

Lesson Plan (1-2)

Lesson Title:

General theme: NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS. Sustainable development.

Specific topic: Diet Identity.

Objectives:

- Understand that our food systems have an effect on the natural environment.
- Identify the sustainability of specific diets.
- Explain factors that contribute to maintaining specific diets.
- Form their own opinion on what diet is the most ethical to maintain in order to promote physical health.

Materials Needed:

- Writing materials
- Access to research materials – books, smart devices

Introduction:

This activity plan highlights the importance of being an ethical and global citizen and creating a sustainable food system to reduce human impacts that contribute to climate change.

Outline of the lesson:

1. Begin by asking your learners to think about why humans need food. Can they list a range of reasons? Food is something that provides nutrients. Nutrients are substances required by the body to perform its basic functions and sustain human life. As the human body does not produce nutrients, they must be obtained from diet. They:

- Provide energy for growth and activity
- Regulate our body systems, such as breathing and digestion
- Control our temperature
- Promote cell repair
- Help maintain a healthy immune system

2. Can your learners explain what foods are the healthiest for humans to incorporate into their diet and why? The healthiest diets have more fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, whole grains and low-fat dairy, and less salt, sugary drinks, white flour, and red meat.

3. Do your learners identify on an individual basis as following a specific type of diet? Ask your learners to try to group themselves according to the type of diet they mostly consume. What kind of questions could they ask each other to work out if they eat similar or very different diets? Once in their diet groupings, compare the popularity of the different diets. Is more than one type of diet represented? Does this say anything about the community your learners live in?

4. Do your learners understand that most creatures, including humans, usually conform to maintaining a specific diet? A diet is the kind of food that a person, animal, or community habitually eats. Ask your learners to consider what might influence an individual's dietary habits? For instance, dietary habits are influenced by socioeconomic, cultural and religious factors and individual life choices:

- Families on a low income might only be able to access poorer quality food
- In some countries it is acceptable to eat insects and amphibians such as frogs
- Those following the Jewish faith don't eat pork
- An athlete might follow a strict or protein rich diet
- A child will often follow the same diet as its parents
- Geographical location can influence what we eat
- We have access to more processed and global foods so we might eat differently to how our grandparents did as children

5. Although many humans are omnivores, choosing to eat both plants and meat, each culture and each person holds some food preferences or some food taboos. In small groups ask your learners to try to list, and write a definition for different types of diets that humans follow, e.g. meat eaters, vegetarians, lacto vegetarians, ovo vegetarians, pescatarians, vegans, fruitarians, etc.

Allow time for them to research.

Each group could prepare a PowerPoint slide to present their findings to the wider group.

6. With these diets in mind, can your learners identify any characteristics or adaptations of the human body that help us identify what kind of foods we should naturally eat? Compare and contrast consumption adaptations between humans and other creatures, for example, our teeth. How do our teeth compare with carnivorous or herbivorous animals? Snakes swallow their prey whole because they don't have teeth designed for chewing. Humans cannot swallow food items whole, but must chew them finely and mix them with saliva before the ball of food will slide down the esophagus. Carnivorous animals, such as cats, tear off chunks and swallow them almost immediately.

Assessment:

Can your learners use their findings to come to a consensus of opinion on whether humans are created to be carnivorous, herbivorous or omnivorous? If not, what divides opinion?