

## Food and Meals: Survey the Past and the Present

Adapted from a Lesson by Ruth Shunick from Crystal Lake

**Grade Level:** 6 - 8

**Subject(s):** Language Arts

**Description:** Students will conduct surveys, demonstrate a clear understanding of the foods they eat, compare their food and meal choices to their parents and Illinois farm families by creating and publishing an online multimedia page of survey results.

**Resources:**

**Illinois State Museum's Oral History of Illinois Agriculture searchable online AV database** - <http://ohia.museum.state.il.us/>

Listen to audio interview clips and view video interview clips by searching on Food & Meals, vegetables, fruits, food preparation, and other related keywords and facet search.



*Roadside Fruit Stand*

**United Department of Agriculture's MyPyramid** -

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/mypyramid/index.aspx> **Inside the Pyramid** link reminds users of the basic food group constituents and describes and explains them.

**Activity One:** Students take a survey, record food & meals eaten, and graph results.

**3.1 What Are The Food Groups?** - Students view the food pyramid to discover the different food groups. [Inside the Pyramid](#)

**3.2 Record Food & Meals** - Students, using Microsoft Office Excel, record their food intake everyday for 4 weeks. They also record the foods that interviewees from the ISM Oral History of Illinois Agriculture website ate. They record the foods that their parents used to eat as children and what they eat now.

**3.3 Graph Your Results** - Students graph their data and interpret their findings at the end of 4 weeks.

**See the survey form and graph form at the end of this lesson.**

**Activity Two:** Students will survey their parents about their childhood eating habits and record the responses on another copy of the survey form and graph form.

**Activity Three:** Students will search the ISM Oral History online searchable database to find out what farmers families ate in the first half of the twentieth century. They will take notes for each interviewee they see/hear on a variant of the survey form, also seen at the end of this lesson. These forms will be compared and a Master Form and Graph will be created, either in groups or

as a whole class activity led by the teacher. The results will reflect an average diet for all the interviewees of the time-period and place (Illinois farmers' families 1900-1950).

**Application:** Students will take the summary information from their three surveys and compare and contrast them according to the health information in the FDA Pyramid. They will discuss which era's and individual's diet (1900-1950, their parents' childhood, or their childhood) best follows the FDA's recommendations. (taking into account also the high physical activity level of farmers' family members 1900-1950 compared to their more sedentary lifestyle – what happens when quantities remain the same when activity level decreases?).

Then they will discuss what has changed in food choices, food availability, food preferences, food costs, etc. What are the benefits and disadvantages of the changes?

Each student will highlight the parts of his/her diet that are not healthful, beneficial, or desirable, and write a paragraph about the consequences of his/her choices, or a statement about what simple changes could be made in the diet to improve it. (reading labels of processed food to make an informed choice; giving up one less healthy snack per day; eat one more fruit or vegetable per day).

**Follow-up:** Students will continue to take a food survey in the form of a diary each day for two weeks. At the end of that time, they will summarize their records by filling in the graph form again. They will compare it to the first self-survey graph and mark if they have improved, maintained, or lost ground in finding a healthy diet according to FDA standards.

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed by a rubric on the

1) completion of the survey form:

three points – survey is 98% completed

two points – survey is 90% completed

one point – survey is less than 90% completed, therefore difficult to validate

2) accuracy of their graphs

three points- graph numbers match the notes taken in survey

two points- graph numbers match survey notes with no more than 2 errors

one point – effort was made, but graph is incorrect enough to invalidate survey

3) finding successful search results of the ISM Oral History database

three point – students found five valid search results by keyword or Facets

two points – student found three valid search results by keyword or Facets

one point – student did not find enough valid search results to complete task.

4) participation in discussion

three points – student participated in discussion by adding his results to the groups  
0 points – student did not participate or was unable to share results

5) completion and results of their follow-up self-survey

five points – student completed post-self-survey, graphed results correctly and clearly summarized meaning

four points – student completed post-self-survey, graphed results at least 80% correctly, and wrote a short summary that revealed understanding.

three points – students completed up to 90% of survey, graphed results at least 80%, but summary revealed less understanding of results

one point – effort was made but student did not complete survey, did not graph correctly, and did not write a summary that revealed understanding. This student need remediation to complete unit successfully.

## Food Survey Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

For each item eaten, think of its ingredients – pizza, for example, has grain in the dough, vegetables, cheese (milk), and meat in the toppings. So you could list pizza in several columns.

Think what category each food belongs in – orange juice is a fruit; an omelet is eggs; soup can be vegetables, donuts are bread.

Meal	Grains: Breads, cereals	Vegetables:	Fruits:	Milk:	Meat, Eggs, Beans, Nuts
Breakfast					
Snack					
Lunch					
Snack					
Supper					
Snack					

Oils: important part of diet if carefully watched; they sneak into processed foods and are part of meats, nuts, and dressings. Read labels to find out quantities.

List here amount of margarine, mayonnaise, nuts, dressings, olives, peanut butter:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Graph Form for Food Survey: Color in each column up to the number of servings shown on the left, according to what your survey subject ate.

#servings	Grains	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk	Meat
9					
8					
7					
6					
5					
4					
3					
2					
1					

Take this information back to [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov) (page for printouts) to view the recommended number and size of servings recommended by the FDA. How does your subject's diet differ from the ideal?