
TWO BEANS PRODUCTIONS, LLC.

Rob Barron, Artistic Director

STUDY GUIDE

For

TWO BEANS PRODUCTIONS'

THE JACK SPRAT LOW-FAT WORLD TOUR

by John Forster and Michael Mark

ABOUT THE SHOW

THE JACK SPRAT LOW-FAT WORLD TOUR was originally commissioned by the American Cancer Society, New York Division. The first aim was to give children awareness of the benefit of good diet in relation to building the body's resistance to disease. As the project developed, it became a broader survey of the nutritional value of different food groups, and an attempt to raise students' level of understanding of good eating habits in an engaging and entertaining format.

The story centers around Jack Sprat, who eats no fat, and his wife, Gloria, who eats nothing but fat. Jack has discovered that a high-fat diet is bad for Gloria's health. He tries to help her change her eating habits by introducing her to MC "Old Mutha" Hubbard, a professional cupboard consultant. MC is aghast at what he finds in Gloria's cupboard. He takes her on a nutritional safari through the supermarket, educating Gloria as to what constitutes a healthy diet. By the end of the story, Gloria is ready to give good nutrition a try, and Jack has learned a few things as well.

ABOUT THE STUDY GUIDE

This study guide underscores the basic outline of good nutrition habits covered in the show. The discussion contains a lot of detailed information about diet and health. In the show itself, we attempted to jump that hurdle through the use of contemporary music and lots of student participation. By extension, this study guide offers a selection of participatory activities that will hopefully give students a chance to visualize and grasp the concepts involved in good diet.

EXERCISES

1. **Keep a food log**

Instruct students to write down all the food they eat in a 5-day week (1 day for younger grades). The log should include everything they ingest, down to the last M & M.

Once the food log is complete, categorize foods by group (proteins, carbohydrates, fats).

New labeling guidelines are making it much easier to obtain nutritional information about all foods. The "Nutrition Facts" label can supply good information. On larger food packages, this label gives the breakdown (in grams) of a balanced diet. If a label does not have nutritional information, there will almost always be a phone number or an address that can be used to obtain the nutritional content of a prepared food. Students can call or write for the information; or teachers can assemble it for the younger grade levels.

Students can use this nutritional information to calculate their daily average intake of calories, protein, carbohydrates. They now have a profile of their own diets which they can compare to recommended nutritional models.

At the end of the nutrition unit, discuss the completed profile in comparison to recommended nutritional models. How can the student change their diet to improve their diet?

(OVER)

2. **The supermarket as an ally or enemy**

Take students on a trip to the supermarket with the idea of finding out what is there. Make a map of the store, identifying the fruit and vegetables department, meat counter, grain and cereal section, candy aisle, etc. Photocopy the map and use it several ways. For example, on one map, point out areas of higher and lower protein; others could be the Fat Map, or the Carbohydrate Chart, etc.

There will be many places where fats, proteins and carbohydrates overlap. These overlaps are excellent points of class discussion. Where do you go in the supermarket for the healthiest, most beneficial nutrition?

3. **The Nutrition Facts Label**

A new "Nutrition Facts Label," as mentioned in #1, is appearing on packaged foods. As of May 1994, food manufacturers must supply nutritional information on their packages or, if the package is too small, supply a phone number or address for obtaining nutritional information about the food. This new label is very informative, and students need to learn to read it and recognize its value so that they can use it to select a food and analyze it for its nutritional benefits.

One aspect of the food label is the use of measurements as they relate to food. How much is a **gram**? What is a **milligram**? Using beads and a gram scale, graphically illustrate common amounts. Students can weigh out the daily amounts of fat (65 grams), carbohydrates (300 grams), sodium (2400 milligrams) contained in a 2000 calorie diet.

4. **The cause and effect relationship of food and your body**

The *JACK SPRAT* show deals in part with the fact that the food you eat can change the way you feel. Students can have fun examining the properties of food that promote good health.

Have students select a food and write a poem about it. What's nutritionally good or bad about it? How does it taste? What does it look like? Where does it come from? How does one prepare it? What benefits does it give to your body? How is it detrimental?

5. **Have a cooking class**

Many schools do some kind of cooking with the class around Thanksgiving time. Use the cooking lesson as an opportunity to have a nutrition discussion.

Fairy tales use a lot of food and present opportunities for cooking and, by extension, nutritional examination. Read or tell the story, *Stone Soup*, and make some in your classroom. Have children bring an ingredient from home to add to the kettle (don't forget to start with a nice, clean stone).

DISCUSSION TOPICS

How does food get digested?

How does digested food get distributed?

The blood stream

What are antibodies, and how does the immune system work?

What kinds of foods help the immune system to be strong?

VOCABULARY

antibody

calorie

carbohydrate

cell

cruciferous

diet

digestion

fat

fiber

food

gram

health

immune system

milligram

mineral

mono-unsaturated

fat

poly-unsaturated fat

protein

saturated fat

sugar

vitamin

FOR MORE NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION, you can contact The American Cancer Society at **1-800-227-2345**

