Eating on a budget

1. Ask students what “budget” means to them.
   - Ask students if they know the actual definition of budget. Have students look up the definition in the dictionary and discuss.
   
   **Definition:** Generally refers to a list of all planned expenses and income. It is a plan for saving and spending.

2. In what areas do they have budgets at home?
   - Clothing, groceries, entertainment, etc.

3. Ask students to provide ideas on ways to make the most of their food budget.
   - Eat out less often
   - If you eat out, share a meal with a friend
   - Store foods properly to avoid spoilage and waste

4. Ask students how they can save money at the grocery store.
   - Plan menus and shopping lists in advance
   - Check what is on hand at home while making grocery list
   - Decrease trips to the store and shop once a week
   - Buy store brands
   - Use grocery ads and buy items you will use when they are on sale
   - Use coupons only for items you normally buy
   - Use unit pricing to compare costs

5. Ask students what other ideas they have on ways to stretch the family food budget.
   - Plant a garden
   - Shop at farmers markets
   - Buy in bulk if prices are lower
   - Plan and use leftovers
   - Decrease impulse buying and unnecessary purchases
   - Buy only what you need

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**Fun ways to learn about stretching food dollars**

Have students bring in grocery ads and coupons. Give each student or group of students a budget for certain types of families. (For example: Two parents and three children; one parent and four children; two parents and two children, etc.)

Have students:

- Make a grocery list from the ads using only the budget they are allowed
- Make menus using the foods on their grocery list
- Use coupons to see what types of savings coupons may provide

☐ How might this savings compare to the store brand of the same item? (It might still cost more, even with the coupon.)