

Ideas for Educators: Student Activities for Breakfast Time

Remember, students can be empowered too. Increase School Breakfast participation by teaching students about the importance of eating breakfast and about how to make nutritious and healthy food choices.

The Breakfast in the Classroom Alternative Meal Service Model provides an excellent opportunity to fuse breakfast with learning.

Ideas for Integrating Breakfast in the Classroom with Instruction:

- **Read Aloud Time**—Read to students from a picture or chapter book while they are eating. Once a week, read a book that has to do with nutrition and/or being physically active. Students may also enjoy listening to books on tape.
- **Combine Breakfast and DEAR (Drop Everything and Read)**—Allow students time for self-selected silent reading while they eat.
- **Practice Math Facts**—While eating, consider playing a game with flash cards (e.g., Around the World) where two students race to give the answer to the math class and the student who wins moves on.
- **Practice Spelling Words**—While eating, consider playing a game with words (e.g., Sparkle) where students take turns giving the next letter in a spelling word until it is spelled correctly.
- **Show Instructional Media (e.g., television programming or DVDs)**—View content relevant to what the students are learning while students are eating.
- **School News Program**—Do you have a school news program? If not, consider starting one. Have classes take turns recording a school news program. Create DVDs and distribute school-wide, let students watch the school news while eating breakfast.
- **Current Events**—During breakfast provide students with articles related to current events. Prepare copies of newspaper editions and/or record news stories. During breakfast have students discuss and debate current events.
- **Life Skills/Character Education**—Use breakfast time to learn about important Character Education skills. Apply the skills to the context of eating school breakfast (e.g., when students help to serve and clean-up breakfast, they are learning about “responsibility”).
- **Food Pyramid Sort and Log**—Teach students how to eat healthy by using the Food Pyramid as a guide; discuss the importance of variety and balance. Provide younger students with Food Group Sorting Placemats (to make the placemat: on construction paper, create a five-column chart, label it with the five Food Groups, and laminate). Students can use the placemats while they eat breakfast and sort the items in their daily breakfast into the proper food groups as they are eating. If the chart is laminated, students could even create tally marks on the sorting chart using a dry-erase marker.
- **Vocabulary Development**—Work with the words that the students are learning as they enjoy their breakfast. Students can: List the names of the foods they are eating and put them in alphabetical order, study the history of the food, list adjectives that describe the food and list verbs that describe the way that they eat the food.
- **Demonstrations**—Use breakfast time to demonstrate something that you will be teaching about later. Perhaps you are going to demonstrate how to write a Personal Narrative, have the students watch your demonstration while they eat. Science demonstrations work well too.
- **Fine Arts**—As they are eating, have students listen and react to a variety of music or view and discuss a slideshow of art collections.
- **Presentations**—Have students give book reports, speeches or small group presentations during breakfast.

- Family Breakfast—Once a month, invite family members for breakfast. Display student work and portfolios which can be reviewed during breakfast time.
- Story Telling or Reader's Theatre—Use breakfast time for you or students to present prepared and rehearsed Story Telling or for small groups of students to perform a Reader's Theatre.
- Literature Circles—While eating breakfast, students can meet with their literature circle groups or book clubs to summarize and discuss prior reading (e.g., the chapter that they read for homework) or answer specific questions about the book they are reading.
- Homework Review—While eating breakfast, go over the homework from the night before.
- Test Review—During breakfast play games to review for tests, such as Jeopardy-style quiz.
- School-Wide Enrichment Clubs—Enrichment Clubs are self-selected special interest clubs that allow students to be challenged and/or expand their learning in an area of their own interests. Enrichment activities that involve listening, speaking, studying or researching can be conducted during breakfast.
- Classroom Guests—Invite guest speakers to talk during breakfast (e.g., school nurse or social worker) and share about a variety of topics (e.g., bullying, healthy living, eating, relationships).
- Class Meetings—Use breakfast time to conduct your class meeting. During class meeting students are assigned new class jobs, class rules are discussed and reinforced, upcoming events are reviewed and class "business" is conducted.
- Mind Puzzles and Riddles—Post mind puzzles and riddles (e.g., Plexers) for students to think about and solve while they are eating.