# "Buying Food for a Party"

**A Sample Cross-curricular Thematic Unit exemplifying language instruction techniques**

In one of the Calgary Board of Education's sheltered high school classes for students with limited formal schooling, two teachers co-planned a thematic unit to address significant cross-curricular common learning outcomes and to provide continuity and recycling of language amongst their sheltered Mathematics, Science and Career and Technology Studies courses. This unit, developed over several days, exemplifies many aspects of best practice for language development (click on the hyperlinks for more information.)

1. The students worked on identifying and classifying foods in photos, according to the Canada Food Guide groups. They used their iPads to complete graphic organizers. They had to track their food intake for one day in a journal and figure out if they'd had enough servings from each food group.

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|---|---|
| Vegetables and Fruit<br>Teen female – 7 servings<br>Teen male – 8 servings<br><br>broccoli<br>carrots<br>potatoes<br>peppers<br>squash<br>tomato<br>lettuce<br>spinach<br><br>apple<br>orange<br>grapes<br>banana<br>strawberries<br>100% juice | Grain Products<br>Teen female – 6 servings<br>Teen male – 7 servings<br><br>bread<br>bagel<br>flat breads<br>rice<br>cereal<br>cooked pasta |
| Milk and Alternatives<br>Teen female – 3-4 servings<br>Teen male – 3-4 servings<br><br>milk<br>evaporated milk<br>powdered milk<br>soy milk<br>yoghurt<br>cheese<br>kefir(sour milk drink like thin yoghurt) | Meat and Alternatives<br>Teen female – 2 servings<br>Teen male – 3 servings<br><br>fish<br>shellfish<br>poultry<br>lean meat<br>cooked legumes (beans)<br>tofu<br>eggs<br>peanut or nut butters<br>shelled nuts and seeds |

2. The students were shown how to use an internet search engine to search for specific topics related to nutritional values of foods in the Canada Food Guide. They practiced techniques for inserting images and text into PowerPoint. They shared their learning in PowerPoint presentations which they exhibited on the Smartboard. Prior to presenting, students did oral rehearsals of their presentations concentrating on having topic sentences, supporting details and conclusions.


3. Students discussed and developed a meal plan for one day and then completed the paragraph (My Healthy Meal Plan) as a shared writing activity. They generated the sentences collectively through a Language Experience Approach. Individuals used framed sentences and patterned sentence starters to complete the sentences that required personal information about their own food choices.

**My Healthy Meal Plan**

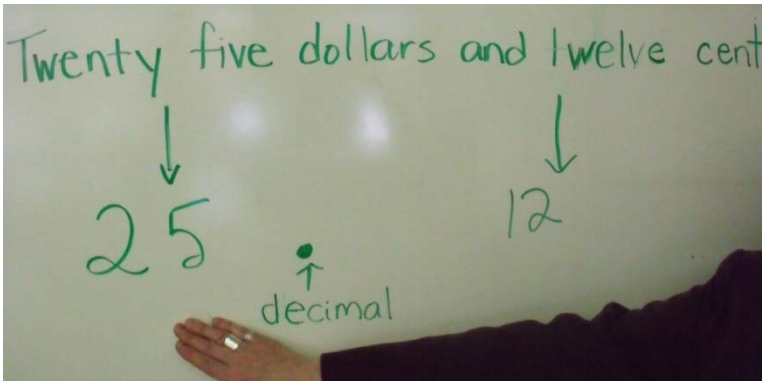
To stay healthy, I need to eat enough food from each of the four food groups. The four food groups are Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives. This is my healthy meal plan for one day. For breakfast, I am going to eat ¾ of a cup of hot cereal with 1 cup of milk, 1 medium banana, 1 slice of toast, and 1 cup of apple juice. For lunch, I am going to eat a sandwich with 2 eggs, lettuce and tomato, ¾ of a cup of yoghurt, and an apple. For dinner, I am going to eat 150 g of beef, 1 cup of brown rice, 1 cup of asparagus, and 1 cup of milk. If I eat like this every day, my body will be strong and healthy.

4. The teacher led a discussion about having parties. The students used their background cultural knowledge and described the events in their cultures when there would be a party. Students talked about what makes a good party. The teacher used semantic mapping to develop the vocabulary regarding hosting a party.


5. The teacher then focused on the foods served at parties to connect to the previous nutrition topic. The students reviewed the categories of foods and their importance for nutrition. The teacher used realia (actual food samples) to help students identify food groups.


6. After reviewing and recycling the vocabulary and concepts regarding nutrition, the teacher introduced the idea of calculating the cost of providing food for a party. Students re-familiarized themselves with the Canadian money system, by naming the coins and bills and telling their monetary values.


7. They reviewed the representation of prices using numbers and decimals.



8. They took turns pretending to buy and sell items, using appropriate social expressions. The seller made change for the purchases, while the class illustrated these as subtraction equations. They referred to the word wall chart to label the parts of the equations.


9. The class then moved to an activity demonstrating how mathematical operations are written as word problems. The teacher modelled how to complete the first exercise using a talk-aloud protocol. The students worked in pairs to complete the other word problems. Students read them aloud, and discussed in pairs what vocabulary they identified to help them to decide what kind of equation they needed. They wrote full sentences to describe their answers. They used the Grammer Jammer app on their iPads to review past tense verb formation. See sample below.

> Semira and Makra wanted to have a party. They invited 27 people from school and 29 people from their family. What is the total number of people they invited?
>
> Nabila spent $15.50 on crackers, hummus and peanut butter. She had $23.00. How much did she have left over?