



## LESSON PLANS 3-5

# Breakfast Food Labels: Figuring them out!

Breakfast, though often eaten “on-the-go,” is one of the most important meals of the day. It provides the energy needed for students to carry out their day. Students who skip breakfast are typically less attentive, less focused, frequently tardy, and visit the school nurse more often. Therefore, it is essential for students to learn the importance of eating breakfast at an early age. This lesson was designed to educate students about food labels while reinforcing basic mathematical skills. Breakfast should provide one-quarter of the day’s nutritional requirements.

## I. LEARNING CONTEXT

**Content Areas:** Health/Nutrition  
Mathematics

**Grade Level:** 3-5

### ***NYS Learning Standards:***

This learning experience incorporates the following Learning Standard:

#### **Standard 3: Mathematics**

- apply Mathematics in a real world setting
- solve problems based on food labels
- understand how to manipulate numbers

### ***Student Background:***

Students can succeed in this lesson with basic mathematical skills.

## II. PROCEDURE

1. Discuss with students the importance of breakfast and the importance of eating a variety of breakfast foods. Highlight its importance in terms of providing the energy and nutrients needed to concentrate, focus, and feel better.
2. Bring in a good variety of food labels from breakfast foods. Choose one of the food labels to use as an example. Place a transparency of the chosen food label on an overhead projector or draw the food label on the board. Explain that the food label contains a serving size, servings per container, calories, total fat, carbohydrate, sodium, fiber, protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, calcium, and iron.
3. Discuss the importance of the serving size and indicate that the serving size on a food label is often much smaller than what we eat. Explain that everything listed on the food label is based on the serving size. Emphasize that servings per container are how many servings contained in the whole package, box or can. For example, a package of Pop Tarts may have a serving size of one Pop Tart but the servings per container are two Pop Tarts. Thus, if the student eats the whole package, they have consumed two Pop Tarts and they have doubled all the nutrients within that food.

4. Discuss what is a calorie? What is a gram? What happens if you eat too many calories? Explain the nutritional guidelines for breakfast for grades 3 through 5. These guidelines are:

Calories	500
Protein	7 grams
Fat	30% or 150 calories or approximately 17 grams
Saturated Fat	10% or 50 calories or approximately 6 grams
Iron	2.5 mg
Calcium	200 mg
Vitamin A	175 RE
Vitamin C	11.25 mg

5. Once students have an understanding of how to read a food label, provide them with two food labels. Have the students take home the food labels with a sheet of paper with questions regarding their food label. Sample Questions:

How much is one serving size?

How many calories per serving?

How many total fat grams per serving?

How many milligrams of sodium (salt) per serving?

How many grams of fiber per serving?

How many grams of protein per serving?

What are the percent daily values of Vitamin A, Vitamin C, calcium, and iron?

\* In addition to answering the questions for one serving size, instruct students to answer the same questions for a double serving size and a half serving size for the provided food labels.

6. After students bring in their food label assignment, encourage discussion of topics such as, their favorite breakfast foods and classmates' differences of calories, fats, etc. on the food labels provided. Also, discuss what should be considered when making breakfast choices. What happens to you if you do not eat breakfast? How or where do you get these missed nutrients?

### **III. TIME REQUIRED**

Preparation:	a few minutes
Lesson:	30-45 minutes
Assignment:	overnight for homework
Post-Assignment Discussion:	15 minutes

### **IV. RESOURCES**

- Food labels of breakfast foods

### **V. ASSESSMENT PLAN**

Progress toward the Mathematics standard and performance indicators can be assessed by informal observation during discussion portions and the review of students' food label homework assignment.

### **VI. REFLECTION**

Breakfast is one of the most important meals of the day, for it gives children the healthy start they need to be able to think and learn. However, breakfast is often not given the attention it deserves. Hopefully, this lesson will highlight breakfast for students, making them more aware of the variety of choices for breakfast and show students how to read food labels from the breakfast foods they like to eat.