

BREAKFAST LESSON ONE: GRADES K-2

We Need Breakfast to Jump-Start Our Day



The GOALS of this lesson are to:

- help children understand why breakfast is important (HEALTH, SCIENCE, READING)
- discuss strategies for eating breakfast every day (PROBLEM SOLVING)
- increase awareness among children of how they feel when they eat and don't eat breakfast (ART, WRITING)

This lesson has four components: **READING** a story about breakfast as a class; a **DISCUSSION** of reasons we need breakfast and reasons we may miss breakfast; an **ACTIVITY** in which students draw a picture of themselves when they eat and don't eat breakfast; and completion of one or more **ACTIVITIES** to reinforce the concepts presented in the discussion.



READING

Introduce the lesson with *Pancakes for Breakfast* by Tomie dePaola. *Pancakes for Breakfast* is a wordless picture book. Below is a suggestion for introducing it: Use a story circle.

Show children the cover and have them predict what the book is about.

Share the picture on each page and have children take turns telling what is happening in the picture.



DISCUSSION

Compare the story children created with their predictions. Lead into a discussion of breakfast by asking the following questions:

Why are pancakes a good food to eat for breakfast?

What are some other nutritious breakfast foods? (a good time to bring up the idea that non-traditional foods such as pizza, sandwiches, burritos, leftovers, etc. are all nutritious breakfast foods)

What is a "good" breakfast? (a breakfast with foods from the Food Guide Pyramid)

Optional: Have a few empty food packages from breakfast foods to use as visuals. Try to have a few from each food group, e.g., empty milk and yogurt cartons from the milk group; an orange juice container from the fruit group; cereal and frozen waffle containers from the grain group; a peanut butter jar and an egg carton from the meat group.

How do you think the girl in this story feels when she doesn't eat breakfast?

How do you feel when you don't eat breakfast? When you do eat breakfast?

Why is eating breakfast so important?

- gives you energy to play
- helps you think and learn
- helps you stay alert in class
- helps you to feel healthy and strong

Survey the class to find out how many children ate breakfast today.

What are some reasons why we might miss breakfast?

*What are some things that we can do to be sure we eat breakfast every day?**

NOTES

*If your school has a School Breakfast Program, it's important to let children know that School Breakfast is an option. School Breakfast is a program for all children who don't eat breakfast at home in the morning – whether they're simply not hungry when they wake up, they don't have time to eat before leaving in the morning, or breakfast is not available in their home. Your school food service director can help you get information about the program to the children.



ACTIVITY

Provide each student with a blank sheet of paper and have them divide it in half. On one half, students should draw a picture of how they feel when they eat breakfast and on the other half, a picture of how they feel when they don't eat breakfast. Have students write a sentence for each side of the picture. Display completed pictures in the classroom.



ACTIVITY

Select one or more of the following activities to reinforce concepts presented in the lesson:

Have children survey three people to learn about the breakfast habits of people they know. Write the following questions on a piece of paper, allowing plenty of room for children to write their answers:

Did you eat breakfast today?

Where do you usually eat breakfast?

Whom do you usually eat with?

What is your favorite breakfast food?

Duplicate three surveys for each student. After students have completed their surveys, compile and graph the results. Discuss what students learned from the survey.

Divide students into pairs or small groups and have them pretend they own a breakfast restaurant. Have them name their restaurant and decide what nutritious foods from the Food Guide Pyramid they will serve. Draw a picture of the restaurant and write the menu that customers will use to select breakfast.

As a class, brainstorm as many breakfast words as possible. Write a story or create a story in a story circle using the words.

Have students write a letter to someone special. Tell them why it's important to eat breakfast every day, what their favorite breakfast foods are, and how they feel when they eat breakfast.

NOTES

Make a breakfast mobile.

If your school has a School Breakfast Program, invite the food service director or cafeteria manager to tell students about the program. Send information about the program home with the children. Try to arrange for the entire class to eat School Breakfast one morning.

Other related stories:

The Berenstain Bears Cook-It by Stan Berenstain, 1998.

Curious George Makes Pancakes by Margaret Rey, 1998.

Miss Mabel's Table by Debora Chandra, 1994.

Pancakes, Pancakes by Eric Carle, 1998.

BREAKFAST LESSON TWO: GRADES 3-5

Making Sure We Eat Breakfast Each Morning



The GOALS of this lesson are to:

- help children understand the reasons for eating breakfast (HEALTH, SCIENCE)
- develop an awareness among children of personal breakfast eating habits (HEALTH, MATH)
- identify reasons for missing breakfast and ways to include it in a daily routine (PROBLEM SOLVING)

This lesson has four components: a **DISCUSSION** of reasons for eating breakfast; a short **ACTIVITY** in which children calculate the amount of time between going to bed and getting up in the morning; a **DISCUSSION** of reasons for missing breakfast; and a group **ACTIVITY** identifying possible strategies for overcoming barriers to eating breakfast. Additional **ACTIVITIES** are provided.



DISCUSSION

Begin the discussion by having students share what they did to get ready for school this morning. To do this, have students volunteer to act out or draw a picture of themselves getting ready for school. As a class, analyze the acting or pictures to determine if breakfast is a part of the morning routine presented and decide whether it is important to include breakfast as part of a morning routine.

Lead into a discussion of eating breakfast and reasons why breakfast is important. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

Why is breakfast important?

Why do you eat breakfast?

How do you feel when you eat breakfast?

As students answer these questions, create a web of reasons for eating breakfast on the board. In the center of your web write “reasons for eating breakfast.”



ACTIVITY

Highlight the importance of breakfast by demonstrating how much time lapses between going to bed and eating breakfast. Create a timeline starting with “waking up” and ending with “waking up the next morning.” Have children figure out how many hours there are between going to bed and getting up in the morning. Now have them calculate how many hours they usually have between breakfast and lunch or lunch and dinner. Compare the two.



DISCUSSION

How much time is there between when you eat at night and when you get up in the morning?

How much time is there between when you eat lunch and when you eat dinner?

Is there more or less time between eating dinner and getting up the next morning or between eating lunch and eating dinner?

If you wake up and skip breakfast, how much time is there until you eat lunch?

How do you think you will feel if you skip breakfast?

NOTES

What are some reasons we might not eat in the morning?

- not hungry yet
- no time
- rather sleep
- don't like what's in the house to eat

Breakfast is a meal that “breaks the fast” between when we eat at night and when we get up in the morning. It gives us energy to start the day.

Problem solve in small groups or as a class using the following activity:

ACTIVITY

Break students into small groups. Assign each group one of the reasons mentioned for missing breakfast. Have students create a web of possible solutions (similar to the web used in the discussion of reasons to eat breakfast). Have each group share their solutions and discuss.*

*If your school has a School Breakfast Program, identify School Breakfast as a possible solution if the children don't mention it. For children who don't have time to eat at home, aren't hungry when they get up, or don't have adequate food at home, School Breakfast is a wonderful option. Your school food service director can help you get information about the program to the children.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to reinforce the lesson and problem-solving activity:

Invite the food service director or cafeteria manager to talk about the importance of eating breakfast and your school's breakfast program. Discuss ways to advertise the program to other children in the school. Have each child design an advertisement for the program. Arrange with the food service director to post the advertisements around the school and/or publish them in your town's newspaper. (Be sure to provide adequate “prep” for this activity. Look at some advertisements ahead of time and discuss reasons to advertise, quality of letters and colors used in ads, etc. Provide a variety of materials for students to use if possible.)

Post a large sheet of newsprint with the following questions and response options:
Did you eat breakfast today? (provide “yes” “no” response)

Where did you eat? (provide “at home,” “in the car,” “on the bus,” “at school” as responses)

Provide enough room for students to respond to each question with a tally mark. As students arrive for school, have them place a tally mark next to the appropriate answer to each question. Tally the results and share them with the class. Using survey results from the first day, set a class goal for eating breakfast. Survey the children each day for a week or two. See how close you come to reaching your class goal.

NOTES

Have students write a cartoon strip, rap, or other musical piece about the importance of eating breakfast each day.

Have children keep a breakfast journal for a week in which they record what they ate, where they ate, and how they felt. At the end of each journal entry, have them decide whether they ate a nutritious breakfast and why it was nutritious. At the end of the week have them draw conclusions about their breakfast eating habits and record any changes they plan to make as a result of keeping a journal.

Provide students with different scenarios such as “in the car,” “at a fast food restaurant,” “on the bus,” “at a convenience store,” and “at home.” Have them decide what nutritious foods they could eat in each situation. Share results and discuss.

Work in small groups to develop and present a skit about the importance of eating breakfast every day. If possible, perform the skit for younger classes in the school.

Publish a class book about breakfast that includes poems, stories, recipes, pictures, etc.

Have students write a *haiku* poem about breakfast. A haiku is an unrhymed Japanese poem. It has three lines that contain a total of five, seven, and five syllables respectively. Example:

Breakfast every day
Energy to play and learn
Breakfast, it's for me

Have students design their own cereal box. Your imagination is the limit, but possible suggestions include: drawing a picture of themselves and creating a cereal name and slogan for the front; creating a breakfast game or puzzles for the back; listing reasons to eat breakfast for one side panel; and listing strategies for eating breakfast every day for the other panel.

Research foods eaten for breakfast in different countries or cultures and report to the class. Make a collective collage on a display board. Take it with the “traveling skit” (see above) or display it in the library, lobby, or other prominent place in the school.

BREAKFAST LESSON THREE: GRADES 6-8

Feeling Healthy and Eating Breakfast



The GOALS of this lesson are to:

- help children develop an understanding of the reasons it is important to eat breakfast every day (SCIENCE, HEALTH)
- make observations about individual and class breakfast habits by completing and compiling the results of a class survey (SOCIAL STUDIES, MATH)
- identify reasons for skipping breakfast and solutions for eating breakfast every day (PROBLEM SOLVING)

This lesson has three components: an **ADVANCE ACTIVITY** in which students bring in pictures of people who are active and also respond to a class survey; a **DISCUSSION** centered around the results of the survey and the pictures they bring to class; and an **ACTIVITY** (selected from several options) that reinforces the discussion.



ADVANCE ACTIVITY

Have students bring in pictures of people who are active. Have them post pictures in an area that you have designated.

Print the following questions on a large piece of newsprint with columns for the responses “always or almost always,” “sometimes,” “never or almost never”:

- I exercise for at least 20 minutes every day.
- I get about 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night.
- I eat three meals a day.
- I eat breakfast every day.

Print the following question with “yes” or “no” response:

- I ate breakfast today.

The day before the lesson, post the survey and ask each student to respond sometime during the day by placing a tally mark under the most appropriate response for each question. Prior to the lesson, total the responses for each question.



DISCUSSION

Introduce the lesson by sharing the total for each survey question students answered yesterday. Now, refer to the pictures that students brought in: *How do you think the people in these pictures would answer the survey? Why? What gives these people energy to stay active and feel good? How important is each of these items (listed in the survey) to feeling good and having energy every day? Have students rank by importance. Why is breakfast so important?*

Do kids your age need breakfast or is breakfast just for younger kids?

- regardless of age, breakfast is important
- gives us energy to start the day
- makes it easier to focus on learning
- when we eat breakfast, we are more likely to get all of the nutrients we need every day
- when kids miss breakfast, they generally don’t make up for the nutrients they miss through other meals and snacks during the day

NOTES

Have students focus on the results of the breakfast questions and draw some conclusions about breakfast habits of the students in their class. Compare with the results of a recent survey:

- *one survey showed that most 8- to 13-year-olds ate breakfast, but 58 percent of 12- and 13-year-olds didn't eat it every day.*

What are some reasons that kids your age skip breakfast? Possible reasons include:

- rather sleep late
- not hungry first thing in the morning
- don't want to take time to sit down at the table
- don't like the breakfast foods in the house

Divide students into small groups or pairs. Assign each group one of the reasons they listed for missing breakfast. First, have each group act out the assigned reason for missing breakfast. Analyze, then “rewind.” Next, act out how to get around that reason and fit in a nutritious breakfast sometime during the morning. Provide a stimulus question to help students focus:

What can Jane or Jason do to make sure they eat breakfast sometime during the morning?

Have students analyze each scenario presented. Be sure to include the following points and options during the discussion (or as a summary):

- breakfast doesn't need to take much time
- it's okay to eat foods that aren't traditional breakfast foods, as long as they come from the Food Guide Pyramid. Examples include pizza, burritos, sandwiches, leftovers from the night before
- try packing some foods in your back pack to eat on the bus or when you get to school (if allowed)
- check out the school cafeteria and the School Breakfast Program*
- try setting breakfast out the night before
- take breakfast to your room to eat when getting dressed (subject to parental approval!)

*If your school has a breakfast program, be sure that School Breakfast is mentioned as an alternative. School Breakfast is for all children who can't eat breakfast before leaving for school – whether they're simply not hungry when they wake up, they don't have time, or breakfast is not available in their home. Your school food service director can help you get information about the program to the children.



ACTIVITY

Select one or more of the following activities to reinforce the discussion:

Have students create a database and graph and display the results of the class breakfast survey using Hyperstudio® or a similar computer program available in your school.

Have children keep a breakfast journal for a week in which they record what they eat, where they eat, and how they feel after eating. At the end of each journal entry, have them decide whether they ate a nutritious breakfast and why it was nutritious. At the end of the week, have them draw conclusions about their breakfast eating habits and record any changes they plan to make as a result of keeping a journal.

NOTES

Make a “healthy breakfast” collage using magazine pictures.

Working in groups, develop a TV commercial that promotes the importance of eating breakfast every day. Draw a picture for each major scene in the commercial and the dialogue for each scene. If possible, work with the media department to produce the commercial and air it on the local cable channel for your city or town.

As a class, develop interview questions about the School Breakfast Program. Invite the food service director to the classroom and interview him or her using these questions. Use the interview results as the basis for writing a feature or news story for your local newspaper about the school’s breakfast program.

Develop the design for a breakfast Web site (on paper) for children. The design should include:

- a home page with a title, a logo and at least three topics that children can click on to get more information about breakfast. Click-on topics might include: information about School Breakfast, nutritious breakfast ideas, breakfast games or puzzles, or reasons for eating breakfast.
- at least one page that children would see when they click on each topic on the home page, including information they would read and pictures they would see when they view the page.

If possible, have the class choose a favorite design. Work with the technology department to post the design as a real Web site.

Design a puppet show or game (e.g. Breakfast Pictionary) that teaches young children about nutritious breakfast choices and the importance of eating breakfast. Present the puppet show to younger students in their classroom or at an assembly. Loan games developed to younger classes.

Design a logo and slogan that promotes breakfast. Have students vote for a class favorite. Present the winning logo to the food service director to use for promoting School Breakfast.

Invite the school food service director or school nurse to talk about the importance of eating breakfast every day.

As a community service project, have students develop and teach a breakfast lesson for preschool or primary-grade students. The lesson should involve the audience and teach about why it’s important to eat breakfast each day.

BREAKFAST LESSON FOUR: HIGH SCHOOL

Using Market Research to Make a Case for Eating Breakfast



The GOALS

of this lesson are to:

- help teens understand that breakfast is an important meal, giving them energy to learn and start the day (SCIENCE, HEALTH)
- help teens understand that everyone needs breakfast – including kids their age (HEALTH)
- develop an awareness among teens about individual and teen breakfast habits through completing a survey, compiling the class's results, and completing a project based on the results (WRITING, SOCIAL STUDIES, MATH)

This lesson has three components: an **ACTIVITY** in which students complete an individual survey and compile the results; a **DISCUSSION** of the survey results; and an **ACTIVITY** in which students apply what they have learned about teenagers' breakfast eating habits.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Duplicate one breakfast survey for each student (see page 50).



ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION

Tell students that you are doing some market research, and you want them to complete a survey. Distribute one survey to each student and give them a few minutes to complete it.

After students complete the survey, break them into small groups (4-5 students). Ask each group to compile their group's results for each survey question.

Set up a grid on the board with a number for each question down the left and "SA, A, D, SD" across the top. Have each group report their tally for each question, i.e. the number of students who strongly agreed with the questions, agreed with the question, etc. Record each group's results on the chart using hatch marks. Quickly total the results for the entire class for each question.



DISCUSSION

Discuss each question, focusing on reasons for differences.

For those of you who marked "strongly agree" for this question, what were your reasons?

As you discuss the statements (in italics below), include the following points:

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

- when we eat breakfast, we're more likely to get the important nutrients we need every day
- kids who miss breakfast generally don't make up for the nutrients they miss at other meals or snacks

NOTES

I'd rather sleep late than eat breakfast at home.

- with hectic schedules, it is often easiest to skip breakfast, and many teens do
- research shows that as kids get older they are more likely miss breakfast
- with some planning, we can generally get that 5 to 10 minutes it takes to eat breakfast
- nutritious breakfasts consist of foods from the Food Guide Pyramid

I can get a nutritious breakfast in the school cafeteria.

I'd rather eat breakfast at school than at home.

I'm not hungry when I get up.

- School Breakfast is a great option for kids who don't have time to eat at home, who don't have access to breakfast at home, or who aren't hungry when they get up in the morning

I'd rather eat breakfast on the way to school.

- grab-and-go foods are great -- string cheese, bagel and juice, banana, dry cereal in a baggie and yogurt are examples of foods that can be packed in your back pack and eaten on the way to school

I can get a nutritious breakfast at a fast food restaurant or convenience store.

- if kids choose carefully, they can select nutritious foods on the run at fast food places and convenience stores; examples include milk, juice, muffins, bagels, sandwiches, fresh fruit

Introduce the survey that students completed as an example of market research. Many campaigns, advertisements, and new products are developed from the results of market research. Marketers conduct research to learn about people's habits, products they want or need, the amount of money they will spend on a product, etc.

What can we conclude about our breakfast habits as a result of this survey? If we conducted this survey with other classes, do you think the results would be similar? Why or why not?

At this point, transition into one of the activities on the next page:

NOTES



ACTIVITY

Working in cooperative learning groups, have students develop a multimedia breakfast campaign that encourages teens to eat breakfast every day. Have students consider the results of the class breakfast survey as they develop their plan.* Each group's plan should include the following elements:

- a theme for the campaign, e.g., "Take Five for Breakfast" or "Breakfast - Don't Go Without It!"
- a television or billboard advertisement for breakfast
- a newspaper article about breakfast for teenagers or for the parents of teenagers
- a flyer that has tips for eating breakfast every day, whether at home, at school, or on the run
- a school newspaper article about the high school cafeteria's School Breakfast Program

*NOTE: You may want to record the results of the class survey onto one master and distribute a copy to each student or group to use as part of their market research.

Working individually or in cooperative groups, have students develop a new breakfast product for teens or children based on their own market research. The research can include learning more about trends that affect the group selected, conducting a breakfast survey to find out about breakfast habits and food preferences, or conducting in-depth interviews with people.

Conduct a survey about the School Breakfast Program in your school. The survey might ask students whether they eat breakfast at school, reasons why or why not, which of the foods served they like best, foods they would like to see in the menu, and things that would get them to try the School Breakfast Program. Compile the survey results and share them with the food service director.

Have students do a comparative analysis of one or more products marketed for breakfast. Students' analysis should identify the following:

- the target audience for each product selected
- messages used to promote the product
- how the product is promoted (e.g., TV ads, magazine ads, supermarket promotions, etc.)
- how the product is packaged
- where and how it is sold
- cost

Analysis can be for one category of products (e.g. cereals or waffles or breakfast pastries) or a comparison of different products (e.g., waffles compared to breakfast pastries).

BREAKFAST SURVEY

Please provide your opinion for each of the following questions. Circle “SA” if you strongly agree; “A” if you agree; “D” if you disagree; and “SD” if you strongly disagree. There is no right or wrong response.

- | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 1. It’s important to eat breakfast every day. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3. On the days that I eat breakfast, I feel better. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 4. I’d rather sleep late than eat breakfast at home. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 5. I can get a nutritious breakfast in the school cafeteria. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 6. I’d rather eat breakfast on the way to school than at home. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 7. I’d rather eat breakfast at school than at home. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 8. I can get a nutritious breakfast at a fast food restaurant or a local convenience store. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 9. I’m not hungry when I get up. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 10. My friends believe eating breakfast is important. | SA | A | D | SD |