



7TH GRADE | INFORMATIONAL TEXT ARTICLE TEACHER GUIDE ▾

Simple Switches for a Healthier Eating Pattern



Reading Overview

In this first informational text article, students are introduced the concept of eating patterns and ways to add nutrient dense foods for a healthier future. Through a variety of sources, including text, video, and interactive websites, they learn that they have the power and the tools to change their eating patterns to limit added sugar, and increase their intake of fruits and vegetables. With this article, they will practice analyzing the main idea and supporting details. They also will compare how the same ideas are presented in text and visual formats. This prepares them for their reading comprehension assessment.

Connection to Lesson, Interactive Challenge, and Video

The lesson is set up in three sessions, each approximately 45 minutes long. A short lesson warm up and wrap up are also included.

1. The first section hooks student attention with a video about what's really in their beverages. Students then explore the following informational text article, "Simple Switches for a Healthier Eating Pattern."
2. The second section dives into a deeper study of added sugars. Students explore the second informational text article, "Living in the Land of Added Sugar," and then use the "Thirsty for Facts" interactive application.
3. The third section applies what students have learned through a multi-day investigation of students' added sugar consumption and a project on improving peers' beverage choices.

Common Core English Language Arts, Grades 6-8

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.4: Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 6-8 texts and topics.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.6: Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.7: Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.9: Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.10: By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend science/ technical texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

National Health Education Standards, Grades 6-8

1.8.1: Analyze the relationship between healthy behaviors and personal health.

5.8.6: Choose healthy alternatives over unhealthy alternatives when making a decision.

5.8.7: Analyze the outcomes of a health-related decision.

6.8.2: Develop a goal to adopt, maintain, or improve a personal health practice.

6.8.3: Apply strategies and skills needed to attain a personal health goal.

7.8.2: Demonstrate healthy practices and behaviors that will maintain or improve the health of self and others.

8.8.1: State a health-enhancing position on a topic and support it with accurate information.

8.8.2: Demonstrate how to influence and support others to make positive health choices.

Before reading...



Building Background Knowledge

Begin the reading activity with an anticipation guide to activate background knowledge. For this reading, drawing a personal connection to middle school students' interest in exercising greater autonomy and making choices in their lives makes this reading on healthier food and beverage choices relevant and relatable.

During Reading...

Highlight Text Features

Direct students to the headings and visuals in the text. Encourage them to spend a few minutes analyzing these text features. What do they reveal about the structure of the text? How are they helpful to readers?

Model Reading

Select a paragraph from the text to read aloud. At the end of each sentence, stop and “think aloud.” Write a question or comment about the sentence you just read on the board. With this technique you model how to do a close reading while teaching students how to annotate and interact with the text.

Word Study

To activate a schema and familiarize students with technical and academic vocabulary, make a word wall using vocabulary from the lessons. You can also create a concept map to show the connection between key ideas in the text. Another option is for each student to keep a personal dictionary and create new entries for new vocabulary words.

Word	Definition	Example	In A Sentence	Analogy: Below is an Example
nutrient	A substance that plants, animals, and people need to live and grow.	Vitamin C	It is important to eat food that has many nutrients.	Nutrients are like a car's spark plug or oil. Even with a full tank of fuel (like calories in the body), the car needs these other elements to run. Nutrients help the body put its fuel to use and run smoothly.

After Reading...

Formative Assessment

Use an exit slip to quickly check for understanding after students finish reading the text. This tool helps identify concepts that need further explanation and/or clarification as well as students who may need additional support.

3-2-1 Exit Slip

Three important words from the reading are _____

Two facts I learned _____

One question I have _____

Living in the Land of Added Sugar



Reading Overview

In the second informational text article, students are introduced to the concept of added sugars and the recommended limit on added sugar intake. They will learn about the impact of excessive added sugar consumption on their health and how reducing added sugars can improve their health and overall wellbeing. They will practice analyzing visual information, reading charts and graphs. They will be able to identify similarities and difference between the old nutrition facts label and the new one. This prepares them for their reading comprehension assessment, which centers on analyzing the main idea in the text, describing similarities and differences, and evaluating claims.

Connection to Lesson, Interactive Challenge, and Video

The lesson is set up in three sessions, each approximately 45 minutes long. A short lesson warm up and wrap up are also included.

1. The first section hooks student attention with a video about what's really in their beverages. Students then explore the previous informational text article, "Simple Switches for a Healthier Eating Pattern."
2. The second section dives into a deeper study of added sugars. Students explore the following informational text article, "Living in the Land of Added Sugar," and then use the "Thirsty for Facts" interactive application.
3. The third section applies what students have learned through a multi-day investigation of students' added sugar consumption and a project on improving peers' beverage choices.

Common Core English Language Arts, Grades 6-8

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.4: Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific scientific or technical context relevant to grades 6-8 texts and topics.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.6: Analyze the author's purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.7: Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

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8.8.1: State a health-enhancing position on a topic and support it with accurate information.

8.8.2: Demonstrate how to influence and support others to make positive health choices.

Before reading...

Building Background Knowledge

Introduce the topics and themes and use an anticipation guide to activate background knowledge. To make this reading relevant, draw a personal connection to middle school students' interest in exercising greater autonomy and making choices in their lives. Ask questions that make for good conversation, but also tie into the key messages and learning objectives about making healthier food and beverage choices.

During Reading...

Highlight Text Features

Direct students to the headings and visuals in the text. Encourage them to spend time analyzing these features and seeing how they help the reader better understand the content.

Model Reading

Select a paragraph from the text to read aloud. At the end of each sentence, stop and “think aloud.” Write a question or comment about the sentence you just read on the board. Model for students how to do a close reading and teach them how to annotate and interact with the text.

Word Study

To activate a schema and familiarize students with technical and academic vocabulary, make a word wall using vocabulary from the lessons. You can also create a concept map to show the connection between key ideas in the text. Another option is for each student to keep a personal dictionary and create new entries for new vocabulary words.

Word	Definition	Example	In A Sentence	Analogy: Below is an Example
nutrient	A substance that plants, animals, and people need to live and grow.	Vitamin C	It is important to eat food that has many nutrients.	Nutrients are like a car's spark plug or oil. Even with a full tank of fuel (like calories in the body), the car needs these other elements to run. Nutrients help the body put its fuel to use and run smoothly.

After Reading...

Graphic Organizer

Use a graphic organizer to help students identify the main ideas. Graphic organizers can also help students analyze the structure of the text, show connections, and write summaries.

Formative Assessment

If reading comprehension exercise is assigned for homework or completed at a different time, use an exit slip to quickly check for understanding of the reading. It takes a few minutes to complete and can help teachers support struggling students and identify areas to further explain and clarify.

Three important words from the reading are _____

Two facts I learned _____

One question I have _____

Simple Switches for a Healthier Eating Pattern

Follow the directions to answer the questions below.

1. What is the theme or central idea? Cite evidence from the article to support your answer.

2. What is a healthy eating pattern?

3. If we eat too much sodium, what effect can that have on our health?

4. How can eating patterns with lower amounts of added sugars affect our health?

5. How can eating patterns with lower amounts of sodium affect our health?

6. How can eating patterns with lower amounts of saturated fats affect our health?

7. Where do added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium come from? List three foods for each.

Added Sugars	Saturated Fats	Sodium

8. What are three ways to eat healthier meals and snacks?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

9. Imagine your friend doesn't know why simple switches matter. How would you convince them? Write a paragraph explaining your opinion.

Living in the Land of Added Sugars

Follow the directions to answer the questions below.

1. What is the theme or central idea? Cite evidence from the article to support your answer.

2. According to the figure on page 2, what are the top three sources of added sugars?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. How does the food industry market sugary foods and beverages to kids?

4. Look at these Nutrition Facts label examples. Circle all types of added sugars in the Ingredients Lists.

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size 2 cookies	
Amount per serving	
Calories	98
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g	5%
Saturated Fat 2g	8%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 61mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 13g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes 6g Added Sugars	12%
Protein 1g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 4mg	0%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 34mg	1%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size 4 crackers	
Amount per serving	
Calories	62
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	0%
Saturated Fat 1g	2%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 30mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 11g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 8mg	1%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 48mg	1%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size 2 cookies	
Amount per serving	
Calories	98
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g	5%
Saturated Fat 2g	8%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 61mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 13g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes 6g Added Sugars	12%
Protein 1g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 4mg	0%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 34mg	1%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

5. Eating patterns that are lower in added sugars can help decrease the risk of what kind of health problems? List at least three.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

6. What are three beverages you can drink instead of sugary beverages with added sugars?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

7. Imagine your friend doesn't know understand why they should limit added sugars. How would you convince them? Write a paragraph explaining your opinion.
