may lead to some students becoming overly preoccupied with their food intake and/or contribute to feelings of shame relating to food purchasing decisions outside of the student's control.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Choose Jesse's Story

- ☐ What are Jesse's after-school activities?
- ☐ Decide on one dietary consideration for Jesse
 - Food allergy, vegetarian, cultural practice, etc.
 - Research and make notes
- ☐ Why does Jesse want to plan ahead? What is the benefit?
 - Fueling for activity, saving lunch money, etc.



Speaker Notes:

Review details of the assignment on this slide. This information is also in the student instructions for their reference.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Tips to Get Full Grades

- ☐ Use Canada's food guide proportions to plan your menu
 - Snacks may not include all foods. Look at the eating pattern as a whole.
- ☐ Write out specific details "tuna sandwich with mayonnaise, lettuce, and tomato on a bun"
- ☐ Include packing details like thermos or ice pack



Speaker Notes:

Review details of the assignment on this slide. This information is also in the student instructions for their reference.

Image sources:

Microsoft 365 Stock Images

Assignment: Eating Away From Home Menu

1. Develop a 1-week (Monday to Friday) menu plan for lunch and snacks that is balanced according to Canada's food guide.
2. Create a grocery list of the foods that Jesse will need for the week.
3. Write up - explain the background and rationale behind the food choices for the menu.

Eating Away from Home Menu Planner
Dietary considerations: _____

	Lunch	Snacks (1-2 for school)	After school snack (from home or school snack)	Things to remember (based on personal needs and preferences for food items)
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

Grocery List for Lunch and Snacks

Vegetables / Fruits

☐ _____ ☐ _____
☐ _____ ☐ _____
☐ _____ ☐ _____

Protein Foods **Grain Foods**

☐ _____ ☐ _____
☐ _____ ☐ _____
☐ _____ ☐ _____

Other Ingredients

☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____

Speaker Notes:

Review the components of the assignment.

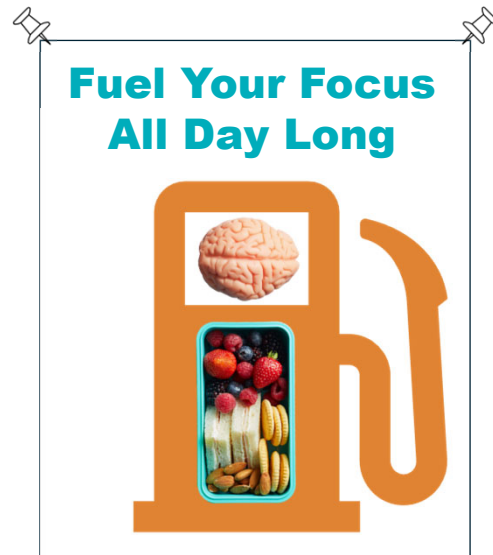
There are two sample templates in the student instructions. The first is a menu template. The second sample template is for the grocery list.

Assignment: Eating Away From Home Menu

Optional assignment:

Use print media or a digital program to create a one-page poster encouraging fellow students to plan ahead and pack a variety of foods for school and activities.

Focus your information on one of the key messages you learned during this unit.



Speaker Notes:

Optional assignment.

Use print media or a digital program to create a one-page poster encouraging fellow students to plan ahead and pack a variety of foods for school and activities.

Focus your information on one of the key messages you learned during this unit.

Image sources:

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