Blyth Primary School

Healthy Breakfast Unit of Work

An eat well be active - Primary Schools project school

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In 2010 at Blyth Primary School, staff identified that there were several students who regularly came to school without having eaten breakfast. It was clear that this impacted upon these students in a range of ways, including having lower levels of concentration and emotional resilience than their peers.

As a result, the theme for Term 1 2011 in the Middle Primary Class was Breakfast. We began by discussing the origin of the term (that is ‘breaking a fast’), and using that etymology to discuss why it might be important to eat breakfast each morning. Although the students were able to identify a wide range of breakfast foods, it was enlightening to discover some of the food that they chose to eat each morning (ranging from cereal and toast to pancakes and ice cream to hamburgers!).

We used this information to reflect upon which were the most nutritious options, if breakfast really was the most important meal of the day. There was a range of Breakfast-themed learning activities for the term, including:

- brainstorming, classifying and sorting breakfast foods
- procedural writing of a breakfast recipe
- use of ‘breakfast/kitchen-related’ words in spelling (i.e. ‘ow’ in bowl, ‘oa’ in toast etc)
- predicting, measuring and comparing the amount of sugar per 100 grams in a range of breakfast cereals, with surprising results
- inventing and making a cereal product (that had to contain a grain, a protein, and a fruit) in small groups
• dehydrating fruit for the groups’ cereals, (considering ‘quality control’ and proportion of fruits/nuts/grains)
• examining the elements present on cereal boxes, and discussing the tools that are used to try and differentiate one product from another and to attract attention
• discussions of the implications of the phrase 99% fat free (as well as the fact that, without regular exercise, sugar becomes fat anyway)
• designing and constructing cereal boxes, containing a product name, logo, slogan, mascot, special offer and nutrition panel; and • designing and constructing advertisements for these cereals.

The children were extremely engaged in this Unit, and began to take a special interest in reading the nutrition panels on their own breakfast foods. They felt that some marketing ‘tricks of the trade’ amounted to trying to prevent parents, and children too, from making the best decisions for their own health.

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eat well be active - Primary Schools Project, a joint SA Health and Department for Education and Child Development project from 2008-2013.