

## Grade 3 Health

**Learning Outcome:** Describe the relationship among healthy eating practices, healthy active living, and healthy bodies.



**Local Emphasis:** The people of Mishkeegogamang believe that there is a clear relationship between eating and good health. Traditional foods are considered to be the healthiest.

### What to Do:

1. Read the “Words of Wisdom” for your own information. If you think some of the quotations might be interesting for your students, read those to them.
2. Have students do the attached worksheet, listing everything they can remember that they ate and drank yesterday and today. (Or you can extend this to what they ate for the past week). Then they put each item into one of these categories:
  - Traditional (My great-grandmother might have eaten this)
  - Sugary (Eat less of these)
  - Salty and fatty (Eat less of these)
  - Non-traditional but good for you (Eat more of these)

The purpose of the worksheet is to get students thinking about the nutritional value of what they eat, as well as the differences and similarities between traditional and non-traditional foods.

## Words of Wisdom

From *The Way of the Heart*

“The native never ran out of food, he never went hungry. He had moose meat from killing moose. There was no shortage of food. He always felt good. And now that he eats white man’s food, it’s as if he is drained of life. That’s what I think, that could be because I’m an elder now. I feel empty, that I have no energy to move around.... Eating only the white man’s food is no good. I never feel full when I eat the white man’s food, only native food. When I eat the white man’s food, I feel that the meat is empty. But when I eat wild food, I seem to be stronger even in one week. I seem to feel healthier. When I eat the white man’s food, it doesn’t agree with my stomach. And that’s why I say this. This is what is going to happen to the native children. They will grow sluggish because they are not eating the food that they were meant to eat, the food that their parents would have taught them to eat. The mother should be teaching this. And the water that’s taken from the frozen lake, where it’s been stirred by the fish that are taken out, fished out. The mother could be teaching this skill to the children. That’s what I was taught.”

-Francis Muckuck

This is what I’ll say. Anishinaabe was given their own life. [Before they had ever] seen the white man, Anishinaabe was given laws and even to eat certain foods. Anishinaabe never had a fridge or storage place for food. When people wandered around with their children to look for food, the Anishinaabe lived to be 100 years old and never got sick. They had a very strong life. They made their own tea... I’ll talk about food. Their food was moose, lynx, elk, deer, beaver, rabbit. These animals were the food that people ate.

-Tommy Spade

James Masakeyash, an elder in the community who died in 2000 at the age of 104, was the oldest man in Ontario’s North. “He was a magnificent man,” says his son David, “and had all the gifts given to him.” Roy [Kaminawaish] says James’s diet was “probably 95 percent traditional. Fish, wildlife, he got his grub from all over the place, from different reserves, like Trout Lake, Cass Lake, Attawapiskat and Cassabonica. People would send him ducks and geese, all kinds of stuff from all over the place. And he ate things as fresh as he could. I remember one time I went to give him a couple of whitefish. I had just caught them. We were on our way to Oz and I checked the fish nets. But I also had a five-gallon bucket of blueberries, which I took along with the whitefish. He wasn’t home when I got there, so I said, I’ll drop in on him on the way home. So when I went to visit him before I came back this way, there he was having supper. He had a big plate. On the one side he had the whitefish all cooked, steamed, and on the other side he had a big pile of blueberries. You know? That was his supper. That’s what I mean by eating fresh - as quick as you can. You are what you eat, eh?”

Roy believes that the prepackaged food so commonly eaten today is the reason people get sick. He says, "It's the very food that you eat that's making you sick. This is all I know. I know if you stick as much as possible to a traditional diet, if you eat beaver as fresh as possible, if you eat fish as fresh as possible, if you eat everything as fresh as possible, you'll immediately begin to feel well. In no time flat. That's one of the things people have to understand." In talking about the birds of the area, he says, "I've eaten a lot of them. I eat eagles too. People feel funny when I tell them that. But the way I was brought up it's just a big duck. James gave me two eagles and I ate them. He told me to eat them, so I did. I belong to the eagle clan. Bald eagle. I eat just about everything. Everything's edible, according to my father. That's the way he was brought up."