

Getting slim on potato chips: Nutrition

Secondary Lesson Plan



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SOURCE

Facing up Teachers' Handbook (page 26) Bernie Marshall, June Hicks, June Kidd (published by Curriculum Corporation, 1992).

Learning area

Health and physical education

LEVEL

Middle secondary (Years 8–10)

Unit description

A unit of work in this area helps students to explore the many pressures faced by people to feel right, look 'cool' and fit in. Students are encouraged to look through all the glossy images, work out what is really needed, and make up their own minds about what is best.

Purpose

To help students critically analyse the nutritional information and messages inherent in a range of food advertisements.

Duration

40 minutes

Possible outcomes

In relation to *A statement on health and physical education for Australian schools*, work in this area could lead to the achievement of outcomes in the following strand:

- **People and food**

There will also be links with other learning areas such as English.

Materials required

- one large sheet of paper for each group of five to six students
- textas
- a collection of current popular magazines (optional)

Procedure

1 Class discussion

We look in the mirror, and mostly Elle McPherson and Tom Cruise don't look back. Sometimes we don't mind; often we do. Advertisers usually use slim, white-teethed, clear-skinned models to promote their products, even when the products they are promoting have the potential to cause nutritional problems in people.

2 Small-group work

Divide students into groups of about five or six.

Ask each group to nominate a student to act as scribe. Ask the scribe to divide the large sheet of paper into three columns with the following headings:

- Foods considered nutritious (such as those high in protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals, breads, cereals, fruits and vegetables, nuts, milk products)
- Foods high in fats and oils (such as all fried food)
- Foods high in refined sugar (such as chocolates, cakes, lollies and biscuits)

Ask students to suggest advertisements such as television commercials or billboards that use slim men and women to advertise their products. Students may also browse through the magazines and find food advertisements that use 'perfect models'. Write the advertisements under the appropriate columns.

3 Discuss results

As a whole class, determine the percentage of the advertisements that come under each category. (This information could be graphed.)

Discuss:

- What are the messages telling us about these foods?
- Are the messages they are giving us correct?
- Should advertisers be able to use such 'perfect' models to advertise foods that have the potential to cause nutritional problems?

Extension activity

Ask students to develop a warning sign similar to the one that is used on cigarette packets to warn consumers of the dangers of over-use of the foods.

Suggested follow-up activities

Rewrite the jingle used for one of the advertisements discussed to warn consumers of the nutritional dangers. Students (or groups of students) can perform their jingle to the rest of the class.

Develop a code of practice that the group thinks should be used by advertisers. This could also relate to other aspects of advertising such as the exploitation of women's sexuality. Each group selects one advertisement that presents a message which is inconsistent with correct nutritional information. Rewrite and role-play the advertisement using appropriate actors and correct nutritional information.