

Picture Story: Healthy Snacks

What snacks are nice and healthy?

Picture 1



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.

Picture 2



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

Picture 3



“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.

Picture 4



“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.”

Picture 5



“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. Everyone should have a healthy diet.” said Rachel.

“That is why there are fair trade campaigns to make sure that the producers in the developing 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 on 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.” said Grandad.

Picture 6



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. 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 cashews to snack while we watch a movie on the TV in South Africa”. said Grandad. Shall I open the packet while you switch on the TV?”

Questions for classroom discussions

Teachers can ask these questions to students after reading the story, to enable a discussion in the classroom.

1. What did you learn from this story?
2. Ask your grandparents/parents if the concept of snacking existed during their childhood? If yes, what kind of snacks did they eat? If no, ask them what would they do/eat if they got hungry in between meals?
3. List down all what all you eat an entire day and at what time and ask your parents/grandparents at home to describe what they used to eat when they were kids and add it in the table below

Grandparents/Parents diet	Children's diet
Morning	Morning
During their childhood, at what time did they eat in the morning?	At what time did you eat in the morning?
What did they eat?	What do you eat?
Afternoon	Afternoon
During their childhood, at what time did they eat in the afternoon?	At what time did you eat in the afternoon?
What did they eat?	What do you eat?
Evening	Evening
During their childhood, at what time did they eat in the evening?	At what time did you eat in the evening?
What did they eat?	What do you eat?
Night	Night
During their childhood, at what time did they eat at night?	At what time did you eat at night?
What did they eat?	What do you eat?

4. After completing the table, now compare both diets (parents/grandparents vs yours) and note down what is different about both and which one of the diets seem healthier. Students can share their findings in the class.
5. Based on this activity, ask students what are some dietary changes that they can adopt?