

Canada's Food Guide: A GUIDED DISCOVERY





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OVERVIEW

In January 2019, Health Canada released an updated *Canada's Food Guide* (CFG) as an online suite of resources in the form of videos, recipes, and tips that provide guidance about eating habits. While there are many elements to the CFG, the *Canada's Food Guide Plate* (CFG Plate) is the most familiar component.

The student workbook guides students in learning about the fundamental concepts of the CFG Plate and facilitates a deeper understanding of concepts within the guide beyond the CFG Plate. It will give students the opportunity to apply the learnings from this exploration to real world scenarios and encourage critical thinking about the messages provided by CFG.

Students will require internet access and a connected device (e.g., computer, tablet, or laptop) to complete this activity. The activity can be done individually, in pairs or small groups, or as a class, depending on the format of your class.

APPROXIMATE TIME: 60 MINUTES

Key Learning Objectives

- Explore the components of CFG beyond the CFG Plate
- Apply concepts of CFG when building meals and snacks
- Analyze messages of CFG and how they apply to individual eating habits

Materials

- Student workbook (fillable PDF or printed copy)
- Computer, tablet, or laptop with internet access
- Access to *Canada's Food Guide* website: Canada.ca/FoodGuide

USING THIS RESOURCE IN YOUR CLASS

This resource can be used in multiple ways depending on your class' needs and the resources available:

- **Individually:** Each student completes the resource on their own using a computer with internet access.
- **In pairs or small groups:** Divide students into pairs or small groups. Provide each group with a computer with internet access. Students can each fill in an individual workbook or the group can fill out one resource.
- **As a class:** Provide each student with an individual workbook to complete on their own. As a class, navigate the website using one computer.
- **Online learning environment:** Provide each student with the fillable PDF to complete on their own at home. During online class meetings, review answers and discussion topics.

INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

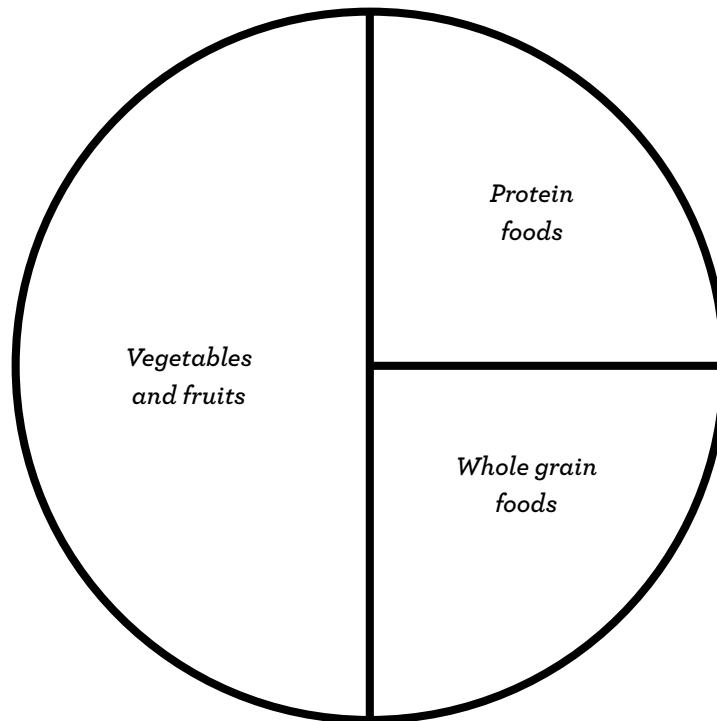
1. Introduce CFG using a copy of the *Food Guide* Snapshot PDF (available at Canada.ca/FoodGuide or download at food-guide.canada.ca/artifacts/CFG-snapshot-EN.pdf). Unlike the previous food guide, this double-sided paper copy is not the actual food guide. At the bottom of the *Food Guide* Snapshot page, "Discover your food guide at Canada.ca/FoodGuide" guides readers to the website where the complete CFG can be found.
2. Have students find the food guide by searching for "*Canada's Food Guide*" or using the address on the *Food Guide* Snapshot: Canada.ca/FoodGuide.
3. Have students complete the workbook using either the fillable PDF or printed workbook. Once the workbook is complete, discuss the answers together.

Suggested answers are provided in italics.

Access *Canada's Food Guide* at Canada.ca/FoodGuide

This page brings you to the CFG Plate. This image showcases a colourful plate of food divided into three categories: vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods, and protein foods.

1. Fill in the following plate with the correct CFG categories.



2. Name three foods from each category that are not pictured but you think could fit.

Vegetables and fruits:


Examples include cauliflower, celery, bok choy, lettuce, mushrooms, onions, okra, squash, cucumber, oranges, banana, pears, peaches, mango, saskatoon berries, and watermelon.

Whole grain foods:

Examples include bagel, bannock, barley, bun, cereal, couscous, crackers, muffin, naan, oatmeal, pancakes, pita, roti, and tortillas.

Protein foods:

Examples include cheese, kefir, milk, skim milk powder, hummus, peanut butter, duck, lamb, moose, pork, shrimp, squid, tuna, turkey, and fish.

Click on the glass of water pictured beside the CFG Plate. 

This page reviews the importance of water and other drink choices that hydrate your body.

3. Describe a scenario where you might need more water than usual. Why?

- *Water helps to keep your body working properly. Its jobs include helping to remove waste, keeping your bowels regular, and maintaining your body temperature.*
- *We may need more fluid than normal;*
 - *on hot days in the summer;*
 - *when we are physically active; and*
 - *when we are sick.*

Why?

- *During these times, we lose more water through our sweat, breath, and potentially vomit or diarrhea. Since we are losing more water, we need to replace this loss by drinking more fluid.*
- *When our body loses too much water, we can become dehydrated. Early cues of dehydration include thirst, dry mouth and eyes, muscle cramping, headaches, and dizziness.²*

4. Make two suggestions to keep yourself hydrated.

- *Examples include drinking a full glass of water in the morning, bringing a water bottle to class, drinking one cup of water during each class at school, and drinking milk with meals and/or snacks.*



On the left side toolbar click on “Eat a variety of healthy foods.” Then, select “Eat whole grain foods.”



This page introduces the role of whole grain foods in your body.

5. Circle the whole grain foods.

• Oatmeal with sliced banana, cooked in milk

• Stew with potatoes and whole grain bread

• White pasta and meatballs with parmesan cheese on top

• Curry with vegetables and a mix of brown and white rice

• Muffin made with bran with yogurt on the side

• Pancakes (made with whole grain flour) topped with butter and maple syrup

• Beef barley soup

• Tomato soup with whole grain crackers

• White toast and jam

6. Provide your own meal suggestion that includes a whole grain food.

- *Examples include egg salad sandwich with whole grain bread, salmon with brown rice and salad, whole grain toast with peanut butter and banana, whole wheat wrap with hummus and veggies, grilled cheese sandwich on whole grain bread, and cheese and whole grain cracker snack box.*

Click on “Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit.”



This page talks about all the nourishing forms of vegetables and fruits, including fresh, frozen, and canned.

7. What is one statement that CFG makes about frozen and canned vegetables and fruits?

- *Frozen and canned vegetables and fruits:*
 - *can be healthy choices;*
 - *do not take long to prepare;*
 - *are convenient; and*
 - *are just as nutritious as fresh vegetables and fruits.*
- *Choose frozen vegetables and fruits without added sugar, added seasoning, breading, or rich sauces.*
- *Choose canned vegetables with little to no added sodium, and drain and rinse canned vegetables to lower the sodium content.*
- *Choose canned fruit with little to no added sugar.*
- *Compare canned vegetables and fruits using the food labels; the % daily value helps you see if a food has a little or a lot of a nutrient.*

8. Give one reason you would choose frozen or canned vegetables or fruits.

- *To change or improve a meal.*
- *When there is limited ability to store fresh fruits and/or vegetables.*
- *During winter when there is less availability of fresh produce.*
- *To increase affordability of produce (often lower cost).*
- *To save time (often less preparation than fresh produce).*

Click on “Eat protein foods.”



This section reviews the many types of protein foods, including plant- and animal-based protein foods.

Iron

Animal-based protein foods contain iron, which helps carry the oxygen in your blood to other areas of your body. When your body has too little iron, you may feel tired or grumpy. You may also be more likely to get sick as your body's ability to fight off infections is reduced.

Calcium

Milk-based protein foods contain calcium, which helps build strong bones. Right now you are in your prime bone building years! This means that you are building the bones that you will have as an adult. Including milk-based protein foods in your meals and snacks will help your bones be strong when you're an adult!

Fibre

Plant-based protein foods contain fibre, which keeps your gut (intestines) healthy by helping your body's waste move through your gut and prevent constipation.

9. Describe a lunch you enjoy that includes at least one protein food. Identify the protein food.

- *Examples include egg salad sandwich (eggs), beef and noodle bowl (beef), three sisters' soup (beans), wrap with hummus and veggies (hummus), chana masala (chickpeas), grilled cheese sandwich (cheese), chicken congee (chicken), and cheese and crackers snack box (cheese).*

10. Did the lunch you suggested include a bone building food? Yes / No (circle).

If yes, what is the bone building food?

- *Examples include milk, cheese, kefir, yogurt, and paneer.*

If not, what could you add to your lunch to include a bone building food?

- *Examples include milk, cheese, kefir, yogurt, and paneer.*



PUT IT ALL TOGETHER: RECIPES

Click on the CFG logo in the top left corner to go back to the main screen.
On the left side toolbar, click “Recipes.”



This page shows recipes that include foods from CFG.

11. Look through the recipes listed on this page and choose one you would like to make.

Students can choose any recipe included on the “Recipes” page.

Why did you choose this recipe?

Examples include:

- *I’ve never tried a recipe like this before.*
- *I’ve tried something similar and liked the taste.*
- *I like an ingredient in this recipe.*
- *The recipe instructions seem easy to follow.*

12. Would you need to add another food to have one from each of the three categories?

Yes / No (circle)

Students can review the recipe that they chose and assess if it includes a food from vegetables and fruit, whole grain foods, and protein foods.

If yes, what food would you add?

Students can choose any food from the missing category to include with their recipe.

13. Would you add anything to this recipe to make it more enjoyable? Yes / No (circle)

If yes, what food or ingredient would you add?

This is an opportunity for students to get creative and alter recipes to match their own preferences.

Examples include vegetable, fruit, whole grain food, protein food, sauce, beverage, spice, or dessert.

¹ Barr S. Is the 2019 Canada’s Food Guide Snapshot nutritionally adequate? *Appl Physiol Nutr Metab* 2019;44(12):1387-1390.

² Government of Alberta. 2019. Dehydration in children. www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca. Accessed on October 16, 2020

BONUS QUESTION

CFG includes additional tips. Find the tips for healthy eating at school and answer the following question:

If you were involved in creating CFG, what is one tip you would add for healthy eating

- **at school?**
 - *Ensure lunch breaks are long enough to eat your meal.*
 - *Eat lunches and snacks with friends.*
 - *Bring snacks that include foods from at least two CFG categories.*
 - *Have class reminders to drink water.*
 - *Include some whole grain options in the school cafeteria and vending machine.*
 - *Pack your lunch in an insulated lunch kit with an ice pack to ensure food is kept cool until lunch.*

- **at home?**
 - *Choose meals that include foods from each of the three food categories.*
 - *Eat dinner at the table instead of in front of the television.*
 - *Eat dinner with family or friends.*
 - *Keep a water glass on the counter to remind yourself to drink water throughout the day.*

