THEME 1 TOPIC 3

Nutritional information

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To understand the guidelines for healthy eating
- To compare the nutritional value of different foods

RESOURCES

- Range of fresh and packaged foods (Engage activity, Activity 3)
- Enlarged colour version of Resource 1
- Cards or sticky notes
- Range of food labels and packaging
- Copies of Resources 2–5
- Dried pasta (Activity 2)
- Digital weighing scales (Activity 3)

RELATED TOPICS

Food groups (Theme 1, Topic 1)
Food labels (Theme 1, Topic 2)
What is a portion? (Theme 1, Topic 4)

HEALTH SKILLS

In today's busy lives many people rely on convenience foods, and making healthy choices can be tricky. For example, foods labelled as 'reduced fat' or 'low sugar' may sound like healthy options, but may not in fact be so. Guidelines that help people looking for specific food groups or more healthy options include the food plate model and nutritional information on food labels. The Food Standards Agency is also encouraging the industry to adopt the 'traffic light' system of front-of-pack labelling to make it easier for people to choose a healthy diet.

Related health information

www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/what-are-reference-intakes-on-food-labels/

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

This topic develops skills for understanding nutritional information on food packaging. In order to compare the nutritional value of food items, learners need to:

- understand the format of food labels
- understand information given in tabular format
- understand key words about nutrition and food groups
- understand metric weights and apply this knowledge to practical situations.

Functional Skills/Core Curriculum

Activities in this topic will contribute to learning in the following curriculum areas:

- understand graphical information on labels **English** E3.12 (LRt/E3.9)
- understand terms about nutrition and food groups **English** E3.8 (LRw/E3.1)
- read information in tables **Maths** E3.21 (NHD1/E3.1)
- understand and compare quantities and weights **Maths** E3.14 (NMSS1/E3.9)
- understand decimals on food labels **Maths** E3.14 (NN2/E3.3).

Engage

- Bring in a selection of food items. Explain that this is what you eat in a day and ask learners to comment on what the items are and how healthy they think your eating pattern is.
- Use an enlarged copy of Resource 1 (the Eatwell guide) and explain how it represents the guidelines for healthy eating.
- Ask learners to decide where each of the food items you have provided fits on the food plate, and discuss this collection of food items. Make sure that all the words used to describe food groups are familiar and understood. You can write these out with examples to support learners. If appropriate, get learners to match cards of food groups with cards of food items.

What makes a reasonable balanced eating pattern?

What can I add or take away to improve this diet?

Enable

ACTIVITY 1

Explore the language of nutritional value and its use on food labels

- Discuss how learners check (or could check) the contents of food items. Show a range of food packaging containing health claims. Ask for other examples.
- Note: people from many cultures will buy staple foods from market stalls, not packaged with labelling and nutritional information. Typically, foods are displayed in large quantities and put straight into carrier bags with no labelling.
- Hand out Resource 2 and point out the extracts from labels. Ask whether these 'healthy' claims give enough information to compare one product against another.
- Check learners' understanding of terms on the labels such as 'high-fibre', 'low-calorie' and 'lite on fat'.
- Focus on the ingredients list and ask learners to locate similar lists on the other food items/labels you have provided. Discuss whether this gives you enough information about how much fat, salt or sugar is in the food you eat.
- Look at the shopper's concerns and add extra questions from the group. Encourage learners to search the labels for additional information such as the nutritional table: 'Is there information that shows you how much salt or sugar the product contains?'

How can you check what is in the food you buy?

Do you ever check out the ingredients on a label?

How do you know what you are buying when you buy a prepared meal?

Support

- Learners may need additional support to become familiar with food labels. Go through different features using headings.
- Check understanding of food groups using food cards to sort.

ESOL

Learners may need access to bi-lingual dictionaries if available and the glossary to check the meaning of unfamiliar nutritional terms.

ACTIVITY 2

Identify the nutritional table as a useful source of information and understand its structure

- Hand out Resource 3 and draw attention to the nutritional table. Ask learners to find similar tables on other food labels. Discuss the content, the way the table works and the language it uses. Relate food groups to the food plate again.

- Check what learners understand by a 'gram' and draw their attention briefly to the examples of different weights.
- Draw learners attention to reference intakes (RI). Explain the purpose of this information and look at the product labels again. Reference Intakes replaced the term Guideline Daily Amount (GDA), although the principles behind both are the same. Ask: 'If you have a 100 gram portion of this food, how much of your RI of salt have you consumed?' Use examples such as salt, sugar and saturated fats as kinds of food to be particularly aware of.
- Discuss the purpose of the table. Point out the difference between 'per serving' and 'per 100 grams'. The proportions of ingredients that the table represents can be demonstrated using 100 grams of pasta: separate the amounts that might represent protein, fat, carbohydrate, etc., and label them.
- Ask questions that will enable learners to navigate the table and extract information from it.
- Use other labels, or the two labels on Resource 4 (the first repeats the table on Resource 3), to make comparisons of contents in the 'per 100 g' column, for example: 'Which of these foods has more salt?', 'Which has less sugar?'

What does Reference Intake (RI) mean?

What is the difference between 'per serving' and 'per 100 grams'?

Support

- It is not important that the precise quantities are understood at this stage except to compare one against another.
- Use a straight edge or piece of card to help learners focus on one column or row.
- Give plenty of practice in extracting information from the table.

ESOL

In order to answer questions about the tables, learners may need help in:

- verbalising weights in grams ('seven point eight grams/about eight grams') and calorific values ('three hundred and twenty-six calories').
- making comparisons: 'more'/'less', etc.

ACTIVITY 3

Understand units of measure for describing nutritional values

- Look again with learners at the nutritional tables on Resource 4 or on other labels. Ask them to pick out weights anywhere on the labels. These will include the weight of the product as well as weights in grams on the nutritional tables.
- Use everyday items to give learners an idea of what weights really represent. For example, a jar of coffee is about 100 grams and a packet of crisps is about 25 grams (see Resource 3).
- Using Resource 5, ask learners to find other items that fit into the weight categories. This can be done by bringing in a range of everyday food items or by taking learners to a supermarket and asking them to find food items of certain weights. A set of digital scales in the teaching room will be very helpful for weighing small quantities of dry goods such as sugar, pasta, etc. Other guidelines on food weights are given in the answers.

What weighs about 100 grams?

TIP

Get learners to close their eyes and compare the weights of foods in their hands. The size of objects can sometimes confuse the issue.

Support

- There is no need to be precise here. Learners are looking for items or packs that are in the 'region of' a certain weight, so they can get a general sense of the weights described on food labels: 100 grams, 25 grams, 5 grams.
- Be aware that some learners will struggle with weights that include decimal figures. Where possible keep to whole numbers.

ESOL

- Introduce words for approximation, such as 'about'/'around'/'roughly', 'just over/under'.
- Practise the words using nutritional tables on real labels. Set up pairs and give each learner a copy of the same label but with different weights blanked out. Learners can then ask and answer questions to complete any missing information (e.g. 'How much fat does it contain?' 'About/just over 15 grams.').

ACTIVITY 4

Compare nutritional values of different foods

- Using the labels on Resource 4 and other food labels, support learners as they compare and identify food items that contain:
  - the least saturated fat
  - the most carbohydrate
  - the least protein
  - the least salt.

  Use as wide a range of foods as possible.
- Learners may also want to compare the calorie content of foods.

Which foods are healthier?

Which foods contain the least saturated fat or salt?

Support

- Make sure learners are comparing by 100 grams and not by serving size, which will be different for each item.
- Encourage learners to focus on whole numbers.

ESOL

As preparation, review language for comparisons:
- comparing two things: 'lower'/'higher', 'more'/'less' (e.g. 'It's got less fat in it.')
- comparing more than two things: 'the highest/lowest', 'the most/least' (e.g. 'It's got the highest fat content.').

Action

- Suggest learners keep a record of the different prepared foods they eat over several days. Using the food plate and nutritional information on the labels, encourage them to think about these questions: 'Do they provide a healthy option in terms of fat, salt and sugar content?', 'Do they constitute a balanced diet?' Allow time for feedback at the next session.
- Suggest learners check items in their own food cupboards. Can they find items that are very low or very high in salt, fat or sugar? Ask them to report back on their findings.

How healthy is the food in your cupboards?

Nutritional information

RESOURCE 1

Your body relies on the goodness that food provides. By eating a **wide variety** of foods in the **proportions** shown below, you can achieve a balanced, healthy eating pattern.

Fruit and vegetables

Eat: lots.

Go for: lots of different fruits and vegetables.

Avoid: adding sugar to fruit, adding fat or rich sauces to vegetables.

Bread, cereal and potatoes

Eat: lots.

Go for: wholemeal, whole-grain, brown or high-fibre bread and cereals.

Avoid: frying or adding butter.

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins.

Eat: moderate amounts.

Go for: beans and pulses and fish, lower-fat versions (eg low-fat sausages, skinless chicken)

Avoid: Red and processed meats and cooking with fat.

Milk and dairy foods

Eat: moderate amounts.

Go for: lower-fat versions (e.g. semi-skimmed milk, low-fat yogurt).

Avoid: full-fat versions and added sugar (e.g. in ice cream).

Oils and spreads

Eat: Very little.

Go for: unsaturated oils and use in small amounts.

Avoid: solid fats & full fat spreads

Nutritional information

RESOURCE 2

LITE **on fat**, BIG ON FLAVOUR

Reduced Sugar

High-fibre food

New healthier! Low-calorie!

INGREDIENTS

Tomatoes, Spirit Vinegar, Sugar, Salt, Spice, Herb Extracts and Garlic Powder

SUITABLE FOR GLUTEN-FREE DIET

They say I should eat less fat, but I must have more carbohydrate. How will I know?

This label says it contains sugar. But how much does it contain?

Am I eating **enough fibre**?

Am I eating **too much sugar** or **salt**?

How do I know how much fat I am eating?

Nutritional information

RESOURCE 3

Most food labels have a nutrition table to help you find out what the food contains.

Check that you know these words:

- nutrition
- calories
- protein
- carbohydrate
- fat – saturates
- fat – monounsaturates
- fat – polyunsaturates
- fibre
- sodium
- equivalent

g means grams

NUTRITION		
Typical composition	A 50 g serving provides	100 g provides
Calories	**168**	**336**
Protein	**3.9 g**	**7.8 g**
Carbohydrate	**21.9 g**	**43.8 g**
of which sugars	3.5 g	7 g
Fat	**7.6 g**	**15.1 g**
of which saturates	4.5 g	9.0 g
monounsaturates	2.6 g	5.2 g
polyunsaturates	0.5 g	0.9 g
Fibre	**1.6 g**	**3.3 g**
Sodium	**0.3 g**	**0.6 g**

REFERENCE INTAKES (RI)		
Each day	**Women**	**Men**
Calories (energy)	2000 kcal	2500 kcal
Fat	70 g	95 g
Saturates	20 g	30 g
Salt	5 g	5 g

This pack contains 8 servings. A serving (50 g) contains the equivalent of approx. 0.8 g salt.

There are 1000 grams in 1 kilogram.

500 grams is $\frac{1}{2}$ a kilogram.

100 grams

50 grams

25 grams

5 grams

Nutritional information

RESOURCE 4

Garlic Bread

Allergy advice
Contains **milk**, **wheat**, **gluten**, **yeast**.

Suitable for vegetarians.

INGREDIENTS

Wheat flour, **water**, **butter** (19%), **garlic** (2.5%), **yeast**, **salt**, **vegetable oil**, **parsley**, **basil**

NUTRITION

Typical composition	A 50 g serving provides	100 g provides
Calories	**168**	**336**
Protein	**3.9 g**	**7.8 g**
Carbohydrate	**21.9 g**	**43.8 g**
of which sugars	3.5 g	7 g
Fat	**7.6 g**	**15.1 g**
of which saturates	4.5 g	9.0 g
monounsaturates	2.6 g	5.2 g
polyunsaturates	0.5 g	0.9 g
Fibre	**1.6 g**	**3.3 g**
Sodium	**0.3 g**	**0.6 g**

This pack contains 8 servings. A serving (50 g) contains the equivalent of approx. 0.8 g salt.

Additional information 200 g

Oven **from frozen** — **12–14 mins** — **200°C/400°F Gas mark 6**

- Remove all packaging.
- Place onto a baking tray and bake in a preheated oven for 12–14 minutes.
- Serve immediately.

Herby Quickies

COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

Remove all packaging.
Do not overcook.
For best results cook from frozen.

TO GRILL

Preheat grill to a medium setting. Brush with a little oil.
Cook for 10–12 minutes on a middle rack position, turning occasionally.

TO FRY

Fry in a little preheated oil for 8 minutes over a medium high heat, turning frequently.

NUTRITION INFORMATION Uncooked, typical values	Per 100 g (and per serving)
Calories	115
Protein	14 g
Carbohydrate	8.9 g
– of which sugars	3.2 g
Fat	3.7 g
– of which saturates	2.2 g
Fibre	4.9 g
Sodium	0.7 g

INGREDIENTS

Rehydrated egg white, onion, flavourings, wheat protein, milk protein, starch, mixed herbs, rapeseed oil.

200 g **e**

SUITABLE FOR VEGETARIANS

WARNING:
MAY CONTAIN TRACES OF NUTS

Not to be used after this date

USE BY END OCT 19

Nutritional information

RESOURCE 5

Find as many items as you can that weigh about the same as the weights listed here.

Weight	What weighs about the same?
5 grams	1 teaspoon of sugar
10 grams	2 teaspoons of sugar
25 grams	A bag of crisps
50 grams	A whole garlic (medium sized)
100 grams	A jar of instant coffee
500 grams	A bag of pasta
1 kilogram	A bag of sugar

Nutritional information

There are no audio scripts for this topic.

ANSWERS

ACTIVITY 3 / Resource 5

Everyday items of food and their approximate weights:

1 teaspoon of many dry goods = 5 grams
1 tablespoon of many dry goods = 25 grams
1 apple = 150 grams
Contents of 1 jar of instant coffee = 100 grams
1 pack of butter or margarine = 250 grams
1 bag of flour = 1.5 kilograms
80 teabags = 250 grams
Bar of chocolate = 100 grams
1 medium pepper = 150 grams
Bag of pasta or spaghetti = 500 grams