

Grades 6–8

Reading Food Labels

Breakfast Is Served!

Reading food labels, learning about portion control, summarizing numerical data sets (6.SP.B.5)

When it comes to portion sizes, students need to look to the label! Gather the following items: a box of cereal, four cereal bowls, eight paper lunch bags, four black markers, and four one-cup measuring cups. Divide the box of cereal into four paper lunch bags. Distribute the materials to four teams.

Have a volunteer from each team pour cereal into the bowl as if he were eating breakfast. A teammate then uses the measuring cup to measure the amount of cereal in the bowl, placing it in the empty bag. Write the team's amount on the board. Then work to create a graph showing the mean, median, and mode.

Next, share the label from the cereal box with students. Write on the board the serving size and number of calories in one serving of cereal. Give students time to determine how close their cereal serving was to the product's suggestion. Discuss variations from group to group and calculate the average cereal serving of all teams. Complete the activity by discussing how cereal and milk can be part of a balanced breakfast.

Challenge students to continue increasing their awareness of portion sizes by periodically checking their portions against product packaging during the next week. What differences do they find?

Extend the learning: Have students take a closer look at breakfast cereals and the nutritional trade-offs between them. Suggest students compare calories, fiber, and whole grains. Do lower-calorie cereals have the most nutrients? What's the best balance of calories and nutrients?

Did you know?

Teens who skip breakfast are more likely to be overweight.



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