

Grades 3–5

What are processed foods?

Going to the Store

Identifying different food packaging and processing methods, practicing fractions

Tell students that food processing is any change in the food that occurs before it is packaged for us to eat. Ask students to think about the different types of food that they see at the grocery store. Compile a list of processing and packaging methods on the board. Be sure to include canned, frozen, bagged, jarred, dried, and boxed.

Challenge students to write a typical grocery list for their families. Once the lists are complete, have students categorize the foods and determine what fraction or percentage of the items each category below represents:

- frozen (vegetables, prepared hamburger patties, prepared dinners, juices)
- bags (salad mix, vegetables, pasta)
- jars (pasta sauce, pickles, peanut butter)
- dried (pasta, beans, fruits)
- boxes (cereal, prepared meals, macaroni and cheese)
- cans (soup, fruits, vegetables)
- individual portions (100-calorie snacks, crackers, cereals)
- fresh (fruits, vegetables, meats)
- other

Fun Fact:

It takes about 540 peanuts to make a 12-ounce jar of peanut butter.



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