

Lesson Title: Junk Food & Treats

Learning Objectives:

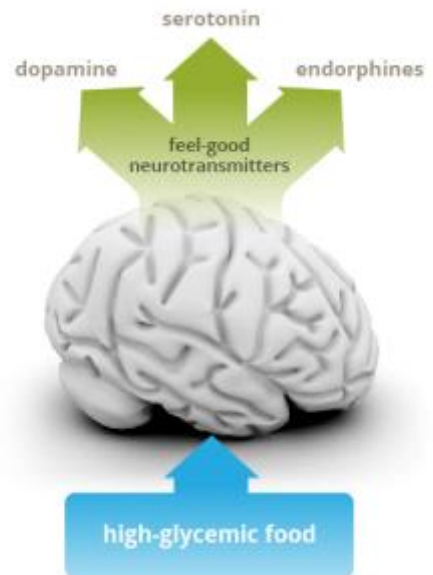
- Identify healthier alternatives to your student's favorite junk foods
- Analyze how processed foods affect brain function/academics
- Explain how processed foods affect physical performance in sports

Opening:

Think back to the last time you felt hungry—maybe that is right now! What type of snack are you craving? Is it a sweet, crunchy, or salty snack? Have students share out. This will lead into the portion of the lesson later where you discuss finding healthy alternatives.

Essential Content:

- Junk/processed foods are easily accessible for teenagers.
- Processed foods lack key nutrients the body needs to function properly.
- Nutrient deficiencies – including insufficient intake of vitamins A, B and C, as well as iron, zinc and calcium – are linked to lower grades and increased absenteeism.
- Lack of adequate consumption of fruits, vegetables, and dairy products is associated with lower grades.
- Many studies show that processed/junk food can light up the same pleasure centers in the brain as illegal drugs.
- Research shows kids have a stronger preference for unhealthy foods.
- They also have less of an ability to associate high sugar, high fat foods with stomach aches and sugar crashes.
- Kids are more likely to eat even if they reported they were “full” 15 minutes before.



Finding Healthy Substitutes:

What are you looking for when “craving” a specific food: sweet, salty, crunchy?

- Sweet → try frozen fruit, fresh fruits, and adding cinnamon to a snack
- Crunchy (such as chips) → vegetable sticks, baked or broiled items, and kale chips
- Salty → liquid aminos, such as miso, herbs, and spices
- High Fat Foods → nuts, nut butters, seeds, coconut oil, olive oil, and baked items, instead of fried

Recommendations:

- Have a healthy alternative available
- Get the junk food out of the house and out of site
- Plan ahead (bring healthy snacks with you)

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Activity:

Guided Practice: Ask students to brainstorm their favorite snacks. Once they share out, ask students to determine what would be a healthy alternative for their snack.

Independent Practice: Have students complete the worksheet then go over together in class. Complete the following:

1. Students will match the junk food and healthy alternatives.
2. Students will find a good replacement for the junk food items listed.

Closure:

Have students go back to what they discussed in the opening and reflect on their common cravings. Have them think consider and discuss why they may crave that particular type of snack.