

Food Packaging – Less is Best!

Teacher's Notes

Summary	Children will learn about the need for food packaging.
Activities	<p>Product Pairs works well as an introduction to food packaging (see http://www.climatechoices.org.uk/pages/food3.htm). It helps children to recognise the influence of packaging on consumer choice. The product pairs need to be chosen to highlight the packaging issue, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plastic v card egg boxes• Branded breakfast cereals with promotional offers v supermarket own brand• Heavily packaged Easter eggs v bar of chocolate <p>Exploring Packaging</p> <p>Collect food packaging (children could bring some from home, but you may want also to provide some obviously over-packaged examples).</p> <p>Introduce: short discussion on 'Why are foods packaged?' Summarise with headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protect foods – eg: egg boxes• Provide information (ingredients, etc.)• Help to sell the product <p>In small groups – disassemble some food packaging and encourage children to think what packaging is necessary (to protect the food and provide consumer information), and what aspects of packaging are not necessary, but are to market the food.</p> <p>Ask the children also to consider which parts of the packaging can be recycled easily</p> <p>A worksheet is provided to help record findings.</p> <p>Be a Rubbish Detective</p> <p>Another way to explore packaging is to ask the children to monitor the packaging they remove from food at home, perhaps one day or over a weekend. As well as information about the packaging, they can record what happens to it.</p> <p>A worksheet is provided to help record findings.</p> <p>Optional Egg-Race</p> <p>Eggs are tricky foods to transport because they are fragile! Using simple materials like card and paper, groups of children are asked to make a container for a raw egg. It must be able to withstand being dropped without the egg breaking. You could also specify that all material used must be recyclable (except the sticky tape and glue!).</p> <p>At the end, each packaged egg can be dropped from ever greater heights – the one that survives from the greatest height is the winner!</p>

Teacher Info	<p>Packaging can serve several different purposes, some more necessary than others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect foods (egg boxes), particularly if it is to be transported a long way, when more robust, or multiple layer packaging may be used • Provide information (ingredients, 'best before' date) • Help to sell the product (images attractive to target audience, packaged to make contents look bigger) <p>Four million tonnes of food packaging end up in landfill sites each year in Britain. Much of this could be recycled, but it is better to reduce the amount of packaging where possible.</p> <p>In some EU countries supermarkets make provision for shoppers to leave or return excess packaging – this is now being introduced in the UK. Studying the origin of the returned packaging enables supermarkets to put pressure on suppliers to reduce packaging.</p> <p>The 'Egg-race' can be fun, but very messy at the end! Keep a 'mop and bucket' handy.</p>
Timing	<p>Packaging evaluation: 1hr or homework</p> <p>Egg-Race: Variable (time pressure can make it more fun): At least 20 min.</p>
Resources	<p>Packaging evaluation: Food packaging</p> <p>Egg-race: Card, paper, cotton wool, string, sticky tape etc</p>
Curriculum Links	<p>Design and technology (product evaluation)</p>
Differentiation	<p>Exploring Packaging: Choose packaging to suit</p>

Exploring Packaging

Food is put inside wrappers, boxes and tins...

- To protect the food during delivery
- To provide the shopper with information
- To help to sell the product

Look at some packaging, and fill in the table. This example is done for you.

Product	Packaging	What it's for?	Recycling
Eezy Peezy Pizza	Cardboard box	Helps stop pizza getting squashed List of ingredients printed on it Picture of happy cartoon children, so children will want it to be bought for them	Cardboard can be put in card recycling box, which is collected once every two weeks
	Thin plastic wrapper round pizza	Helps keep the pizza fresh - stops it drying out	Has bits of pizza stuck to it - has to be thrown away

Exploring Packaging

Name:

Product	Packaging	What it's for?	Recycling

Be a Rubbish Detective!

Name.....

Did you know that four million tonnes of food packaging end up in landfill sites each year in Britain?

Keep a record of the food packaging that you use in your house for a day

What happens to packaging in your home when it's finished with?

Food product (e.g. Milk)	Materials it's made from (e.g. Plastic bottle)	What happens to it when you have finished with it? (e.g. Goes into plastic recycling bin)