

MY LUNCH BOX GUIDE TEACHERS GUIDE

How this activity helps students learn about and apply *Canada's Food Guide*

The Lunch Box Guide offers young learners a framework for creating simple, nourishing lunches. This resource can act as a starting point for children and their caregivers to personalize meals based on foods they have available and like to eat.

Through this activity, students will learn about food from you and from each other. This learning is important because it can make students more interested in learning about and trying new foods. When children eat a wide variety of foods, they are more likely to get the nutrition their growing bodies and minds need to play, learn, move their bodies, and feel good.

The My Lunch Box Guide activity encourages students to include foods they like to eat from the *Food Guide*. Each student has their own likes and dislikes based on their experiences and family traditions. Encouraging students to focus on foods they enjoy eating helps students build positive connections between *Canada's Food Guide* and their own world

To learn more about how to engage your students in learning about *Canada's Food Guide* from kindergarten to grade 12, review the article "[How to Teach *Canada's Food Guide*](#)."



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Introducing the activity

Sample introduction: *Today we are going to talk about one of my favourite topics. Food! Each of you will get your own copy of the My Lunch Box Guide activity as well as the Lunch Box Guide to take home. We are going to talk about foods we like to eat.*

Consider starting this activity with a discussion question.

- Do you see any foods in the Lunch Box Guide you like to eat?
- Do you see any foods you haven't eaten but would like to try?

Sample instructions: *As you go through this activity sheet, think about all the foods you like to eat. When you see the name of a food you enjoy, put a checkmark next to it. You can put as many or as few checkmarks on this page as you like. See if you can find one food from each part of the Lunch Box Guide you enjoy eating.*

One thing you may notice is that there are foods you like to eat that are not listed. This activity sheet would have to be MUCH bigger if it included all the foods everyone in our classroom or school eats. This activity is a chance for each of us to think about food and make our own version of the Lunch Box Guide with foods we really enjoy. If there's a food you like to eat but it's not on the guide, write the name of it in the space provided.

Feel free to share a personal example as you explore these questions with students.

For example,

- "I really like Brussels sprouts and chocolate so I will add them to my sheet."
- "One food I really enjoy is rhubarb, especially my mom's spicy pickled rhubarb. She sends me a jar every year for my birthday."



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Activity answer key

Because this activity is based on personal preference there is no right or wrong way for students to answer. Below is an example of how a student could complete the My Lunch Box Guide activity sheet.

1. Read the lists of foods in the chart below. Put a checkmark next to the foods you like to eat.
2. Use the space provided to add the names of foods you like to eat that are not listed.

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beets | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kale | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apples |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bell peppers | <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce | <input type="checkbox"/> Apple sauce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli | <input type="checkbox"/> Mushrooms | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bananas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage | <input type="checkbox"/> Peas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Berries |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carrots | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Grapes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower | <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mango |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Celery | <input type="checkbox"/> Squash | <input type="checkbox"/> Melon |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corn | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sweet potato | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oranges |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cucumber | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green beans | | <input type="checkbox"/> Pears |

Other vegetables and fruit I like to eat:
Brussels sprouts, pineapple

WHOLE GRAIN FOODS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bagels | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Naan |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bread | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noodles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bun | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pancakes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cereal | <input type="checkbox"/> Pita |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couscous | <input type="checkbox"/> Rice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tortillas |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Muffins | |

Other whole grain foods I like to eat:
Roti, waffles

PROTEIN FOODS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cheese | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kefir | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hummus |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Milk | <input type="checkbox"/> Lentils |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yogurt | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nuts |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seeds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beef | <input type="checkbox"/> Seed, pea or
nut butter |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chicken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tofu |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Egg | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lamb | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pork | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wild game | |

Other protein foods I like to eat:
Black beans

SAUCES AND SIDES Dips Salad dressing Ketchup Salsa Cream Cheese Soy Sauce Cookies

Other sauces and sides I like to eat:

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Wrapping up

Turn and Talk: After the activity, ask students to talk about one food they like to eat and how they like to eat it.

Use this opportunity to learn more about students' favourite foods. For example, what type of berries, bread, cheese, beans, or cookies do they like to eat? What ways do they eat these foods with their families or caregivers? You may find that while some students enjoy the same foods, they eat them in many different ways.

Food for thought

A note on sauces and sides. As students share examples of foods they like to eat, welcome those that come from the "sauces and sides" section in addition to foods from *Canada's Food Guide*. The sauces and sides section was created to highlight foods from beyond *Canada's Food Guide*. Some people consider foods that do not fit neatly into the categories in the *Food Guide* to be unessential or "junk" foods. Yet all foods have a role. For example, what would curry be without turmeric or chilies? Salad without salad dressing? A chewy cookie can add flavour and texture to a meal. None of these ingredients or foods belong to a category, yet they all have value.

Making space for a variety of foods contributes to a positive relationship with food and recognizes that factors such as taste, culture, and food traditions play a role in students' food choices. As students progress through school, they will have many more opportunities to apply *Canada's Food Guide*.

Keep the learning going

Food Picture Cards: After completing this activity, students might be inspired to learn more about where the foods they eat come from. Introduce them to this topic with the [Food Origin Study Prints Online Learning Activity](#). To order a hard copy of this resource for free, visit [our store](#).

To learn more about how the Lunch Box Guide was created, read the [Teacher Guide](#).

