LEVEL 4 THEME 1
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE FOOD WE EAT?

LEARNING OUTCOME
Students will use information on food packaging to make and action safe food choices (based on 4A3).

SUCCESS CRITERIA
Co-construct the success criteria with your students by unpacking the intended learning outcome. For example, the success criteria for the activity Which is best? Making healthy food choices (see page 37) could be: Students are able to use the information on food labels to identify the healthiest option from three different brands of the same product.

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE
Exploring how packaging can influence food choices

ATTITUDES AND VALUES
Becoming more responsible for using consumer information to help make food choices

HEALTH PROMOTION
Taking action to select healthier products using consumer information; educating others about how to use consumer information

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT’S IN A NAME? FOOD LABELLING
- Hold up two packaged food items and ask “How do we know which one is the healthier option?”
- With students, discuss the role of food labelling in helping people make food choices.
- Ask the focus question “What information do we think should be on a food label?” Provide a blank nutrition information panel so that students can record what they think should appear on it.
- Ask “What information is legally required in New Zealand?” Students then compare their ideas with the actual requirements. (See the teachers’ notes.)
- Generate class discussion by asking “How do we read and understand these labels?”

THE LANGUAGE OF LABELLING
- Use Appendix 9 in the online appendices to make up sets of Language of Labelling cards. Working in pairs or small groups, students match each term with its correct meaning (for example, “Good source of energy” means high in kilojoules or calories).

THINKING CRITICALLY
- With students, discuss how misinterpreting this language can create confusion when people are making food choices. (Note: The Heart Foundation Tick means the food is a healthier version of that type of food but may not mean that you can eat as much as you like every day. The food must still be eaten according to whether it is an “everyday”, “sometimes”, or “occasional” food. See page 13.)

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION
Examining and questioning information on food labels.

TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES
The first four suggested activities for this theme relate to the same learning outcome. Teachers and students should develop specific success criteria for each activity.

Labelling requirements
Food labels in New Zealand must include the following information:
- The name of the food.
- Lot identification.
- The supplier’s name and business (street) address in New Zealand or Australia. (Note: “Supplier” includes the packer, manufacturer, vendor, and importer of the food.)
- Mandatory warning statements, advisory statements, and declarations about certain ingredients/substances.
- Ingredients list. All ingredients must be listed by their common name, a description or, where specified in the Food Standards Code, the generic name, in descending order of in-going weight.
- Food additives.
- Date marking. Most packaged foods with a shelf life of less than two years must have one of the following date marks:
  - “Use by” dates, which relate to food safety. Foods with a “use by” date should not be consumed after the date indicated for health and safety reasons. Foods cannot be sold beyond their “use by” date.
  - “Best before” dates, which relate to quality. Foods should be consumed by their “best before” date to ensure quality. Foods can be sold beyond their “best before” date provided they are still fit for consumption.
  - “Baked on” and “baked for” dates. These dates can be used for breads with a shelf life of less than seven days.
- Directions for use and storage.
- Nutrition information panel, including serving size, weight, additives, allergens, order of ingredients by volume, energy, fat (total fat and saturated fat), protein, carbohydrate, sugars, and salt levels.
WHAT SHOULD WE LOOK FOR ON A NUTRITION INFORMATION PANEL?

- Explain that when comparing food products, it is important to look at their energy, fat, sugar, and salt (sodium) levels. Fibre may also be examined where appropriate. Products low in saturated fat, salt (sodium), and sugar are recommended.
- Provide students with an example of a nutrition information panel (for example, from the back of a cereal box) and have them use a checklist to see if it has everything it should have. (See the teachers’ notes on page 36.)

WHICH IS BEST? MAKING HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

- Select three brands of the same type of product (for example, breakfast cereal, muesli bars, orange juice, milk, yoghurt, or crackers). Copy the nutrition information panel for each of the three products. (The information may need to be simplified.)

THINKING CRITICALLY

- In pairs, students compare the nutritional value of the three products and decide which is the healthiest overall, considering the energy, fat, sugar, and salt levels (4A3). Students could give a mark out of three for each aspect to gain an overall ranking. They should use the “per 100 g” values. (Note: Provide students with a scoring sheet.)
- Encourage students to discuss their findings. Ask “How can we use this information in the future to help us with our food choices?”

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION

Examining food labels and selecting healthy food on the basis of sound and valid information.

- Students take their findings home and discuss with their families the information on food labels and the uses of that information.
Students identify solutions to the problem presented by food packaging in the environment (4A3).

**IT’S ALL IN THE PACKAGING!**

**THINKING CRITICALLY**

- Students examine different examples of packaging (for example, plastic bags, recycled brown paper bags, cardboard). Generate discussion by asking “What is it about the way a food is packaged that would make me want to buy it?” Encourage students to explore aspects of packaging such as its colour, its size, and the use of text and images.
- Read the *School Journal* article “Plastic Fantastic?” together (SJ 3.3.07). Students then discuss the ways in which food packaging affects our environment; help them to draw out links to the concepts of pollution and sustainability. Students record their ideas under the headings Problems and Possible solutions (4A3).
- Students examine the packaging used in school lunches (for example, the use of plastic wrap and plastic bags) and gather class statistics about the use of packaging.
- Students promote packaging- (or wrapping-) free lunch days and encourage the use of reusable plastic containers and biodegradable products.
- To conclude this sequence of activities, students could:
  - select a product and design a new eco-friendly package for it;
  - design a new lunchbox that stores food without having lots of wrapping;
  - design a new logo for the local supermarket’s eco-friendly shopping bags;
  - promote the school community’s use of eco-friendly shopping bags.

**OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION**

Taking critical action based on critical thinking about the ecological sustainability of methods of packaging.

**TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES**

Links to technology, level 4, Technological Knowledge.

**USEFUL RESOURCES**

- See the Packaging Council of New Zealand website at [www.packaging.org.nz](http://www.packaging.org.nz)
- *School Journal* item: “Plastic Fantastic?”, SJ 3.3.07; also available on Plastic Fantastic? and other stories CD-ROM.
IS IT THE BRAND OR THE TASTE?

- Students select four common food or drink types (for example, chocolate drink, breakfast cereal, water cracker, bottled water). Using a separate strip of paper for each, they record their favourite brand of each food or drink. They sort their data by placing their strips into a different container for each food or drink type and then working in four groups to identify the preferred brands. The four groups present their findings on a bar graph.

THINKING CRITICALLY

- In pairs, students discuss the reasons for their brand preferences and say how they found out about each one. Encourage them to think about whether they first saw it advertised: on television, in a magazine, or at a free tasting stand in a supermarket.
- Students conduct a blindfolded taste test of some of the food or drink types to see which sample they prefer. See if they can guess which product is a supermarket “home brand” and which is a manufacturer’s brand.
- The original four groups collect the responses to the taste test, graph them, and compare the findings to their initial data. Each group shares their findings with the other three groups. The class compares the four sets of results.
- In pairs, students discuss how the brand labels affected their preferences and whether these have changed (4D1).

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION

- Share the School Journal story “Drive-through” (SJ 2.3.07) to stimulate discussion about marketing and the fast-food industry.

TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES

Is it the brand or the taste? and How does advertising affect choices about food? relate to the same learning outcome. Teachers and students should develop specific success criteria for each activity.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- School Journal item: “Drive-through”, SJ 2.3.07; also available on Freaky Fridge and other stories CD-ROM.
HOW DOES ADVERTISING AFFECT CHOICES ABOUT FOOD?

- For homework, students:
  - record what types of food are being advertised on TV between 3.30 and 4.30 p.m. or between 7 and 8 a.m., and how often; or
  - gather some food advertisements from magazines, leaflets, or newspapers.
- As a class, students share their findings to identify the sorts of foods that are being advertised the most. They discuss and graph the trends they observe.
- Discuss the Advertising Standards Authority's codes of practice associated with food advertisements. (See the teachers’ notes.)

THINKING CRITICALLY

- Students analyse food-advertising techniques while viewing either taped television footage or magazine advertisements. Support this analysis by providing them with a list of questions or a template for recording their ideas. The questions can include:
  - Who is the target audience for this advertisement? Is it parents or children or another group?
  - How do you know?
  - Why are they targeting this group?
  - What are some words used in this advertisement that make you want to buy this food?
  - What do the advertisers want you to believe about this food product?
  - What is the main selling point of the food?
  - Does a fancy advertisement or packaging mean that the product is better or tastes better than others?
- Students select (or are given) an advertisement about food and write a short explanation about the key messages and the techniques used to encourage people to buy the food (4D1).

TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES

USEFUL RESOURCE

For the Advertising Standards Authority codes of practice, go to the Authority’s website at [www.asa.co.nz](http://www.asa.co.nz)
Click on “codes” and then “food”.

Template to record food advertising techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is the target audience for this advertisement?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you know?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why are they targeting this group?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some words used in this advertisement that make you want to buy this food?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do the advertisers want you to believe about this food product?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the main selling point of the food?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the advertisement mean the product is better or tastes better than others?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY

Students explain how a given advertisement seeks to influence a given audience (4D1).
HOW CAN WE DEAL WITH THE IMPACT OF PEER PRESSURE ON OUR FOOD CHOICES?

• Present the following scenario, adapting it as necessary to suit the class: “A friend sends you this note, asking for your advice: *When I am out with my friends, they always want to buy fish and chips. I really don’t like fish and chips, but if I don’t get them, my friends call me a health freak. Can you please make some suggestions about how I can deal with this?*”

THINKING CRITICALLY

• In pairs, students discuss the factors influencing this person’s choice of food and what they could do.

• In a class discussion, draw out the idea that sometimes other people influence our food choices. This influence can come through “peer pressure” – social pressure to behave in a certain way in order to be accepted by a group. Highlight how assertive communication can be important when making food choices and explain the difference between aggressive and assertive communication.

• Students discuss and record what each type of communication sounds like, looks like (body language), and feels like.

• Students could respond to the scenario by:
  – writing a note back to the friend;
  – acting out how to respond to the friend;
  – writing a “speech bubble” showing what could be said.

• A range of different scenarios could be used to promote discussion and develop effective communication techniques.

• The students could practise assertive communication techniques in pairs or small groups (4C3).

TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES

USEFUL RESOURCE

• Creating a Positive Classroom Community, in The Curriculum in Action series, provides ideas for addressing peer pressure.
WHAT’S SAFE TO EAT AND DRINK?

- Ask students the focus question “What’s safe to eat and drink?”
- Provide students with a list of foods, including some that would be safe to eat and some that would not. (Examples include chicken that’s a bit pink in the middle, yoghurt with a passed expiry date, foods with artificial sweeteners, drinks with caffeine in them, raw nuts, or a bowl of frozen peas.) Students place an “S” for safe or a “U” for unsafe beside each food and give a reason.
- Explain that some foods may have both an “S” and a “U” beside them, because allergies mean that foods such as raw nuts may be safe for some people and unsafe for others. Use the Journal of Young People’s Writing article “Allergy Alert” as a stimulus for a discussion on allergies. For a story about the dietary needs of diabetic people, refer to the Junior Journal story “Shopping With Adam”. (See the teachers’ notes for details.)

THINKING CRITICALLY

- In pairs, students share and compare their lists. They then collate their ideas as a class, discussing the reasons a food or drink would be safe or unsafe. Encourage students to generate their own questions around food safety, such as: “At what temperature should food be refrigerated?” “What is a safe level of caffeine consumption?” “How hot should cooked food be?” Some research may be needed to find answers to these questions.
- Provide students with a scenario in which they must select safe food for a particular event. Scenarios might include a one-day tramping trip, a barbecue, a picnic, a sports day, or a hāngi.

THINKING CRITICALLY

- Give students a handout with a table that has the headings “Safe/suitable” and “Unsafe/unsuitable”. Either give the students a list of foods for them to put under the appropriate heading or get them to provide their own examples. Students justify their placements by giving reasons, bearing in mind the context of the scenario and thinking about aspects such as hygiene, storage, mass, size, and weight (4A3). (Example: “Unsafe: Cold chicken on a hot sports day. Reasons: No fridge to keep it cool, lots of bacteria growing on it during the day if left out.”)

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION

Examining and evaluating food safety issues.
**LEVEL 4 THEME 2**
**HOW DO WE GET OUR FOOD?**

**LEARNING OUTCOME**
Students will investigate available sources of school lunches and identify changes that would improve lunch options (based on 4D1/4D2).

**SUCCESS CRITERIA**
Co-construct the success criteria with your students by unpacking the intended learning outcome.

**ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY**
Charts indicate students’ analysis and evaluation of foods available for lunch and include practical suggestions for improvements (4D1/4D2).

**HEALTH PROMOTION**
Contribute to an environment where healthy nutrition choices are available.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**
Students will describe the body’s changing nutritional needs at puberty and will plan and prepare simple low-cost lunches to meet these needs (based on 4A1).

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**TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**INVESTIGATING LOCAL SOURCES OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES**
- In groups, students conduct a class investigation into the lunch options available to them. They make comparisons based on cost, nutritional value, and taste.

**THINKING CRITICALLY**
- Working in pairs or groups, students complete a chart under the headings “Healthy lunch foods available that we like”, “Changes that are needed”, and “How the changes could be made”. They contribute their ideas to a whole-class discussion (4D1/4D2).
- Working by themselves or in groups, students set targets to bring about one improvement. After identifying the planned improvement, they develop an action plan, presenting it as a flow diagram for teacher approval. The plan should include an agreed time frame and a measure for deciding whether the plan has met its targets.

**OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION**
Challenging assumptions about available lunch options. Taking action to bring about change.

**UNDERSTANDING NUTRITIONAL NEEDS**

**THINKING CRITICALLY**
- Students keep a 24-hour record of their eating and drinking, using Ministry of Health resources to enable them to consider the nutritional adequacy of their food intake for the day. (See the teachers’ notes.) Each student identifies one area of improvement they will focus on over the next week and sets a realistic goal (for example, to eat one more serving of vegetables or fruit each day). They keep a record of progress over the week.

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**TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES**

**USEFUL RESOURCES**
- Food and Beverage Classification System for Years 1–13: User Guide (Ministry of Health), pages 4–6 and 10–18.
- Food and Nutrition for Healthy, Confident Kids guidelines (Ministry of Education), pages 9–10.

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The activities Understanding nutritional needs, Low-cost class lunches, and Is Home-made best? are intended to help students work towards the two learning outcomes on pages 43 and 44. Teachers and students should develop specific success criteria for each activity. The suggested resources can be used in a variety of ways.
Students will investigate home-made foods and compare them with pre-prepared equivalents (based on 4D2).

SUCCESS CRITERIA
Co-construct the success criteria with your students by unpacking the intended learning outcome.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY
Students will plan and prepare simple low-cost lunches to meet nutritional needs (4A1).

HEALTH PROMOTION
Developing personal skills and knowledge that empower them to take action to improve well-being.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY
Students’ reports to the class indicate their critical thinking about the value of making one’s own food compared to the value of buying ready-made food (4D2).

LOW-COST CLASS LUNCHES
- The class plans and prepares a lunch around themes that demonstrate the students’ understanding of the nutritional needs for people at their age and stage in life. (Themes might include eating more vegetables or meeting increased needs for iron or calcium.) Students’ planning includes the development of an action plan to guide the practical aspects of food preparation (4A1).

IS HOME-MADE BEST? HOME-MADE VERSUS PURCHASED FOOD
- As a class, brainstorm a list of students’ favourite "ready-made" healthy lunch items, along with estimates of their cost.

THINKING CRITICALLY
- In groups, students:
  - prepare a “shortlist” of those pre-prepared items that can be made from basic ingredients;
  - select one of these food items and prepare an action plan for making it at school;
  - carry out their action plan, bringing the ingredients and recording their cost, making the item, and using a teacher-provided graphic organiser to evaluate the item’s cost, taste, and nutritional value;
  - complete a short report on the item they made to present to the class, commenting on the advantages and disadvantages of buying pre-prepared food in comparison to using the food they prepared themselves (4D2).

- Students present, orally or in a written list, the benefits of their home-made foods.

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION
Examining, questioning, and evaluating practices and assumptions. Taking critical action based on critical thinking.

USEFUL RESOURCES
- Ministry of Health:
  - Eating for Healthy Children Aged 2 to 12/Ngā Kai Tōtika mō te Hunga Kāhungahunga.

For recipes:
- Food and Beverage Classification System for Years 1–13: Catering Guide.

For planning and preparing meals in a school setting:

Food items that can work well for this activity include: sandwiches, wedges, popcorn, mini pizzas, muffins, hamburgers, and “quick meals”.

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION
Examining and evaluating practices and questioning assumptions. Taking critical action based on critical thinking.
TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

COOK EASY

- Ask students the focus question “What are the advantages and disadvantages of preparing and eating food with others?” Encourage them to think about the positive and negative aspects of eating at the table with your family (or mates, whānau, syndicate, or class group) and on your own.

THINKING CRITICALLY

- Students consider the statement “Eating at the table with your family is best.” They choose and present different perspectives (for example, that of a parent who cooked the meal or of a child who wants to watch television).
- As a class, students share their ideas and construct a chart showing the positives and negatives of eating together.
- Students work in groups to plan, prepare, cook, serve, and consume a simple meal suitable for a family, using basic store-cupboard foods. (See the teachers’ notes for examples of these staple foods.)
- As they eat, encourage students to discuss with their group:
  - how they felt working together to prepare the meal;
  - the time taken to prepare the meal;
  - the cost of this meal compared to takeaways or pre-prepared meals;
  - ways of making sharing meals fun (for example, by turning off the television)
  - whether they would or would not make the same meal at home.
- Have each group write a paragraph for the school newsletter outlining their findings about preparing and eating meals together (4C1).

OBSERVING CRITICAL THINKING AND CRITICAL ACTION

Taking collective action to prepare a simple, basic meal that is likely to support enjoyable and economical family mealtimes.
Taking critical action based on shared conclusions.

TEACHERS’ NOTES AND RESOURCES

Having some easy-to-prepare foods in the cupboard can make it easier for family members to quickly cook a meal. Staple foods include bread, flour, eggs, milk, cheese, canned fish, rice, soup, pasta, tomato sauce, fruit, and vegetables and, in the freezer, vegetable burgers, minced beef, fish fingers, and chicken pieces.

USEFUL RESOURCES

For recipes, see: