

# Breakfast

## An interactive discussion

These questions and activities are designed to stimulate discussion with students in the classroom.

**1.** Write the word breakfast on the chalkboard and ask students if they know what the word means. (Break the fast)

- ◆ When we wake up in the morning, our bodies have gone several hours without food. When we eat breakfast, we are “breaking the fast.” (Fast is to abstain from food).

- ◆ Think of your body as an engine. Nutrients and calories from food fuel your body just like gasoline fuels a vehicle. After an overnight fast of eight to 12 hours, your brain needs fuel for energy. Skipping breakfast leaves your brain without fuel, making it difficult to concentrate and solve problems.

**2.** Lead an interactive discussion with students.

- ◆ Ask students if they eat breakfast each morning.

- ◆ Ask students if they skip breakfast.

- ◆ Ask students to discuss why they skip breakfast.

**3.** Ask students why it is important to eat breakfast.

- ◆ Remind students how important it is to eat breakfast:

- Your body needs to be refueled after an eight to 12 hour fast (sleeping).

- Breakfast skippers are often more tired, irritable and restless than those that eat breakfast.

- Eating breakfast helps with weight control. When you eat breakfast, you are less likely to overeat later in the day. Let students know that skipping breakfast has been linked to obesity.

- People who eat breakfast are ready to learn. Their brains are ready for problem solving, concentrating and memorizing.

*(As a teacher, you have probably experienced the difference in students who eat breakfast compared to those who skip it. Discuss with students your experiences as a teacher).*

**4.** Have students take turns writing on the chalkboard some non-conventional breakfast foods that they have

eaten or are willing to try for breakfast. Pizza is a good example.

- ◆ Remind students that it is important to eat something. It doesn't necessarily have to be typical breakfast foods.

**5.** Ask students to discuss a time when they were rushed and didn't feel like they had time for breakfast. What are some foods they could have eaten on the run? Examples include:

- ◆ Cheese and crackers,

- ◆ Fresh fruit,

- ◆ Fresh vegetables,

- ◆ Low-fat yogurt,

- ◆ Fruit smoothies made the night before, and

- ◆ Whole-grain toast and juice.

**6.** Ask students if fast, convenience foods are a good choice for breakfast.

- ◆ Convenience foods, such as cereal bars and toaster pastries, are sometimes okay. While these foods are often low in nutritional value and high in fat and sugar, they are better than no breakfast at all. There are many quick and easy breakfast foods that have more nutritional value (cereal and milk, juice and whole-grain toast, etc.)

- ◆ If students do choose a convenience food, remind them to add low-fat milk or juice to boost the nutritional value of their breakfast.

- ◆ Remind students to read food labels to make healthier choices. Find foods that are high in vitamins and low in fat and sugar.

**7.** Have students stand by their desks and do a stretching exercise. Have them reach for the sky, reach in front of them, and then reach for the floor. Have them do their own freestyle stretches.

- ◆ Remind students that everything they just did requires energy. We get energy from the food we eat.

- ◆ Remind students that it is important to take time for breakfast every morning! Breakfast will give them the energy they need to get through the morning.

