

Staying Healthy Outdoors

Lesson Overview

During this lesson, students will practice their relationship, self-awareness and critical thinking skills while they apply their knowledge of healthy eating and nutrition to make reasoned decisions and take action for their health and well-being. Students will identify the environmental factors that pose a safety risk, and apply behaviours, safety rules, and procedures to maximize their own safety and avoid illness while participating in outdoor education activities.

Overall and Specific Expectations

- A1: A1.4, A1.5, A1.6
- B3: B3.1, B3.2

Learning Goals

- I can use my knowledge about healthy eating and my critical thinking skills to make informed food and beverage choices to nourish my body and keep myself hydrated while participating in outdoor education activities.
- I can behave responsibly and follow safety rules and procedures to avoid illness while participating in outdoor education activities.

Materials

- Chart paper and markers

- [Student Resource: Staying Healthy Outdoors - Self-Check \(primary\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Staying Healthy Outdoors - Self-Check \(junior\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Staying Healthy Outdoors - Self-Check \(intermediate\)](#)

Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education

Tools and Resources

- [Disability-Centred Safety](#)
- [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)
- [Sample Curricular Medical Information and Acknowledgement of Elements of Risk Form](#)

Other

[Risk Management](#)

Assessment for Learning

At the beginning of the lesson, work with students to co-create criteria for assessing knowledge and skills needed for healthy eating, and safety rules and procedures during outdoor education activities. For example, success criteria might include:

- I can identify what my body needs to stay nourished and hydrated during outdoor education activities.
- I can use my knowledge of healthy eating to make healthy food and drink choices to keep myself safe during outdoor education activities.

After the activity, review the co-created criteria with students and then have them complete the *Student Resource: Staying Healthy Outdoors - Self-Check*.

Assess students' responses during the class discussions and consolidation illustrations (primary) / scenarios (junior/ intermediate). Use the co-created criteria to assess student learning and offer feedback. If needed, provide feedback to individual students or the entire group to clarify or reinforce their understanding of how to stay healthy during outdoor education activities, and answer any remaining questions.

Minds On

Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Call out different foods and beverages. Instruct students to stand up if they would pack the food for a class outdoor education trip to a local trail or stay seated if they would not choose it. Have all students sit down after each food so they are sitting and standing each time. Note that some of the suggested foods are clearly not appropriate for a packed lunch (for example, ice cream, pop). They have been included to help students think about which foods are nutritious and easy to pack to fuel their bodies during an outdoor education activity.

Foods: carrots, celery, apples, ice cream, chocolate bar, water, meat, hummus, crackers, cheese strings, raisins, cheese sandwich, energy bars, granola, pop, rice cakes, jam, bananas, chewy type fruit snacks, cured meat snack (for example, Pepperette, Jerkee), juice box, sports or energy drink, chips, licorice, trail mix or nuts, sandwich.

Action

Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Explain to students that having the proper food and drink to fuel their body is important to have the energy for the activity and to stay safe on outdoor education trips. Remind them that they need to think of the energy they use during the day. Their food and beverage intake need to be sufficient for the energy they will need to accomplish the activities that are planned.

Divide students into groups of 3-4 and provide each group with chart paper and markers. Have groups discuss and record their answers to the following questions.

- What do we need to think about to make sure we nourish our bodies and stay hydrated for a full day of activity at a local park? Possible answers:
 - We need to think about how long the trip is.
 - We need to bring a full water bottle and think about how much water we should bring.

- We want to bring foods that won't go bad or don't need to stay in a fridge.
 - We want foods that are light to carry in our bags.
 - We want to think about how much food packaging we take because we have to carry it back.
 - We need carbohydrates for energy so we should bring fruits, dried fruit or granola bars, unsalted seeds like pumpkin or sunflower seeds. Protein bars are good too.
 - We need to make sure we have a balance of carbohydrates, protein like soybeans, cheese, eggs, dried meat and some healthy fat like seeds or seed butters.
 - We need snacks to keep our energy up.
 - We want to pack foods that don't need utensils or plates.
 - If we need to pick food that won't get squished, bruised, spilled.
- What can we do before we leave for our trip to make sure we are ready for physical activity? Possible answers:
 - We can make sure we have a healthy breakfast and drink lots of fluids before we leave on the trip.
 - We can think about having a snack when we arrive at the park before participating in activities.
 - We want to get a good night's rest the night prior.
- One general rule is to eat before you feel hungry and drink before you feel thirsty. Why do you think this is such an important rule? Possible answers:
 - If we wait to eat when we feel hungry then our body is telling us we are already running out of energy to fuel our needs.
 - If we wait until we are thirsty then that is one sign that we are already dehydrated.
- Make a list of foods that you think would be best to pack for an outdoor education day trip? Possible answers:
 - Fruits
 - Vegetables

- Sandwiches
 - Coco Bread and Jam
 - Samosas
 - Pakoras
 - Wraps
 - Naan Bread
 - Cheese
 - Hard boiled eggs
 - Granola bars
 - Freeze dried fruit
 - Trail mix (avoid including peanuts for everyone's safety)
 - Raisins
 - Rice cakes
 - Rice
 - Crackers
 - Pepitas
 - Chocolate bar
- What else should we bring for our food safety? Possible answers:
 - Disposable wipes
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Trash bags to carry out what we bring like orange peels, apples cores and food packaging

Engage students in a whole group discussion by inviting groups to share their responses with the class. Use the student responses to deepen their understanding of how fueling their body will help them stay healthy while participating in outdoor education activities.

Junior/Intermediate

Sometimes in colder weather conditions, we might want a hot drink to help us stay warm while we stop for lunch. If we are taking a trip that includes an evening meal, we want to think about what food to cook or prepare that is nourishing, fills us up, and gives us energy for the next day but requires as little equipment as necessary.

Questions:

- What will we need to think about if we want to include a hot drink or a meal as part of our nourishment?

Possible answers:

- We can make a fire.
 - We can use camping stoves that use gas or propane.
- What are some of the things we need to think about when deciding on what we will use as a cooking source? Possible answers:
 - We need to find out if we are allowed to make fires where we are going.
 - We need to know if there is enough wood available to make and keep a fire going.
 - We need to think about how much time we have to cook.
 - We need to think about how many people will be eating.
 - We need to verify if anyone has food allergies.
 - We need to know how many stoves and how much fuel we need.
 - We need to think about other equipment we need like pots, plates, utensils, and matches and/or lighter.
 - We need to figure out how we will clean up and make sure we take everything back home. We can't leave any scraps of food or packaging behind.
 - What do we need to think about when we are selecting the food we want to cook or drinks we want to make? What are some foods we might bring along to cook or prepare? Possible answers:
 - We need to think about food that can be made with one pot like pasta, rice, lentils, or quinoa.

- We need to think about how long the food we select takes to cook.
- We should make drinks that only need water.
- We should try to make foods that won't be too messy to eat.
- We can make foods that only need a fork or spoon so we don't have to use knives.
- We want to choose foods that will fill us up and give us energy for the next day.
- We don't want to bring food that is too heavy to carry or has a lot of packaging or needs a can opener.
- We can also think about food that can be made ahead of time and then reheated.
- We should make a drink like hot chocolate which only requires adding powder to boiled water.

Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Divide students into pairs to complete the *Student Resource: Staying Healthy Outdoors - Self-Check* to check for understanding before moving to the consolidation.

Consolidation

Primary

Divide students into small groups to draw or write out their breakfast, lunch and snacks they would ask their caregiver to pack for a day hike.

Junior

Divide students into groups of 4-5 to complete the following scenario and share their meal plans with the class.

Scenario: Our class will be going on a day hike two hours away from the school. We will be going by bus. The group you are now part of will cooperate as a team to help each other stay safe and healthy throughout the day. Your task is to help each other decide on a healthy breakfast to eat before the hike to fuel up, and what you will pack for lunch and snacks for the bus and hike. You don't all have to eat the same foods, but you want to make sure everyone has decided on and planned meals and snacks for a safe and healthy day. Don't forget to plan for adequate hydration, too.

Intermediate

Divide students into groups of 4-5 to complete the following scenario and share their meal plans with the class.

Scenario: Our class will be going on a two-day trip to a camp that is a three hour bus ride. The group you are now part of will cooperate as a team to help each other stay safe and healthy throughout the trip. Your task is to help each other decide on a healthy breakfast to eat before the trip to fuel up, and what you will pack for lunch and snacks for the bus and the hike. As part of the trip, you will be learning how to use camp stoves. Your group is responsible for bringing two different food items that can be cooked using a camp stove. You don't all have to eat the same foods, but you want to make sure everyone has decided on and planned meals and snacks for a safe and healthy trip. Don't forget to plan for adequate hydration, too.

Notes to Teachers

Remember to check school board policies and procedures applicable to any outdoor education activity.

A variety of assessment strategies have been identified in the Assessing for Learning section of each activity. Please note that these assessment strategies have been provided as a means for teachers to gather information to determine what students already know and can do, to inform instruction, scaffold learning, differentiate instruction in response to their students needs, and help students keep track of their progress in achieving the learning goals. These are not meant to be used for formal assessment and evaluation purposes.

Consider including this lesson into learning about healthy eating where appropriate (i.e., Grade 1 - D1.1, Grade 3 - D1.1, Grade 4 - D1.1, D3.1, Grade 6 - D2.2, D3.1, Grade 7 - D3.1)

Research indicates that the two biggest challenges groups face around proper nutrition on multi-day outdoor education trips is establishing sufficient time to cook and having the skills to perform basic cooking practices. Often nutritious foods are carried on trips, but too often, they don't get used, are not cooked properly, or there isn't time to cook them, and these are all factors leading to students not receiving sufficient nutrition.