Nutrition, Health and Fitness
Get More Bang for Your Buck with Healthy Foods

Skill Level
Beginner
Intermediate

Learner Outcomes
The learner will be able to:

Define the concept of nutrient density.
Understand how food choices affect their daily nutrient intake.
Explain the similarities between “calorie” dollars and “regular” dollars.

Educational Standard(s) Supported
PCW.2, PW.3, PW.2

Success Indicator
Learners will be successful if they:
Accurately choose the healthier food option three times

Time Needed
15-30 minutes

Materials List
Scenario Cards
Calorie Dollars or Monopoly Money (optional)
Adequate space for five stations
Five surfaces that can be used as stations
Printer and computer
My Food Choices Handout
Get More Bang for Your Buck PowerPoint

Introduction to Content
Nutrition helps us fuel our bodies and get the most out of our lives. It explains how the choices we make have a direct impact on our health.

Introduction to Methodology
This activity introduces students to the importance of choosing healthy, nutrient dense foods and getting the correct number of calories. Start the lesson by relating the calories we eat to the money we spend. Once students understand the correlation, go into the activity to further demonstrate how calories are “exchanged” for energy and nutrients in food. After the activity, allow students to process this new information and invite them to expand upon what they have learned.

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Prepared using research based practices in youth development and experiential learning.
Terms and Concepts Introduction

calorie – unit of measurement for the energy in food and drinks

healthy – physical and mental wellbeing

Nutrition Facts Label – label on food and drink products that tells you the nutrient contents of that product

Setting the Stage and Opening Questions

Ask students: How many of you like to spend money? How many of you have to be careful so that you do not spend too much money? Would you believe it if I said that money and the food that you eat are related?

Let’s think about this for a minute. Similar to us all having a certain amount of money to spend because of what is in our wallets or bank accounts, we all have a certain number of calories that we should eat in a day to stay healthy. Calories are important! Calories in foods and drinks give our bodies energy so we can do the things we need and want to do! Our bodies help us choose the right number of calories by telling us when we’re hungry and when we’re full. Making smart choices with how we spend our money and with how we spend or use our calories is very important. We also need the foods and drinks we choose to give our bodies nutrients like vitamins, minerals and fiber.

In this activity, we will learn more about how we can make smart choices with our calorie dollars – spending them wisely for good health. We want to make good choices with our money so that we are able to buy the things we need and want. We also need to make good food choices so that we use our calories on foods that give our bodies the nutrients it needs.

Now, we are going to do an activity to explore the importance of making nutritious food choices.

Experience

Divide students into partners. Use the My Food Choices Handout and Get More Bang for Your Buck PowerPoint to guide students through completing the exercise described below.

1. Create five stations, placing one scenario card per station.
2. For Round 1, set up stations using the scenario cards with “Round One” labeled in the lower right-hand corner. These cards will not have calorie and nutrient information.
3. For Round 2, set up stations using the scenario cards labeled as “Round Two” in the lower right-hand corner (with calorie and nutrient information).

(Optional) Hand each student or pair of students 2,000 calorie dollars. Tell students: This value represents a recommended number of calories for a day. Everyone has different calorie needs, depending on their age, sex and activity level. We are using 2,000 calories today because that is the amount used for the Nutrition Facts Label.
**Share**

Ask the students to partner with someone near them. Instruct the students to share with each other one new thing that they learned as a result of this lesson. If time allows, you may call on a few students to share what their partner learned as a result of the lesson.

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**Life Skill(s)**

4th Grade Health  
*Demonstrate characteristics of good character.*  
Show use of good judgment.

5th Grade Hands  
*Demonstrate the characteristics of leadership, citizenship and teamwork.*  
Speak clearly and effectively in group settings.

6th Grade Health, Living  
*Select a way of living that is in accordance with sound condition of body, mind and prevention of disease and injury.*  
Know how the human body functions.

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**Process**

Instruct students to take a few minutes to think about the following questions. You may ask the questions orally and have students respond or write the questions on the board and ask students to write down their answers.

1. How are calorie dollars and regular dollars (money) similar?
2. How might the amount of regular dollars (money) you have influence the type of food choices that you make?

**Generalize**

Choosing healthy foods is important because healthy foods give our body the energy and nutrients that it needs do what we enjoy doing like running, playing sports, shopping, cheerleading and playing with friends. Sometimes, we call these healthy foods “nutrient dense” foods. Could anyone tell me what the word dense means? Some words that are the same as dense are jam-packed, crowded, heaped and packed. We can think of nutrient dense foods as foods that are jam-packed with nutrients. Nutrient dense foods are full of vitamins, minerals and other important nutrients. Nutrient dense foods do not have a lot of sugar, solid fats or sodium added to them. Can anyone tell me some foods that are full of nutrients? Possible answers include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, seafood, eggs, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, lean meats, unsalted nuts and seeds, beans and peas.

**Apply**

Now that you have learned the importance of eating nutrient dense foods in order to get the most bang for your buck, check out the Choose My Plate website for more fun activities that help you learn about your health and how food can help you achieve a happy life!
PCW.2: Nutrition
5. Describe the pros and cons of drinking various types of beverages (milk, juice, water, etc.)

PW.3: Nutrition
6. Apply strategies to consume a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages.

PW.2: Nutrition
7. Apply dietary tools such as *My Plate* or *Food Fact Labels* to employ healthy meal plans.
My Food Choices: Round One
Choose the more nutritious food for each scenario. Place an X in the square below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Morning Snack</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Afternoon Snack</th>
<th>Dinner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruit-flavored Breakfast Cereal</td>
<td>One Percent Milk</td>
<td>Fried Chicken Nuggets</td>
<td>Cheese-flavored Tortilla Chips</td>
<td>Strawberry Cupcake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole-grain Breakfast Cereal</td>
<td>Soda</td>
<td>Grilled Chicken Nuggets</td>
<td>Carrot Sticks and Hummus</td>
<td>Fruit Salad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table:

- **Breakfast**
  - Fruit-flavored Breakfast Cereal
  - Whole-grain Breakfast Cereal

- **Morning Snack**
  - One Percent Milk
  - Soda

- **Lunch**
  - Fried Chicken Nuggets
  - Grilled Chicken Nuggets

- **Afternoon Snack**
  - Cheese-flavored Tortilla Chips
  - Carrot Sticks and Hummus

- **Dinner**
  - Strawberry Cupcake
  - Fruit Salad
My Food Choices: Round Two
Choose one food for each scenario. Write down the number of calories and nutrients in your food choice using the box below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fruit-flavored Breakfast Cereal</th>
<th>Whole-grain Breakfast Cereal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron (mg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber (g)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D (mcg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium (mg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium (mg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>Fried Chicken Nuggets</td>
<td>Grilled Chicken Nuggets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein (g)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>Cheese-flavored Tortilla Chips</td>
<td>Carrots with Hummus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium (mg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A (IU)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiber (g)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>Strawberry Cupcake</td>
<td>Fruit Salad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium (mg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C (mg)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber (g)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Breakfast

Fruit-flavored Breakfast Cereal

Whole-grain Breakfast Cereal
Morning Snack: Choose a Drink

One Percent Milk

Soda
Lunch

Fried Chicken Nuggets

Grilled Chicken Nuggets
Afternoon Snack

Cheese-flavored Tortilla Chips

Carrots with Hummus
Dinner: Choose a Sweet Treat

Fruit Salad

Strawberry Cupcake
Breakfast

Fruit-flavored Breakfast Cereal
Calories: 200
Iron: 3 mg
Fiber: 0 g

Whole-grain Breakfast Cereal
Calories: 150
Iron: 10 mg
Fiber: 3 g
Morning Snack: Choose a Drink

One Percent Milk

Calories: 100
Vitamin D: 3 mcg
Potassium: 366 mg
Calcium: 305 mg

Soda

Calories: 160
Vitamin D: 0 mcg
Potassium: 19 mg
Calcium: 4 mg
Lunch

Fried Chicken Nuggets
Calories: 295
Protein: 15 g

Grilled Chicken Nuggets
Calories: 130
Protein: 26 g
Afternoon Snack

**Cheese-flavored Tortilla Chips**
- Calories: 195
- Potassium: 63 mg
- Vitamin A: 32 IU
- Fiber: 1.5 g

**Carrots with Hummus**
- Calories: 60
- Potassium: 276 mg
- Vitamin A: 501 IU
- Fiber: 3 g

Round Two
Dinner: Choose a Sweet Treat

**Fruit Salad**
- Calories: 90
- Potassium: 348 mg
- Vitamin C: 50 mg
- Fiber: 3 g

**Strawberry Cupcake**
- Calories: 285
- Potassium: 140 mg
- Vitamin C: 0 mg
- Fiber: 1 g