



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2012 Volume I: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Consumer Culture

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## **Food Choice: How the ingredients on food packaging influence the foods we eat**

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Food consumption is both a medical and cultural need for all humans. There are many historical and cultural reasons for why we consume the foods we do. Middle School students are entering a time of transition between eating the food their parents provide and making their own food choices. With obesity, diabetes and eating disorders in children increasing at alarming rates, children need to develop a better understanding about food and the choices they have. This curriculum unit includes a series of independent lessons focused on food choice. The unit will explore both the meaning of popular terms on packaging from a scientific prospective as well as how diet trends influence ingredients in food. Additionally, the unit will focus on sugar substitutes. We will learn how sugar is packaged and repackaged as artificial sweeteners and about their negative impact on health. Activities will include: students cooking foods with all-natural ingredients, analyzing food labels, and designing their own inquiry-project based on questions they have about the subject matter presented.

(Developed for Middle School Elective Course Language Arts, Science, and Health, Middle School grades; recommended for Language Arts and Health, Middle School grades)

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