

## LESSON 22



# Snacking and Inactivity

## Background

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Students need energy to think, learn, and grow. Snacks are a very important part of a growing child's diet. The usual snacks students choose, however, are not optimal for good health. Students most frequently snack on chips, sugary drinks, and other foods high in sugar, salt, and unhealthy fat. On a regular basis, children should choose snacks that are low in saturated fat, do not contain trans fat, and are high in the nutrients the body needs for good health. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy protein all make great snacks.

At the same time, students must be encouraged to be physically active—to keep moving. Children should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day; these 60 minutes can be accumulated during multiple sessions throughout the day and should include moderate- and vigorous-intensity activities. Yet more and more students spend their days in sedentary activities—in an average year, some students even spend more time watching TV than they spend attending school!

This lesson stresses the importance of making healthy snack choices as well as making physical activity a daily habit. The first part of the lesson is a discussion with students about their snacking and physical activity habits. In the second part of the lesson, students play the Snack-n-Act game, in which they pick out healthy snacks and activities from a pile of healthy and unhealthy choices. Before the game, students are guided through a warm-up exercise. After the game, students are guided through a cool-down session.

## Estimated Teaching Time and Related Subject Areas

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**Estimated teaching time:** 1 hour

**Related subject areas:** physical education, language arts

## Objectives

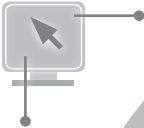
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- Be able to choose a variety of healthy snacks.
- Identify snacks that are less nutritious.
- Identify active and inactive after-school pastimes.
- Perform an endurance workout while pacing themselves during the fitness activity.
- Demonstrate a pace that works for them so that they can move for a long time without stopping.









## Materials

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- Nutritious (low in saturated fat, no trans fat or partially hydrogenated oils, high in healthy fat, fiber, or a whole grain) and less nutritious (high in saturated and/or trans fat, high in sugar, or a refined grain) snack choices cards (provided)
- Active and inactive after-school pastime cards (provided)
- Ten boxes (in which to put cards)—five with smiling faces, five with frowning faces
- Stretching diagrams from the web resource



### Nutritious Snack Choices

 apples	 grapes
 avocado slices with lemon	 hummus and red pepper slices
 cheese	 100% whole-wheat crackers
 whole-grain cereal	 100% whole-wheat English muffins

### Less Nutritious Snack Choices

 soda	 potato chips
 cookies	 cake
 candy	 cheese puffs
 brownies	 cupcakes

### Active After-School Pastimes

bike riding	jumping rope
walking	running
skating	swimming
playing basketball	dancing
playing hockey	doing yoga

### Inactive After-School Pastimes

watching TV	sitting on the couch
playing video games	watching music videos
watching movies	sitting around doing nothing
napping	getting a ride everywhere
playing computer games	spending time online for fun

## Procedure

1. Ask students: “Do you snack after school? Why do you snack after school? What snacks do you eat?”
2. Review the five food groups, and name snacks that belong in each group (see table 1.1 in lesson 1 for an overview of the best-choice foods in each food group).
3. Ask students: “What do you do after school? Do you have an active lifestyle or an inactive lifestyle?”
4. If students are snacking for energy, what are they doing with the energy? Are they sitting around, or are they using the extra energy?
5. Lead the students in a warm-up exercise.

Warm-up—The first part of the safe workout, in which slow movements get the body ready for the fitness activity.

### What to Emphasize

- If you do not warm up, you are more likely to get injured.
- You should always warm up before exercising, even when you are at home.

- Always do the movements very slowly to warm up.
  - Movements that are similar to those that will be done in the fitness activity are best. For example, when beginning a bike ride, warm up by pedaling slowly at first. Likewise, when throwing a ball, throw slowly at first.
6. Explain the Snack-n-Act game, which stresses the importance of healthy snacking and physical activity. In this game students also learn the importance of nonstop movement. Endurance fitness activities are crucial for a healthy body. Remind students that they should get at least one hour of physical activity every day.
  7. Have the students form five groups and stand in five lines. Place a variety of the nutritious snack cards, less nutritious snack cards, active after-school pastime cards, and inactive after-school pastime cards on the opposite side of the room.
  8. In front of each group line, place two boxes—one with a smiling face and one with a frowning face. Tell the students about the food and activity cards located on the opposite side of the room.
  9. Tell the students that to play the game, each group member (one by one) jogs across the room, picks a food or activity card, jogs back to the line, and places the card in the appropriate box. Each group has a box with a smiling face on it and a box with a frowning face—the frowning box is for the unhealthy snack and inactive after-school pastime choices, and the smiling box is for the healthy snack and active after-school pastime choices.
  10. Begin the game. Tell the students to jog in place while waiting for their turn. Remember to stress that students should pace themselves.
  11. Keep the game going until each group has had four or five turns, or until each student has had a turn (depending on how much time you have).
  12. When the game is over, lead the students in a cool-down.  
Cool-down—The part of the safe workout in which your body slows down and recovers from the fitness activity.

**What to Emphasize**

- Move slowly. Walking is an excellent cool-down activity.
- Remember to cool down after exercising at home, too.

Stretch—The last part of the safe workout, in which you do exercises that improve flexibility fitness (see the stretching diagrams in the web resource).

**What to Emphasize**

- Stretching after an activity is especially important; it improves flexibility fitness and helps you recover faster.
  - Activities such as riding a bike or doing push-ups do not improve flexibility.
  - Stretch at home while watching TV or when doing nothing in particular.
  - Hold stretches for 10 or more seconds.
  - Use slow move-ments; don't bounce.
13. After the cool-down, review the contents of the boxes. Discuss any incorrect choices.