

Drinks: The Facts Behind The Label

This project has four objectives:

1. Show you how to accurately read nutrition labels on popular dinks.
2. Offer real-world comparisons to demonstrate how much of each ingredient is in the drink.
3. Convert grams to units easier to understand.
4. Guide you through basic academic research skills.

Summary:

Humans are genetically pre-disposed to foods that are rich in sugar, salt, and fat. This mean that we crave these tastes in what we eat even if we know that these foods aren't healthy for us. This project will focus on popular drinks and expose the truth behind the potentially dangerous ingredients they contain, the amounts of these ingredients in common drink sizes, and compare these amounts with other food items to give you a clear perspective of what exactly it all means. For example, a 2012 study by Harvard University found that 2 of 3 adults and 1 of 3 children are overweight or obese and that this country spend \$190 billion per year treating obesity-related health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Understanding the nutritional value and potential dangers of the foods you eat will affect your health for as long as you're alive.

Read all of the directions carefully and ask questions when you're not sure of something. This project can be incredibly informative if you take it seriously but will require several hours of your time to read through the materials, interpret the data, and create an outstanding presentation. Please do not wait until the due date is approaching to begin. Your presentations will demonstrate that lack of effort and your grade will suffer because of it. I am giving you 9 weeks to complete this project so you can budget your time accordingly. Use the rubric to guide your work.

Instructions:

Determine how much sugar is in popular drinks by reading through the links I've provided or from credible sources you've found. If the amounts are given in grams you must convert them into a unit that the average American can understand such as teaspoons or equivalencies in other foods or drinks. You can also find this information simply by reading the labels on products you see in stores. Draw your own conclusions as to the potential danger of sugar in drinks, how much sugar is acceptable, and state what you've learned.

You may work together or in pairs/groups but the grade earned by the project will be given to every member. There will not be any exceptions so choose your partners carefully. Your final product is expected to be a creative presentation of your findings. This can be a Power Point, Prezi, tri-fold board display, research report, or something else approved by me (movie, skit, news show, etc.). Using your own pictures, graphs, examples, and research would be awesome and show what you've learned. I've provided you with several links to begin your research with but you are encouraged to find your own links from credible sources. You must use your own words or cite the author when you're quoting a specific source. You may use a few quotes in your presentation but the majority of your words must be your own. An example of a proper source citation is below. If you're not sure how to cite a source see either myself or Ms. Muc.

Citation example: (note the use of quotation marks and italics)

"On average we consume 71 pounds of caloric sweeteners each year. That's 22 teaspoons of sugar, per person, per day. The amount is equally split three ways, with the sugar derived from sugar cane, sugar beets, and the group of corn sweeteners that includes high-fructose corn syrup." (pg 27, Michael Moss, 2013)

References:

~note that all of these references are from credible sources

<http://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2012/10/how-sweet-is-it-color.pdf>

~chart/table comparing levels of sugar and calories in various popular drinks

<http://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2012/10/sugary-drinks-and-obesity-fact-sheet-june-2012-the-nutrition-source.pdf>

~information sheet from research into sugar

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/02/health/gallery/sugar-sweetened-beverages/>

~slideshow of sugar quantity comparisons

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/sugary-drinks/>

~summary of research with links to other sources

http://scalar.usc.edu/works/uiuc-food-networks/media/MichaelMoss_SaltSugarFat2013_2.1.pdf

~this is a large research paper so focus on the following pages: 27-29

<http://sugarydrinkfacts.org/>

~check out the entire site for information

~the chart on the "Nutrition Ranking" page should help you

Scoring Rubric

Research: (50%)

Sources are credible. (10 points)

Quotes are cited properly. (10 points)

Sources are provided. (25 points)

~I must be able to locate your exact source by copy/paste

Sources include those not provided by teacher. (5 points)

Presentation: (50%)

Demonstrates student understanding. (10 points)

Includes accurate, relevant, and timely data. (20 points)

Includes pictures, charts, graphs, visual examples, or other appropriate graphics. (10 points)

Demonstrates creativity and is appealing to middle school students. (5 points)

Includes information on sugar, calorie, and caffeine content in drinks. (5 points)