



Activity: Food does what?!

Focus: STE(A)M

Materials: None ; Link to assist: [How the food you eat affects your brain](#)

Grade Range: 7th & 8th

Time: 15-20 Minutes

Synopsis: Mentors and students will talk about food and its importance in keeping our brain healthy. Students will watch a video about how specific types of food are beneficial to brain function and that the choice in what you eat everyday has long lasting effects. If time permits, talk about some ways that you can better what you're eating to fuel your brain

Instructions:

1. Share with students that the topic today is food and how it affects your brain. Why is it important for us to eat? How does food impact us both positively and negatively? Allow students some time to answer.
2. When students and mentors have shared, have a mentor (or teacher) share the screen and the video "How the food you eat effects your brain"
3. After the video is over, ask students their thoughts. What types of foods make you tired? What gives you energy? What would happen if you only ate junk food for the rest of your life?
4. Share the following facts with the students:
 - Eating an apple is more effective than coffee at waking you up in the morning.
 - A handful of almonds, walnuts, or pistachios before bed will enhance your quality of sleep.
 - Dark chocolate isn't all that bad for you— in fact, dark chocolate improves your brain - function by increasing blood flow and aids in relieving stress and anxiety.
 - The average person spends 32,098 hours eating and drinking beverages in their lifetime.
 - Some of the food that we eat for breakfast make us more alert and focused by increasing our brain's sugar level. Food like whole grain cereal, coffee, milk, eggs, toast, etc. are all known to increase your brain's power to focus. Therefore, a healthy breakfast can actually make you smarter.
 - The brain uses more than 20% of our caloric needs.
5. After sharing these facts, ask students what they can change in their diets to support better brain function. Remind students that it's okay to treat yourself to junk food occasionally and that it's all about having a balance. Mentors, be sure to share what you can change too!