

Food for Thought

A part of Project Eat!



Switzerland on Rye by Frances Lehnert (American, b. 1928), ceramic, 12" x 12" x 3.75"

The Museum To Go program and these educational materials are made possible by the generous funding from



**The
Hoover
Foundation**

This resource packet, companion artwork images, virtual tour of the exhibit "Food for Thought", and many other resources are available through the Canton Museum of Art website at

www.cantonart.org/learn/museum-to-go



Table of Contents

1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Lesson Overview
4. Lesson Procedures
5. Lesson Vocabulary
6. Lesson Discussion Points
7. Focus Artworks
8. Background: Food for Thought Exhibit
9. Background: Food Advertising
10. Lesson Activity Procedures
11. Fave Food Worksheet
12. Cereal Box Investigation Worksheet



Teacher Resource Packet

4th Grade Level

Food for Thought

A lesson about food, advertising, and decision-making

Lesson Overview

This lesson pairs **opinion-based writing skills** and **responsible decision-making** to learn about **food advertising** and **its impact on consumer culture**. Students will go on a **virtual tour** of the **Canton Museum of Art's exhibition Food for Thought** and **discuss** the different ways food can be represented in our culture. Students will be introduced to **food marketing** tricks and will **collaborate** in small groups to **identify** them on **real products**. Students will then **utilize** these techniques with their own favorite foods — thinking of their **own reasons** and **opinions** as to how they would “sell” it to others. Students will end the lesson by **hand-building** a miniature, modeling clay version of their favorite food that they will **stage and photograph**.

Lesson Materials

Food for Thought Virtual Tour
 Food for Thought (focus works, advertising, photography) PPT
 Fave Food Advertising Worksheet
 Cereal Box Investigation Worksheet

All lesson materials are available for download at www.cantonart.org/learn/museum-to-go

Activity Materials

Cereal Box Investigation

Empty boxes of cereal (preferably ones with character endorsements)
 Cereal Box Investigation worksheet

Food Sculptures

Fave Food Advertising worksheet
 Modeling clay
 Food sculpture size template
 Backdrop for food photography
 Any type of camera

Content Standards

Language Arts

W.4.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons or information.

Visual Art

2PR Experiment with art materials by using them in unexpected and creative ways to express ideas and convey meaning.
 3RE Recognize and describe the relationship of artworks to their social and cultural contexts.

Social and Emotional Learning Skills

This lesson aims to provide information for students to make responsible decision-making as consumers. Students will be given the strategies that the food industry uses to appeal to young audiences like themselves in hopes that they will utilize and identify them on everyday advertisements.



Teacher Resource Packet

4th Grade Level

Food for Thought

A lesson about food, advertising, and decision-making

Lesson Procedure

1) Museum Virtual Tour

- a) Students will take a virtual tour of the **Canton Museum of Art's Permanent Collection exhibition Food for Thought**. They will view the exhibition and discuss the variety of ways food can be articulated through art, especially **sculpture**.
- b) Students will zoom in on the focus artworks to segway into the **discussion of food advertising**.

2) Food Advertising

- a) Students will be introduced to **food advertising** by **discussing** any food brands that are their favorites as **consumers**. Students will be shown product containers and advertisements to see what they **recognize**.
- b) Students will then learn about how the **food industry markets** most of its time towards youth, the **target audience**. Students will compare the strategies with cereal product containers.

3) Cereal Box Investigation

- a) Each group of students will be given an **empty cereal box** and a **Cereal Box Investigation worksheet**.
- b) Students will **discuss with their table groups** the cereal box they were given. They will **collaborate** together on the worksheet to **identify and recall** any marketing strategies they see or have seen with their given product.

4) Food Photography

- a) Students will transition from the Cereal Box Investigation to learn about **food photography** by looking at the photographs of the cereals on the boxes.
- b) The instructor will begin a **guessing game** where the students will have to use their **creativity and imagination** to **deduce** what the photographers are actually using in the photographs instead of the real product.

5) Mini Food Sculptures

- a) Students will **utilize** both what they learned from **food photography tricks** and their **Fave Food worksheets** to create a **mini, modeling clay** version of their favorite food. **Remind** them of Frances Lehnert's **Swiss on Rye** for reference.
- b) Once the mini sculpture is created, the **table groups** will place their mini sculptures in the photo backdrop to be **photographed** by the instructor.



Lesson Vocabulary

Advertising: a type of communication in which businesses use to sell a product

Brand Loyalty: the tendency of consumers to buy the same brand of goods rather than competing brands

Consumer: a person who purchases goods for personal use

Food Industry: a complex, global group of all of the companies that sell food consumed by the world's population

Marketing: activities of a company to promote the buying of their goods

Opinion: a view or judgement formed about something

Product: something manufactured to sell

Sculpture: an artwork that is three-dimensional

Target Audience: a particular group in which the product and advertising is aimed



Lesson Discussion Points

Viewing of Food for Thought Virtual Tour

- What are the different ways food is portrayed in this exhibiton?
- Where do you like to eat food?
- Where do you buy food?
- Are there certain foods you like more than others?
- Do any of these works make you hungry for food? Why and how?

Food Advertising

- How many times a day do you see advertisements for food?
- Do you have any favorite food brands? Why are they your favorite?
- What are your favorite advertisements? Favorite songs/jingles?
- What makes food look so appealing in advertisements?
- Do food advertisements make you crave the food they are trying to sell? How?

Food Photography

- Why do you think advertisers do not always use the real food they are advertising?
- Are there any clues that the food in these photos are fake? What are they?
- Can you think of ways to photograph food easier? What are they?
- Do you think it is fair or unfair that they are using tricks instead of the real product?

Focus Artworks

Swiss on Rye
Frances Lehnert
1971

https://www.cantonartcollection.com/itemdetail.php?work_id=1311



76 Special
Gary Erbe
1975

https://www.cantonartcollection.com/itemdetail.php?work_id=2096



Little Italy
Charles Bell
1979

https://www.cantonartcollection.com/itemdetail.php?work_id=1612





Teacher Resource Packet

4th Grade Level

Food for Thought

A lesson about food, advertising, and decision-making

Background: Food for Thought Exhibit

Feast your eyes on these works from the Canton Museum of Art's Permanent Collection. Since the beginning of civilization, food has brought people together. Today, we continue to gather around food to celebrate, reflect, and make memories. What we eat is a cornerstone of our culture and holds deep significance to individuals and families alike. Food engages our senses, combining flavors, colors, scents, and textures to create an experience that is far more than just a meal—it's a work of art.

Food for Thought explores food through objects, people, and places. These works examine what we eat, how we eat it, and who we eat with, creating an intimate look at the role food plays in American art and culture. From still lifes and ceramics to fishermen and families, the representation of food in American art is a reflection of our unique values and histories. The pieces in this exhibit reflect a rich history of artistic, agricultural, and culinary traditions that have shaped how we engage with food today.

Consider the role that food plays in your own life. Where does your food come from? How do you prepare food? Who do you share meals with? Think about the many people involved in getting a meal to your table and the memories tied to your favorite dish. Food, like art, is a constantly evolving way for us to tell our stories. Come and gather around our table and let's celebrate the art of food.

Text pulled from the Canton Museum of Art's website:

<https://www.cantonart.org/node/5542>



Teacher Resource Packet

4th Grade Level

Food for Thought

A lesson about food, advertising, and decision-making

Background: Food Advertising

Online Resources

Article: *Food Advertising and Marketing Directed at Children and Adolescents in the US*

By Mary Story and Simone French

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC416565/>

Article: *Influence of Licensed Characters on Children's Taste and Snack Preferences*

By Christina Roberto, Jenny Baik, Jennifer Harris, Kelly Brownell

<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/126/1/88.abstract>

Video: *Marketing food to children | Anna Lappe | TEDxManhattan*
by TEDx Talks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0bop3D7-dDM>

Video: *Consumer kids: Agnes Nairn at TEDxGhent*
by TEDx Talks

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

Video: *Cereal Box Psychology -- Cornell's Brian Wansink (Slim by Design)*
by Food and Brand Lab

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8u6xdGClq6o>



Lesson Activity Procedures

Mini Food Sculptures

1. Students will have their **Fave Food worksheet** handy and will be introduced the main activity: they will be recreating their favorite food out of modeling clay and then photographing it as if it were a food advertising photoshoot.
2. The pre-determined table groups will be given one container with **modeling clay** of various colors and each student will be given the plate template to show what scale their food should be. The mini sculptures should not be more than 3 inches in any direction. Advise students to “pinch” off pieces of the modeling clay at a time so that the modeling clay is not wasted nor they use too much and make their food too big.
3. After demonstrating how to “pinch” off pieces of modeling clay, refer students to the plate template sheet. This sheet will be the guide for scale. Students should make their food in that scale as these are mini models for the real food.
4. Allow the students to work for at least 10 minutes.
5. As table groups begin to finish, give each group one simple color **backdrop** for all of them to place their mini food sculptures on.
6. The instructor will take **photographs** of each groups’ food set.

Additional Time Options:

Have each student present their food as a sales pitch or advertisement, utilizing the Fave Food Worksheet. Students could also design packaging for their product, using the marketing tricks learned from this lesson.



Fave Food

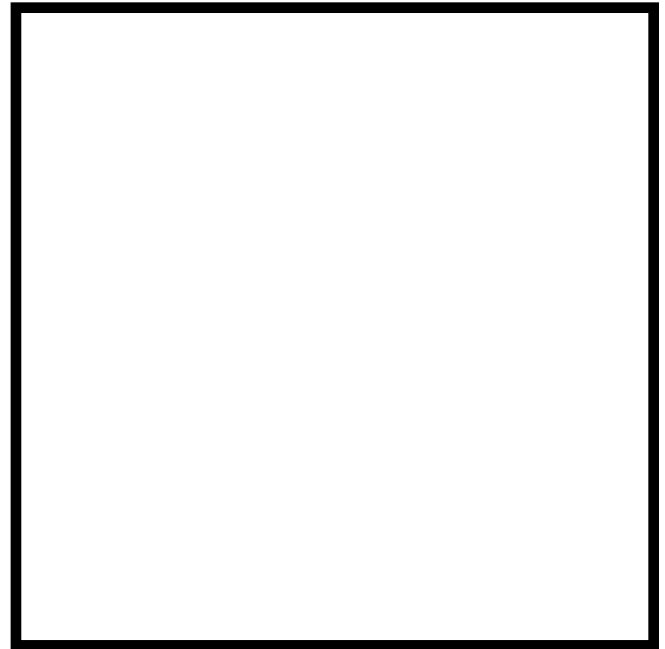
Food for Thought

A lesson about food, advertising, and decision-making

What is your favorite food?

What does it look like? Draw it below!

What makes it your favorite food?



List 3 reasons why someone should also like this food.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Does it have any food superpowers, like give you energy or help you build stronger bones? These can be other ways to get people to eat your food.

How would you get people to buy it? Would you have a catchy jingle or a celebrity have to sponsor it?



Cereal Box Investigation

Food for Thought

A lesson about food, advertising, and decision-making

Have you seen this cereal before?
Have you had it before?

Are there any characters on the box? Who are they?

What is the name of the cereal?

What is the character doing? Where are they looking? Are they holding or saying anything?

What is the brand that makes the cereal?

What are the main colors used on the box? Are they bright and happy or dull and boring?

Are there any games on the box? Any links to websites? Are there any coupons or Box Tops?

Have you watched any commercials for this cereal? Where else have you seen its advertisements?

Who do you think is the target audience?