



7TH GRADE | LESSON PLAN ↘



What Are You Really Drinking?

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will explore how to create healthy eating patterns by adding nutrient-dense foods, limiting added sugar from beverages, and drinking more water. Engaging activities weave together two informational text articles, an engaging video about what's really in students' beverages, an interactive application tracking beverages consumed throughout the day, and a research project creating a school-wide campaign to promote the benefits of drinking water.

TIME REQUIRED:

Lesson activities are grouped into three sessions, each approximately 45 minutes long, with a short warm up and wrap up.

SUPPLIES:

- Video projector
- computers with internet access,
- Thirsty For Facts Interactive Handout (p.4),
- **SuperTracker:** <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/>
- SuperTracker Reflection Handout (p.5),
- Beverage Choices Matter Handout (p. 6),
- sample food and beverage marketing items (i.e. fruit juice packaging, magazine ads, energy drink bottles).

Lesson Structure

Each lesson is created like a “menu,” allowing you to pick and choose from a variety of learning activities designed to engage all children and all learning styles. Lessons also include video, interactive tools, and challenges developed specifically to promote engagement and exploration.

Subject Connections

English Language Arts

Key Vocabulary

Added sugar, calorie balance, consume, daily values, dilute, eating pattern, excessive, isolation, limit, nutrient-dense, percent daily value, portion size, recommend

Transfer Objective

Students will be able to independently use their learning from these activities to:

- Increasingly choose water or fat-free/low fat milk over sugar-sweetened beverages.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify the maximum amount of added sugar that could fit within their daily

calorie needs.

- Evaluate messages and marketing graphics on beverage labels.
- Identify added sugars on an ingredient list and on the new Nutrition Facts Label.
- Communicate the benefits of drinking water or milk instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Compare typical middle school food and beverage choices with more nutrient-dense alternatives

Enduring Understandings

- Water and low fat/fat free milk are healthy beverages because they have no added sugars.
- Food and beverage manufacturers use marketing and design to sell their product. You can make better choices by reading the Nutrition Facts Label.
- Dietary patterns that are high in added sugars and low in nutrient-dense food choices may lead to health problems.

Essential Questions

- *How do added sugars affect my health?*
- *What factors influence my beverage choices?*
- *Why does what I drink matter?*

Warm Up (10 minutes)

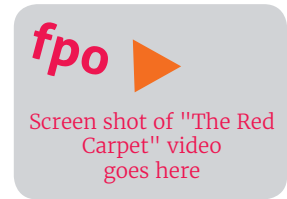
THINK-PAIR-SHARE: With a partner, discuss: *What are some popular drinks amongst students in your grade? Why are some drinks more popular than others?* Invite students to share what they discussed with the entire class. As students share their responses, jot down their answers on the board.



Beverages and Nutrient Density (45 minutes)

1. WATCH: Watch “The Red Carpet” video

Ask students to discuss the video about the ingredients in common beverages. *What did you learn about each drink? What did the label reveal about the contents of the beverages? What does this tell us about how drinks are labeled? What does this tell us about the strategies beverage marketers use to influence us?*



2. READ: “Creating Your Healthy Eating Pattern” informational text article.

- After reading the article, have students answer the reading comprehension questions and then discuss as a group.



Focused Study — Added Sugars (45 minutes)

1. READ: “Living in the Land of Added Sugars” informational text article. Answer reading comprehension questions, and then discuss as a class.

2. EXPLORE: “Thirsty for Facts” Interactive Application

- Distribute the **Thirsty for Facts Interactive Handout** (p. 4) to each student. Use a projector to demonstrate how to use the interactive tool. Use the interactive as a group or let students explore individually on computers.
- The interactive asks students to pick 4 beverages to represent their total beverage intake throughout the day. At the end, students will see a conclusion screen summarizing their total calorie and added sugars intake for the day, as well as the amount of physical activity needed to burn off calories from added sugars. Students will be prompted to try the interactive again, to uncover different healthier combinations.
- After using the interactive, discuss as group: *Were you able to stay within your daily limit on added sugars? Did the calories and added sugar content of the beverages surprise you? What did this interactive show you about why your beverage choices matter?*





Analyzing Our Beverage Choices (45 minutes)

1. INVESTIGATE: Students will use the USDA's [SuperTracker](https://www.supertracker.usda.gov) tool ([supertracker.usda.gov](https://www.supertracker.usda.gov)) to explore their eating habits, focusing on their sugar consumption.

- Have each student create a **SuperTracker** account and instruct them to use the Food Tracker tool (<https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodtracker.aspx>) for 2 days. Remind students that they must be logged into their accounts for their entries to be saved. Students should enter every food item they eat and all beverages they drink. At the end of the 2-day period, students can analyze their eating pattern.
- At the end of the week, have students run the **Food Groups, Calories, and Nutrients report** on the 2 days they recorded food and beverage intake. Once they have reviewed the report, instruct students to fill out the **SuperTracker Reflection Handout** (p. 5) to reflect on their sugar consumption. Discuss students' reflections as a group, focusing on the final goal-setting question and students' plans to reduce their sugar consumption.

2. PROJECT: Improving Peers' Beverage Choices

- Distribute the **Beverage Choices Matter Handout** (p. 6) and then discuss as a class. Brainstorm some of the reasons middle school students don't choose water or low-fat milk.
- Then instruct students to use the handout to design a persuasive campaign to make water a more popular choice with kids their age. Students can work with a partner or in small groups.
- The goal is to raise awareness about the benefits of water and promote drinking more water in school. The message can be amplified by displaying the posters in prominent locations around school or making public service announcements over the school announcement system. Additionally, you can begin a social media campaign or start a new tradition like "Milk Monday" or "Water Wednesday" to continue this effort.

Wrap Up (10 minutes)

FINAL REFLECTION: Revisit students' answers to the Anticipation Guide for the first article. *What did you learn from reading the articles and doing the activities? How did this information influence your answers to these questions? Has your opinion changed?*

Thirsty For Facts Interactive Handout

Use the interactive application to learn about your favorite beverages. Take notes on what you learn.



Beverage	Calories	Added Sugar (% DV or grams/teaspoons)		Minutes of Physical Activity
1.		% DV	grams/teaspoons	
2.		% DV	grams/teaspoons	
3.		% DV	grams/teaspoons	
4.		% DV	grams/teaspoons	
TOTAL:			TOTAL:	

How much physical activity would you need to do to burn off the calories from added sugars in all the beverages you picked?

What changes can you make to reduce your consumption of added sugars from beverages?



SuperTracker Reflections



Follow your teacher's instructions to sign up for **SuperTracker** (supertracker.usda.gov) and join your class's group, either by email or with an access code. Enter all the foods you eat into SuperTracker for 2 days. You may want to write down what you eat on a piece of paper and enter it on the computer later. Make sure to save your entries. After the two days, run the Food Groups, Calories, and Nutrients report so you can see how much added sugar you consumed. Using the report, answer the questions below to see what you learned.

1. What did you learn about your eating pattern after using SuperTracker for 2 days?

2. Look at the Food Groups, Calories, and Nutrients report. What was your total amount of added sugars for each day? Is it higher than the daily recommended limit?

3. What were your top three sources of added sugar?
What nutrient dense alternatives could you choose instead?

	Food or Beverage	Nutritious Alternative
1.		
2.		
3.		

4. SET A GOAL:

I would like reduce the amount of sugar I consume every day to _____ grams.

To do this, I will consume more _____ (insert food or beverage type)

and/or consume less _____ (insert food or beverage type).



Draw a food/beverage you want to consume **less often**.



Draw a food/beverage you want to consume **more often**.



Beverage Choices Matter

Why Choose Water?

1. List 5 unhealthy beverages your peers enjoy drinking. What alternatives could you suggest?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

2. What are some of the barriers to choosing water or milk that middle schoolers face?

Influence Your Peers — Water Awareness Campaign

In small groups, work together to come up with a message that can be used on posters, social media, and over the school announcement system to encourage kids to drink more water.

1. What is your key message?

2. What is the tone of your campaign? (Is it funny? Is it serious?)

3. How will you spread the message? (Social media?
School announcements? When and where?)

4. Where do you plan to reach the most people?
