

Personal BEST

TEACHERS' NOTES - KEY STAGE 2

INTRODUCTION

Tying in with the 'Change 4 Life' initiative, Personal Best has been written with the aim of promoting a healthy lifestyle and to give its audience some ideas on how and why they should do this.

We follow the fortunes of our heroine Charlie, who eats unhealthily and doesn't do any activity if she can help it!

However, once 'Healthy Week' is underway at school Charlie finds herself on a journey of self- enlightenment which leads her to become the star in the Sports Day inter-house race, the culmination of all the activities of 'Healthy Week' and an event which changes her life forever.

The aim of the play is to leave the audience with a positive message and the tools and knowledge to follow in Charlie's footsteps...

BREAKFAST

One of the focuses of the play is to highlight hidden sugar in the food we eat. Using breakfast cereals as an example we examine the sugar content of a range of products and explore the healthy options available.

It's 'Healthy Week' at school, so rather than eating her normal Coco Pops which are 39% sugar, Charlie is looking for a less sugary alternative. Her mother produces first Sugar Puffs, then Frosties followed by Cookie Crisp, all of which are over 35% sugar.



The next day Charlie's mum has ditched the high sugar cereals for what she thinks are a healthier alternative. She produces a series of cereal bars and Charlie examines the labels: Nutri-gran bars are 33% sugar, Kelloggs EleVenses are 36% sugar, Rice Crispy Squares are 37% sugar and Kelloggs Special K bars are 38% sugar. Even the Alpen Light bar turns out to be 23% sugar - a product sold as being a 'Healthy Alternative'! Charlie is shocked and decides not to eat any of them

On day 3 Charlie's mum has done her homework! Gone are the high sugar cereals and cereal bars and in their place are low sugar alternatives: Rice Krispies (10% sugar), Weetabix (4.5% sugar), Bitesize Shredded Wheat (1% sugar) and Porridge (1% sugar).



The only problem Charlie encounters this morning is her desire to add spoonfuls of sugar to the porridge. But by day 4 her mother has solved this, providing raisins, as a healthy alternative to sugar, to sprinkle on the top.

IN CLASS: Take a selection of food packaging and examine the labels, finding the hidden salt and sugar content of each. Work out the percentages using the amounts given per 100g. Discuss which foods make a good breakfast ie, starchy foods such as bread and cereals.

Find healthy alternatives: If you are having bread, try making toast with wholemeal or granary bread, and use just a small amount of low-fat spread (e.g. margarine) or jam. Choose a spread that is high in polyunsaturates or monounsaturates (both types of unsaturated fat), instead of one that's high in saturated fat, such as butter.

Discuss what you can do when choosing cereal: try to go for one that contains wholegrains and is lower in salt and sugar. Explore what kinds of fruit you can add to cereals for a great taste! Discuss the fat content in milk and suggest trying semi-skimmed, 1% or skimmed milk, or low-fat yoghurt (but remember 1% or skimmed milk isn't suitable for children under 5).

Suggest washing down breakfast with a glass of 100% fruit juice as this will count as a fruit and veg portion. A glass (150ml) of fruit juice counts as a maximum of one portion of your 5 A DAY.

Try making a smoothie in class! Use fresh fruit such as banana and strawberries and some plain low-fat yoghurt or lower-fat milk, or puree a few canned apricot halves with some orange juice. You could also try adding some wholegrain cereal to your smoothie for extra fibre.

60 MINUTES A DAY

The play encourages children to do 60 minutes of physical activity every day, which increases their heartbeat and exercises the heart in pumping blood around the body. If children do this every day it also helps to burn off calories and prevent them storing up excess fat in the body which can lead to cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. It keeps their bones healthy and encourages muscle strength and flexibility.

As it's 'Healthy Week' Charlie is walking to school, and so are most of the other school children. When she stops briefly for a rest she meets her friend Lewis who exercises regularly at the local Football Academy. He shows her how to take her pulse and explains that you can tell how fit you are by how quickly your pulse returns to normal after exercise. He works out her pulse rate before and after physical activity.

YOUR PULSE



Your pulse is a measure of how fast your heart is beating. It is the number of beats your heart makes in one minute. Your heart beats faster or slower depending on what you are doing.

You can feel your pulse at certain points on your body. The easiest place to feel it is in your **wrist**, using the first two fingers of your other hand.

When you sit, the average heart beats about **80 times per minute**. However, everybody is different, so your pulse could be higher or lower than this.

When you **exercise**, your heart beats more quickly. This is because your muscles are working harder and need more oxygen to keep going. Your lungs also work harder, making you breathe more quickly to get more oxygen.

When you **sleep**, your muscles need less oxygen, so your heart slows down.

Charlie tells Lewis she doesn't like exercise and Lewis is incredulous. He reckons there must be something she likes doing apart from watching telly and reels off a long list of activities that could get her moving, including walking to school.

That gets Charlie thinking - if she walks to and from school that's 15 minutes each way, which means she's already half way there to her 60 minutes exercise a day without even realising it! Maybe 60 minutes a day wasn't as hard to do as she thought.

IN CLASS: *discuss what might be counted as physical activity towards your 60 minutes a day. It may well be easier than the children think.*

Walk to School: *it's good for you; gets your respiratory system going; works off fat; helps you concentrate and you can meet up with your friends. There are practical aspects which include finding a safe route and especially in the darker months, wearing clothes that show up. You could also discuss starting a 'walking bus'.*

Cycle: *where practical cycle. You must, however, work out a safe route and have some where to store your bike and safety equipment.*

Sport: *it's a fun way of exercising. Even if you are not very good at sport it's the taking part that matters! It's fun to play football at whatever level you play, but there are many other sports out there. Get the class to think of as many sports as they can: football, cricket, hockey, netball, basket ball, tennis etc*

Dance: *join 'dance club' or just make up your own dance.*

Other clubs: *Beavers, Cubs, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Scouts, Boy's Brigade etc all do a lot of physical activity, playing 'dodgeball', ladders etc. and going on local treks. You can exercise whilst having fun.*

Just being more active: *don't just sit and watch telly or play computer games be more active – dance to the adverts, have a fashion show, if you've got a Wii try Wii Fit etc*

At home: *daytrips (family Olympics – 3 legged races, egg & spoon, sack race, wheelbarrow race) go for a walk, visit a castle, have a BBQ, go for a bike ride, treasure hunts (in the park, find a buttercup, find a conker etc) , 'rounders' in the park, local fairs OR go swimming - it uses every muscle group and is great for cardiovascular fitness. Ask the children what they did at the weekend and count how many minutes of exercise their activities accrued.*

Keep a diary: *Ask each child to keep a diary of their movement each day and see if they have managed to do 60 minutes physical activity a day over one week. Give them ideas of how they can up their minutes and encourage them to play physical games at break time such as 'It' and 'Stick in the mud'.*

Playleaders: *Set up a 'Play Leaders' scheme at school with the Year 6 children leading different physical activities at break times for the whole school. They can be sports, such as football, tag rugby or cricket, or just fun activities like Lewis was leading in the play such as using hula hoops, skipping, limbo dancing or even bouncing on space hoppers! Don't forget old favourites such as Hide and Seek, Hopscotch, French Skipping etc.*

5 A DAY CHALLENGE

Eating more fruit and veg is important for us all. They are packed with essential vitamins, minerals and fibre which may help reduce the risk of diseases such as cancer and heart disease. So it's important for kids to eat a variety of at least **five portions of fruit and veg** every day. For a child, a portion is about 60g, which is roughly a handful of whatever fruit and vegetables you choose.

Ollie, one of Lewis's friends, runs the fruit trolley at school, which has been set up to encourage everyone to eat more fruit and veg. Ollie has an apple, a carrot, an orange, a bag of sweet corn and some raisins and by using these ingredients he shows us how to eat our five a day.



- **Snack it!** Ollie shows the audience that almost any of the fruit or veg would make a tasty mid-morning snack – the apple, the carrot, the orange or the raisins and would count as one portion towards your five a day.
- **Dip it!** You can also dip the carrot in something tasty like humous, salsa or guacomole.
- **Veg it!** Have a portion of two different veg, such as carrots and sweetcorn, with your chicken for supper. If you're not used to the taste of vegetables then hide it in gravy.
- **Add it!** Cut the veg up small and add them to a sauce, such as Bolognaise or a curry. You'll never know they're there!
- **Sprinkle it!** Add chopped apple, banana or a handful of sultanas or raisins to your cereal in the morning instead of sugar.
- **Drink it!** The apple, the carrot and the orange can all be juiced to make a lovely drink. You can experiment with a mixture of different fruit to make a tasty smoothie.

Ollie sums up: Snack it, Dip it, Veg it, Add it, Sprinkle it and Drink it. He teaches the audience actions throughout this section to remind them of each option.

Charlie realises that having her five a day is easier than she thinks: if she has an banana at break and a glass of orange juice and a glass of apple juice she has already notched up three of her five a day, and if she has a school dinner that would be a full house because 'every school dinner contains at least two of your five a day!'

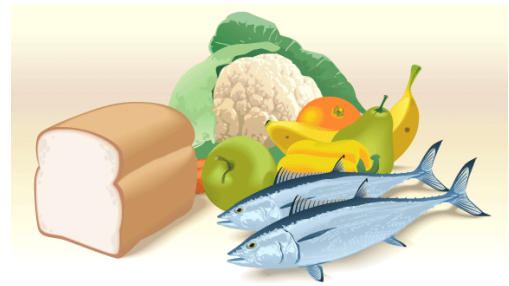
IN CLASS: Discuss how you can get your five portions of fruit and veg a day. Suggest canned and frozen fruit and veg, 100% juice and dried fruit and veg which are often overlooked. They all count towards 5 A DAY as well as fresh produce. See what alternatives the class can come up with to replace chocolate snacks or crisps

A BALANCED DIET

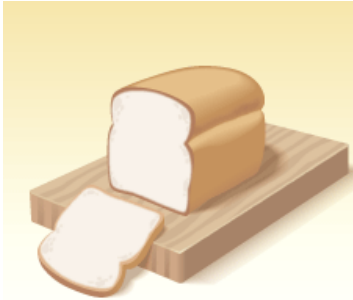
Our bodies need a balanced diet to work properly. Good health involves drinking enough water and eating the right amount of items from the four main food groups.

The four main food groups are carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals. Each of them performs a specific function for our bodies.

At school, a special guest has come to talk to the children about healthy eating; it's Kevin Rooney, ex-pupil and local footballing star! He gives the children a run-down on what they need to eat to keep healthy.

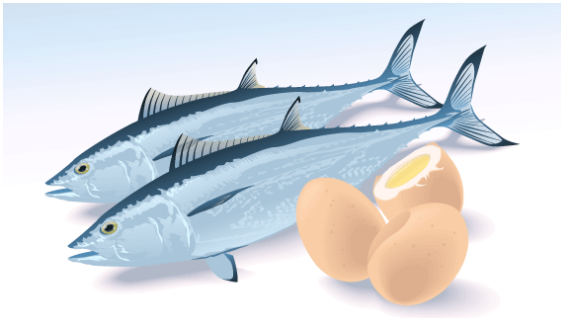


Carbohydrates



Carbohydrates give us energy. They are found in foods such as **bread, potatoes, rice** and **pasta** and we need them when we take part in a lot of physical activity.

Proteins



Proteins help our bodies to build our muscles and when we're injured to repair ourselves. They are found in foods such as **fish, meat, nuts, seeds, eggs** and **cheese**.

Fats



Fats give our bodies energy that can be stored and provide a fat layer under our skin to keep us warm. We need a certain amount of fat, but we must be wary of eating more than we need as it will be stored in the body until it's needed. Fats are found in foods such as **butter, cheese** and **fried foods**.



Vitamins and minerals

Vitamins and minerals help with all sorts of jobs around our bodies such as healing wounds, building strong bones and teeth, making blood, and keeping our brain working!

Vitamins and minerals are found in foods such as **fruits, vegetables, fish** and **milk**.

SCHOOL DINNERS

All food provided by local authorities must meet national nutritional standards which ensure that children are provided with a healthy, balanced diet and they all need to provide on a regular basis high-quality meat, poultry or oily fish. There must always be at least two portions of fruit and vegetables with every meal and bread, other cereals and potatoes must also be regularly available.

Kevin Rooney examines the school dinner for the day: it is chicken, potatoes and peas followed by yoghurt. With the help of the audience he works out which foodstuffs give the protein, which the carbohydrate, which the vitamins and minerals.

IN CLASS: *Try this experiment to see if a foodstuff contains fat: rub brown paper against the foodstuff and then hold it up to the light. If the paper turns see-through the food has fat in it.*

In class the children can cut out paper plate shapes and draw their favourite meals. Which food types do they contain? The children can then draw a balanced meal using foods they like to eat.

A demonstration of how fibre works can be done with a sock, a hard ball and a soft foam ball. Put the hard ball in the sock and squeeze the sock so that the ball moves along. Then try the same thing with the soft ball and compare results.

DAILY CALORIE INTAKE

It is widely recognised that a serious problem has developed with children's diets. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey found that:

- 92% of children consume more saturated fat than is recommended
- 86% consume too much sugar
- 72% consume too much salt
- 96% do not get enough fruit and vegetables.

Junk food diets also have significant effects on children's behaviour, concentration, learning ability and mood. Children with diets lacking in essential vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids tend to perform worse academically, cannot concentrate and are more aggressive.

In the play we highlight how much junk food Charlie is eating in the course of one day without even realising it!

Lewis is appalled at Charlie's snacking and they decide to add up how many sugary and salty snacks she eats in one day: she has a Twix on the way to school, another one at break time, a Kit Kat Chunky King Size at lunchtime, Monster Munch on the way home, a Fruit Shoot drink, a couple of biscuits before tea and another biscuit and a slice of cake before bed.

They tot up the calorie intake:

- 2 Twixes – 560 calories
- Kit at – 261 calories
- Monster Much – 196 calories
- Fruit Shoot – 115 calories
- 3 Hob Nob biscuits – 279 calories
- Slice of cake – 300 calories



That makes a total of 1719 calories on snacks alone! The recommended daily calorie intake for children is 1800 so Charlie already eats almost all her daily intake in snacks before she has any meals. Charlie says she needs the snacks because she gets hungry, but Lewis counters this by telling Charlie she wouldn't get hungry if she ate three regular meals and suggests she swaps her snacks for some of Ollie's healthy snack suggestions - **snack it!**

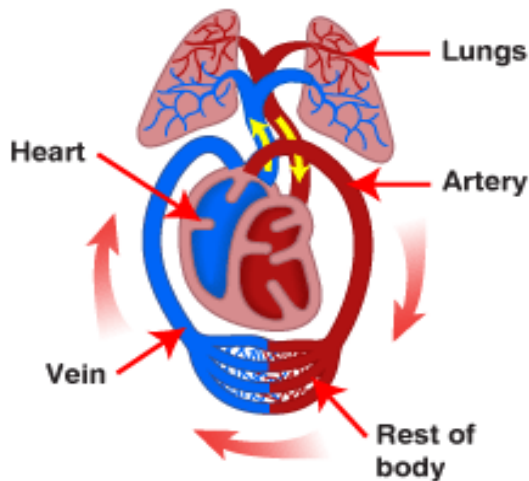
IN CLASS: Again, get the class to keep individual food diaries. The children must write down every item they eat or drink for a day and then assess how many calories they are taking in. Ask the children for suggestions as to how to improve their diets.

Ask the class to bring in a selection of food products and investigate what the calorie count is for each foodstuff. They might be surprised at the calorie content of some of their favourite foods, such as Pizza, peanut butter, sweet popcorn, sausage rolls, and the mayonnaise that appears in almost every healthy-looking sandwich!

THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

The heart is a very strong **muscle** that pumps blood around the body and is made up of four chambers, two upper chambers and two lower chambers. Blood enters the upper chambers which then squeeze and push the blood into the lower chambers and these then squeeze and push the blood out of the heart. Exercise strengthens this system, making the heart work more efficiently pumping the oxygenated blood around the body.

Lewis, using 'Archie' the life-sized model of the human body that Charlie's mum has made and a volunteer from the audience, explains to the audience how the respiratory system works.



The heart first pumps blood to the lungs. Here, the blood picks up **oxygen** from the air breathed in.

The blood (carrying oxygen) then travels back to the heart.

The heart gives the blood a second push. This time, it's sent to all the other parts of your body, including the brain, all the other organs and all the muscles.

The blood delivers its oxygen to them all, and collects the carbon dioxide waste products.

The de-oxygenated blood then travels back to the heart, and it all begins again: the blood is

pumped to the lungs, we breathe out CO₂, take in O₂ and it travels back to the heart to be pumped round the body.

The more you exercise, the more oxygen you need – which means you have to breathe deeper and your heart has to work harder - and this strengthens your system.

THE PEA CLUB

Two of the school's pupils are performing a special song about healthy eating in assembly during 'Healthy Week'. Dubbed the 'Pea Club' this is the song they sing:

You've gotta get fit, eat healthy
If you wanna stay wise and wealthy.
Good food, exercise and rest
Come on, you know it's for the best.
Just eat a balanced diet
I wanna see you try it.
Work that body, fuel it right
And then make sure you sleep all night.
So come on, be good to yourself, for health!

The words are put up on screen and everybody is encouraged to sing along!

The play concludes with Charlie taking part in sports day for the first time in her life and winning for her house. Having finally taken part she's discovered that she's actually quite a good runner. This inspires her to change her diet and her life and now she runs regularly at a local club with her friends.

AT THE END OF THE PLAY

At the end of the play the actors will hold a short (5-10 minutes) question and answer session with the children which relates to the information and issues discussed in the play. The audience is then invited to ask any other questions they may have regarding any aspect of the production.

