

Exemplar: Healthy snacks

How do we adopt healthy and sustainable lifestyle?

Good health starts by following a nutritious and a balanced diet. Without nutritious food, humans cannot live, build immunity to fight against diseases or lead a healthy and productive life. Moving from our local traditional food to fast food has not only increased lifestyle diseases among people including children but has also contributed to climate change. Healthy eating habits not only support us in building a healthy body and mind but also support successful progress toward targets in health, agriculture, inequality, poverty and sustainable consumption.

Furthermore, in this exemplar we will learn about a small delicacy like cashew which shows how inclusion and ESD can be tackled at school from the perspectives of four countries: Germany, India, Mexico and South Africa. India is the world's largest producer of cashews, Germany the main consumer, Mexico houses natural resources of cashew trees in the South. It produces and imports due to increasing demands. South Africa's cashew story has built a successful economy for them. These complex interlinked realities of cashews will help strengthen learners ESD competencies.

Linkage to SDGs

Many SDGs are connected to healthy food. Nutrition is the key point of SDG 2 Zero Hunger, which focuses on ending hunger, providing food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. In this exemplar, we consider SDGs through which we can work with learners to understand the key connection of health, food and wellbeing of people and planet.

Indirect linkages to the other SDGs are:

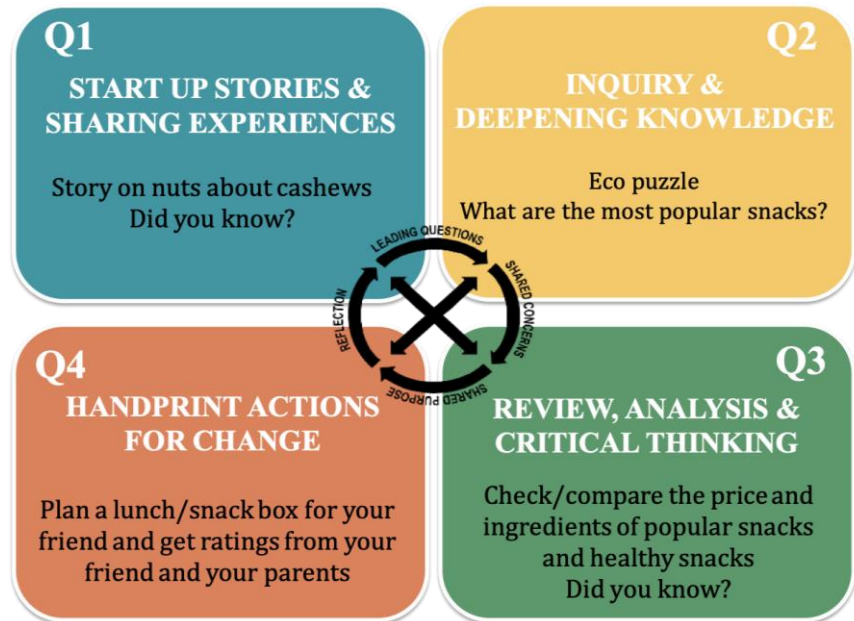
- SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being
- SDG 5 Gender equality
- SDG 13 Climate action
- SDG14 Life below water
- SDG 15 Life on Land.



Handprint CARE Pedagogy

Teachers using the Handprint CARE pedagogy could facilitate learning among students by taking them through experience sharing to inquire about the issues to critically think about what can be done and then taking actions.

Below diagram guides teacher about how this exemplar could be used:



Quadrant 1

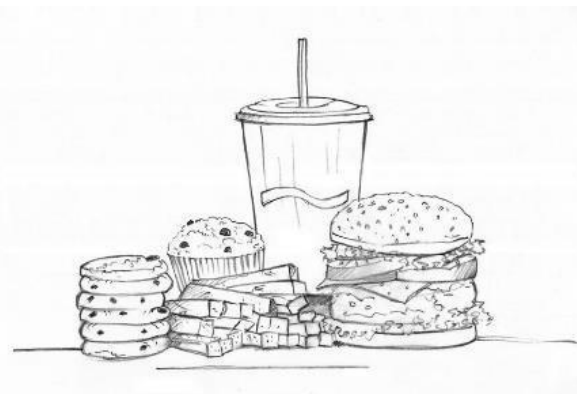
Start up Stories & Sharing Experiences

Did you know?

Snacks foods are a part of the modern diet

In the past people would make a sandwich and select a piece of fruit to take to school for a snack. Today, more and more people do not often have the time to make a sandwich so they buy a snack at the supermarket or from street vendors. The modern diet has changed and more and more health issues like obesity and early-onset diabetes are increasing because of the foods we eat when we are young.

Sweets, biscuits, potato crisps and nuts have become popular snack foods today but we seldom think about our health, only how tasty they are and what we feel like eating.



Story 1: Nuts about cashews

“Remember, no junk food or snacks between meals,” her mom called out as she drove away after dropping Rachel off to visit her Gran. Rachel loved to visit her Gran as she would be allowed to choose her snack food when her Gran read her a story or when she watched a movie with her Grandad. Rachel knew that sweets, potato crisps and biscuits were junk food but she loved nuts and today she would ask for her current favourite, cashew nuts.



“Cashew nuts!” her Grandad exclaimed, “Wow, you have expensive tastes.”

“Yes, I love cashew nuts,” replied Rachel.

“Well, you can’t love to eat something that doesn’t exist.

There is no such thing as a cashew nut,” her Grandad added.

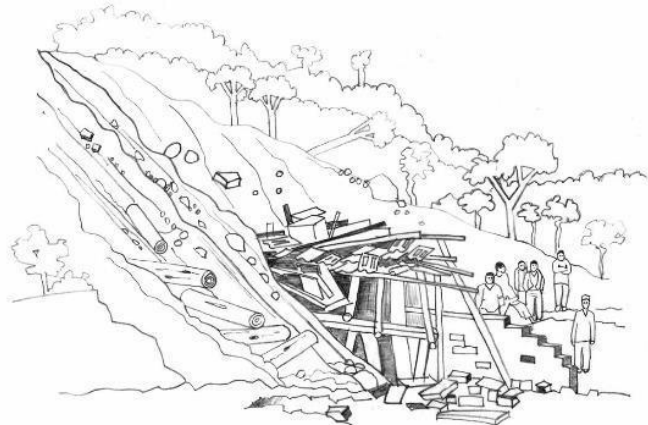
Rachel responded: “Of course there are. I had some in my lunchbox at school the other day.”



“Cashews - yes, but nuts - no. You must be nuts then because the cashew is not a nut,” continued her Grandad.

“The cashew is the kernel of the only fruit that has its seed on the outside. Nuts like peanuts and pecan nuts have hard shells but the cashew is the kernel of a fruit so you are actually eating the cashew fruit pips.”

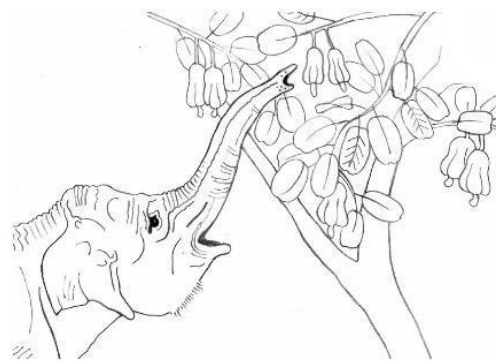
“The cashew tree was brought to India because of its deep root system that holds soil, preventing soil erosion on the coast or on steep slopes around fields and villages to prevent mudslides during the monsoon rains.”



“Elephants loved the fruit so the trees were spread into the wild forests and people began to pick the fruit and dry the seeds as a delicious food.”

“Imagine eating the seeds of a tree that came from the Amazon Jungle for its thick roots and was transported by elephants. You could be eating elephant poo junk food?”

“Ha ha! Grandad, elephant poo is just the seed’s fertilizer and cashews are not junk food. They are good for you and they are yummy!” Added Rachel.



“Well, you are right about that Rachel, the cashew is not a junk food but a snack food that is good for you. It only came into world trade when snacking became more popular as people began to watch movies and television.

This is where the bad habit of snacking between meals became popular in modern, western countries and the cashew entered world trade. Today Germans are the largest consumers of cashews as a snack food and India is one of the main exporters to Germany.” Rachel added, “But we get them in South Africa too.”

“Oh yes, you are right,” added Grandad, “And they are an expensive snack that is now being grown in the wetter, hot parts of Mpumalanga and Zululand.”

“Because they have become an expensive snack food, the poorer people of India that used to eat them in their diet, can no longer afford to buy them as most of the crop is exported. This has removed a healthy part of their diets and now their diet is not as nutritious as it used to be.”



“That’s not fair.” Said Rachel, “Everyone should have a healthy diet.”

“Absolutely correct.” Said Grandad, “That is why there are fair trade campaigns to make sure that the producers in the poorer countries of the world, especially the small plantations do not have their prices pushed down by the bulk-buying supermarkets that want to sell cashews to their customers at low prices.”



® You can look at the packet to see where the cashews you eat come from and look out for the Fair-Trade logo so that you know that the producers are getting the best price for the work that they have done to grow, harvest, shell, clean and roast their cashews.”

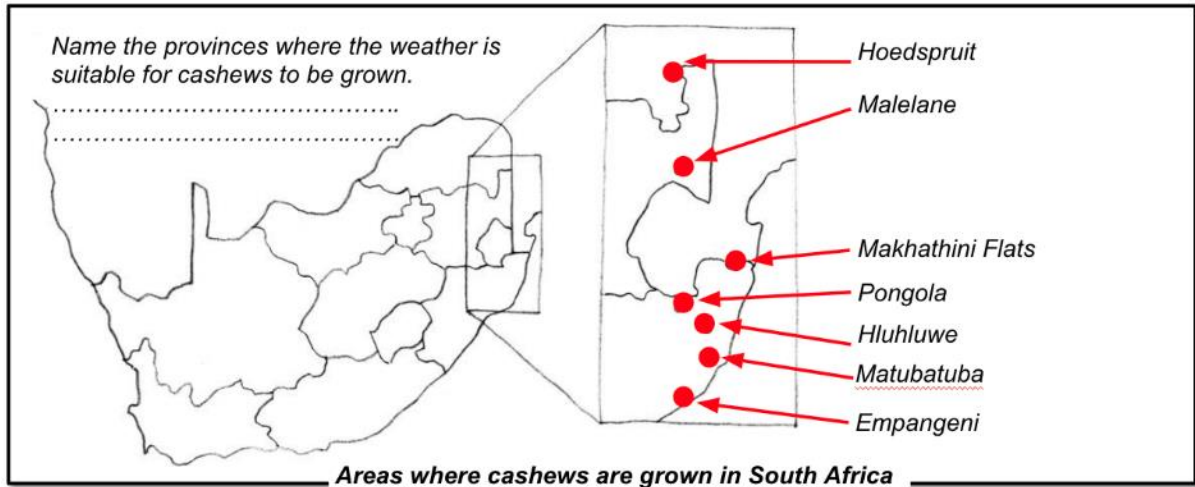
That’s an interesting story Grandad.” Said Rachel. “But can we open the packet and watch the movie now?” One last puzzle Rachel, “Did you know that the cashew is a climate change crop?”

“I heard on the news that the earth is getting hotter and that we need to use less fossil fuels like coal and oil but what does that have to do with cashews?” said Rachel.

“Correct again!” added Grandad, “And because the eastern parts of South Africa are predicted to be getting hotter and wetter, they are now more suitable for growing cashew trees, so there will be no shortage of healthy nuts to snack on while we watch a movie on the TV in South Africa.”

“Ha!” exclaimed Rachel. “I thought you said that they are not nuts!” “A slip of the tongue. Shall I open the packet while you switch on the TV?”





Using the SDG circle of CARE to raise questions about modern snack foods

Description of the situation

*Unhealthy snacks increase obesity and early onset diabetes.
Sweets increase tooth decay and infections.*

The focus concerns

What are healthy snack foods?



Quadrant 2

Inquiry & Deepening Knowledge

Did you know?

People used to bake, rather than buy snack foods

Before there was such a wide variety of snack foods in stores and supermarkets, people used to make their own snack foods.

Many people still make plates of snacks but most people visiting friends to have a party will stop at a shop and buy their drinks and a bag of snacks.

When working hard in the fields all day the Nguni would drink amaRewu, a healthy energy drink made using a ferment starter and warm maize porridge. This would give them immediate energy to keep on working as well as energy to keep working into the afternoon, enriching their digestive systems to digest the evening meal.

It would be interesting to find out which home-made snack foods are the most popular and which are healthy for young people today.



Migration of cashews

The history of migration of cashew from its origin in the Amazon lowlands to the tropics and peripheral tropics of Africa, Asia and Australia can only be understood when we look into the European expansion since the 15th century. In early 16th century, Portuguese knew about the cashew tree in the context of the root system which prevent soil erosion and cashew apples are used for the production of an alcoholic beverage. With the expansion of its trade branches, exchange of people, crops, and cultural customs took place. In the mid-16th century, then the cashew trees came to Goa (India) from Brazil. It is not sure whether the Portuguese were keen on protection of erosion or production of alcohol beverages.

In the 19th century and in the context of colonial power, many parts of tropics and sub tropics grew cashews. Newly introduced plants were kept to themselves. Partly digested cashew kernels eaten by elephants contributed to the spread of cashews from Goa to southern states in India. In Goa, fruits were harvested for their economic value to produce 'feni'. Till today, this production happens in small farms and has regional brand protection.

Cashews were integrated into the diet of poorer populations in India. Only during the 19th and 20th centuries, cashews were valued for their anti-erosional properties. In 1990s, cashews demand at a global level increased significantly due to lifestyle changes like snacking while watching television. Globalisation has reflected in cashew productions as well in countries like Vietnam, India, and many African countries with unequal and poor working and income conditions and unequal trade conditions.

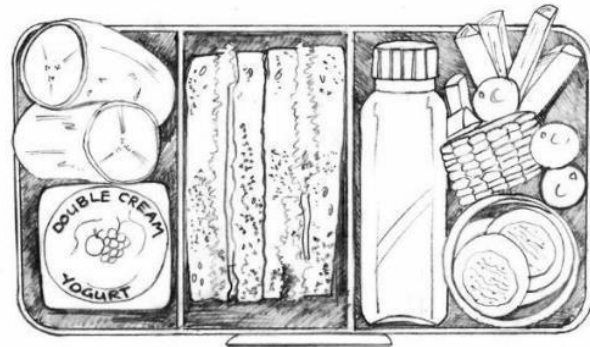
Source: Conspicuous Cashew. Inclusive Learning Material for Secondary Level (2017). ESD Expert Net

Eco Puzzle Activity 1: Assess the snack foods at a recent party or sports practice

Conduct it as a group activity, ask students to interview their friends to find out what snacks they have had at their last sports practice, party, long trip in a car, school outing or family picnic.

Task:

- Make a list of the snack foods from the most common to unusual snacks
- List the top 5 in popularity
- List the top 5 snacks that your parents would consider healthy.



Quadrant 3 Review, Analysis & Critical Thinking

Eco Puzzle Activity 2: Plan the snacks for a party

Give a situation to the students. Telling them that they have been asked to help organise the snacks for a video party with 5 of your friends.

You have to:

- Find out from your 5 friends what their favourite snacks are
- Make a list of those snacks
- Visit a supermarket and price each type of snack
- Plan what to buy using R50/INR 250/3 Euro/3.5 USD

Did you know?

School snacks are now a health business

Mothers have always had the challenge of ensuring that their children have nutritious snacks and lunches at school. As more and more fast foods have appeared in the busy lives of modern people, the term *'Junk food'* emerged to describe fast foods that school children came to love but were not healthy.

These included fried foods, hot dogs and hamburgers that are associated with the global fast food chain stores and have become global corporations. The last 10 years has seen the emergence of greater concern for school children to have healthy foods that they like and that give them the necessary health and energy for a busy school life.



Quadrant 4

Handprint Actions for Change

A healthy snack for school

Plan a snack box for a friend to have at school. From what you have learned about snacks and health, plan a school lunch box for a classmate.

Task:

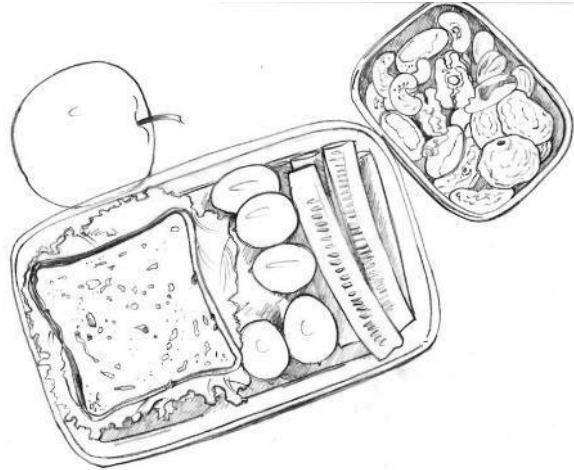
List the healthy snack foods you would provide in school.

List why you think that they are healthy options

Now make a table and get 5 friends to rate the lunch box snacks 1 - 5 stars according to what they would or would not like to eat.

Finally ask them if there are any healthy snacks that they would add to your list.

- Plan a snack box for a friend to have on a school outing
- Ask your parents to assess the snacks you have provided you friends
- Record the snacks that your friends have enjoyed the most
- Report back to the class on what you have learned and what are the most popular and healthy snack foods.



References

Conspicuous Cashew. Inclusive Learning Material for Secondary Level (2017). ESD Expert Net. <https://www.bezev.de/en/home/place-your-order/conspicuous-cashew-india/>

Video Resources

Sustainability: Healthy Snacks for a Healthy Future (Case example of a school, English language, 2.55 mts duration)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wujl_9fAxI

Sustainable and Healthy Canteens - Future Food (Animation video, Language in English, 2.30 mts)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pz8en4sMx-0>

Smarter Snacks for School Children (Case example, In English, Duration: 2.09 mts)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bKP4xluxYc>