Fast Food Packaging

Grades: 5 – 6

Time Allotments: Teacher preparation: 1 hour

 Lesson and Activity: Three 60-minute sessions

 - Introduction and discussion, 15 minutes

 - 30 minutes for groups to perform activity and prepare presentation

 - 1 hour for group presentations and closure

Vocabulary: Packaging, Recycling, Waste Reuse, Waste Reduction

Corresponding Core Curriculum Content Standards:

Careers: 9.1.4.A.1, 9.1.8.C.1, 9.1.8.D.3

Language Arts: 3.2.5/6 C, 3.2.5/6 D.4., 3.3.5/6 A, 3.3.5/6 B.

Social Studies: 6.1.4.C.2, 6.1.4.C.6, 6.1.4.C.8, 6.1.4.C.9

Objectives:

Students will –

* Identify reasons for certain types of packaging of fast or convenient food items;
* Identify differences in packaging between foods served on-site and takeout foods; and
* Describe ways to reduce fast foods packaging.
* Observe, document and discuss data collected at an eatery;
* Work cooperatively on a task and verbal presentation;
* Analyze and compare collected data;
* Identify questions to gather specific types of needed information;
* Conduct an interview by meeting, phone or e-mail; and
* Write a business letter.

Materials: For teacher’s presentation:

- Chalkboard and chalk or large paper and markers

- Copies of activity description (1 per student)

- Copies of worksheet (1 per student)

For each student:

- Pencil or pen

- One copy of worksheet

- One copy of activity description

Anticipatory Set:

• Ask students to identify their most favorite convenience or fast food items. List these on the board as they are suggested.

• For each food item listed, ask students to identify the packaging they receive with the item. List this information on the board as well next to each item. Using this list of preferred food items identify five – seven types of places where students may go to obtain their favorite foods. These could include any or all of the following: A convenience mart; pizza parlor; a Chinese restaurant; a Japanese restaurant; an all-youcan-eat buffet; an over-the-counter burgers restaurant; an over-the-counter sandwiches

eatery; a diner; a coffee shop; an ice cream parlor; a bookstore with eatery; etc. Keep this

list posted on the chalkboard.

Teacher’s Presentation or Modeling:

• The teacher should ask students to describe what “packaging” is and reasons for types of

packaging and the materials that are used. Such reasons could include security, to

maintain freshness or taste, to prevent tampering or breakage, etc.)

• Explain to students that for this lesson they will work in small groups to visit a favorite

eatery; analyze food packaging and waste disposal methods at the site; determine if the

site is doing a good job of managing its solid waste and communicate feedback and

suggestions to eatery staff as well as to the class.

• Divide the class into small groups (4 – 5 per group). Distribute the “Fast Foods

Packaging” Worksheet to each group. Review the contents of worksheet and what is

expected of the groups

• Ask each student group to select one type of eatery (on the list) that their group would

like to visit and make purchases at. Once a type of eatery is assigned (i.e., a chinese

restaurant) it cannot be taken by another group. The goal is to have a group of diverse

eateries visited and compared by the students. Have them identify a specific restaurant

(name and location) that they have decided to visit

Guided and Independent Practice:

• Review expectations of the groups for this project. Each team should:

- Select a type of eatery they all agree to research and visit; Select a specific place

- Visit the eatery as a group and complete the worksheet on-site

- Identify a list of questions related to solid waste to pose to eatery management

- Contact eatery management with the questions and secure responses

- Prepare a verbal report to be presented by all members of the group to the class about

their eatery’s solid waste activities

• Review topics to be explored with eatery management and through research:

- Was the packaging of food purchase sufficient and needed? If so, why? If not, why?

- Were any packaging items re-usable?

- Were any packaging items recyclable?

- Did the eatery provide the means for recycling on-site?

- Did the eatery provide the means for reusing packaging items on-site?

- Did the eatery utilize recycled materials as part of their packaging?

What differences did you notice between foods served to people eating on-site versus

foods ordered as takeout or delivery?

• Assign deadlines for the following group tasks:

- Group visit to the eatery of choice

- Completion of worksheets by group members

- Completion of communications with eatery management

- Completion of group’s written summary of findings

- Date for group presentations to class

• Check in with the groups regularly regarding their progress

• Group presentations are made to the class

Closure:

• Discuss the following questions after the presentations are completed:

- Which site seemed the most conscientious about waste disposal?

- Which seemed to be the least conscientious and waste disposal?

- Which eatery, if any, actively promoted positive actions it was taking to help protect the

environment?

- What are your thoughts about how fast foods waste contributes to what types of trash, as

well as how much, goes into a landfill?

- Why do people enjoy ordering convenient, take-out or delivery foods?

Assessment:

• Responses to questions from the teacher;

• Participation in the group and the group’s completion of the worksheet; and

• Comprehensiveness and completeness of the group’s presentation to class.

Extensions:

• Review the structure and composition of a business letter, if needed. Ask each group to

compile a letter to the management of the eatery (corporate or main office) that they

visited and reported on. The letter should:

- Describe the group’s project and purpose;

- State their observations of fast foods packaging and related solid waste practices and

any evidence to support these observations;

- Provide positive support for actions in place that help protect the environment;

- Provide suggestions they think would improve fast foods packaging while also

helping to the environment; and

- Suggest reasons why such changes would be beneficial.

• Have students invent an entirely new way to package and distribute a fast food item.

Safety/Clean Up:

• Be sure to have parental cooperation and support for this project. This can be done

through an advanced letter sent home to parents and/or getting their signatures on the

student’s work sheets

Fast Foods Packaging - Worksheet

Name of Eatery/Store: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Team #: \_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reminder: All purchases must be fast foods items “to go” or for delivery.

Information needed for each item:

- Describe item and how many were purchased

- Types of packaging that came with item

- Materials that packaging is made from

- Condiments and packaging that came with food item

- Non-food items & their packaging (i.e., napkins)

- Ask eatery staff – how is this food served on-site?

- Does site have recycling and/or trash receptacles?

#1. Item Purchased: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#2. Item Purchased: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#3. Item Purchased: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#4. Item Purchased: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#5. Item Purchased: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#6. Item Purchased: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fast Foods Packaging – Activity Details Team #: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Mtg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Eatery/Store: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Details about this project:** This activity focuses on fast foods packaging. You and your team will meet together at an eatery or convenient store where each person will make a food purchase. Each will fill out the worksheet regarding the food’s packaging as well as information about the site.

Your team’s gathered information should address the points or questions below – all points should be included in your team’s verbal presentation to the class. You should contact eatery management to obtain information that you couldn’t get during your visit. This could be done through a meeting, letter, phone call or e-mail.

- Was the packaging of food purchases sufficient and needed? If so, why? If not, why?

- Were any packaging items re-usable?

- Were any packaging items recyclable?

- Did the eatery provide the means for recycling on-site?

- Did the eatery provide the means for reusing packaging items on-site?

- Did the eatery utilize recycled materials as part of their packaging?

- Were there sufficient/any garbage receptacles at the site in appropriate places?

- How were your purchased fast foods packaged and served to people eating on-site versus what you received as takeout or convenience foods?

- Does your group have suggestions for improving this eatery’s packaging? If so, what?

- Why does your team think people enjoy ordering convenient, take-out or delivery foods?

Project deadlines:

• Team visit to eatery of choice: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• Complete worksheets by team members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• Complete communications with eatery management: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• Complete team’s prep for group presentation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

• Date for team presentation to class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_