

Junk Food Sales in Schools

- Over the last 15 years, many high schools and middle schools in the United States have allowed **snack** foods such as soft drinks, candy, and potato chips to be sold in vending machines in their buildings. Expensive **advertising campaigns**, paid for by the makers of these products, have **encouraged** students to snack on junk food instead of healthy food such as fruits and vegetables.
- As a result, many students eat junk food for lunch and during the day. Federal and state rules that **restrict** vending machine products from being sold at lunchtime are simply **ignored**.
- Students who eat junk food every day are likely to become **obese** or to suffer from tooth **decay**. As adults, they may develop serious diseases, like diabetes, which add to the country's health care costs.
- Yet schools continue to make junk food easily available to students. They do this because their government-**funded budgets** only cover basic school services. The money they receive from junk food manufacturers can add \$50,000 or more to their budgets each year. Schools that allow only one particular brand of soft drink, such as Coke, to be sold in vending machines can make much more money. This money is used to pay for things like computer equipment, field trips, special activities, and marching bands.
- The more junk food students buy from the vending machines, the more money the schools make.
- Since 2001, many U.S. lawmakers, parent groups, and communities have tried to change this situation. They believe that schools should sell nothing but **nutritious** food at lunchtime. They also believe that **corporations** should not be offering schools large sums of money to ignore the health **risks** of junk food. However, many schools have **opposed** their actions because they do not want to lose the money they make from junk food sales.
- Many people believe that, instead of being safe places, schools today are unhealthy places for students.

Pre-Reading Warm Up Questions ☀

- What is "junk food"? Give some examples of junk food?
- Do you eat a lot of junk food?
- Do you think that children nowadays eat too much junk food?
- What is a vending machine? Are there vending machines in public schools in your city? If so, what kind of products do they sell?
- How do schools in your area pay for things such as sports equipment, musical instruments, computer equipment, field trips, etc.?



COMPREHENSION 📖

- Why are American students eating more junk food in schools nowadays?
- What is the danger to children who eat a lot of junk food?
- Why do many schools make junk food easily available to students?
- How is the money obtained from the sale of junk food often used?
- What are many parent groups and communities trying to do about this situation?

VOCABULARY REVIEW

A. Match the words on the left with the correct meaning on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. snack | a) danger |
| _____ 2. advertising campaign | b) very fat |
| _____ 3. encourage | c) company |
| _____ 4. restrict | d) paid for |
| _____ 5. ignore | e) a light meal |
| _____ 6. obese | f) limit |
| _____ 7. decay | g) good for health (as in food) |
| _____ 8. budget | h) be against; not support or agree with |
| _____ 9. funded | i) series of activities for selling something |
| _____ 10. nutritious | j) not pay attention to |
| _____ 11. corporation | k) get in bad condition |
| _____ 12. risk | l) a plan of income and spending |
| _____ 13. oppose | m) give hope or confidence; support |

B. Choose the right word(s) from the left column above to complete the following sentences.

1. Eating a lot of candy will make your teeth _____.
2. A _____ diet includes a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables.
3. The toy company is planning a very big _____ before Christmas.
4. If you _____ the doctor's advice, you will not get better.
5. If you _____ the government, you can vote for someone else in the next election.

DEBATE IT

Below are two topics to debate in small groups or pairs. Your teacher will tell you if you will be debating for or against the idea. You will have ten minutes to prepare your arguments.

Topic #1:

Schools should promote healthy lifestyles for children and therefore, no junk food should be sold in school cafeterias, snack bars, vending machines or anywhere else on school property.

Topic #2:

Schools should never be allowed to make arrangements with big corporations to support, sell, or advertise their products no matter how much money they receive.

DISCUSS IT

Work with a partner or in small groups.

Discuss the following questions.

1. Why do you think so many children are obese today? What can parents and society do to prevent children from becoming obese?
2. How have schools changed in the past forty or fifty years? Do you think it is the responsibility of public schools to provide extra-curricular activities to students or should this be the responsibility of parents?
3. Do you think public school budgets should include funding for sports programs, music, arts, field trips, etc. or should they just cover basic educational services?
4. Do you think that public schools should ask more big corporations to provide funding for the schools in exchange for endorsing (supporting) their products? Explain your answer.
5. Do you think that big corporations such as Coca-Cola could be persuaded to change the products they sell in the vending machines? For example, many soft drink producers also make healthier products such as fruit juices, bottled water, etc.
6. If schools decide to ban the sale of junk food in their schools, what are some other ways they could raise money?

WRITE IT

Choose one of the questions above and write a paragraph stating your own opinion.

ANSWER KEY

Please note: The reading for this topic is also available in full-page format at the end of the lesson.

Comprehension:

1. Expensive advertising campaigns, paid for by the makers of these products, have encouraged students to snack on junk food.
2. Students who eat junk food every day are likely to become obese or to suffer from tooth decay.
3. Because their government-funded budgets only cover basic school services.
4. The money is used to pay for things like computer equipment, field trips, special activities, and marching bands.
5. The parent groups, and communities have tried to change this situation. They believe that schools should sell nothing but nutritious food at lunchtime. They also believe that corporations should not be offering schools large sums of money to ignore the health risks of junk food.

Vocabulary:

A.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. e | 2. i | 3. m | 4. f | 5. j | 6. b | 7. k | 8. l | 9. d |
| 10. g | 11. c | 12. a | 13. h | | | | | |

B.

- | | | | | |
|----------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. decay | 2. nutritious | 3. advertising campaign | 4. ignore | 5. oppose |
|----------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|

Useful Expressions and Transitions for Debating

Agreeing and Disagreeing

- That doesn't take away from the fact that...
- That's beside the point.
- With all due respect...
- I agree with you there.
- I agree with ---- (name).
- I see your point, but...
- That may be true, but...
- We're going to have to agree to disagree.
- I get/see where you're coming from, but...
- I'm afraid I disagree entirely.
- I'm afraid I'd have to disagree.
- I agree to some extent, but...
- I disagree with you there.
- Pardon me for disagreeing, but ...

Interrupting/Asking to Contribute

- I hate to interrupt, but...
- If I may come in here...
- I'd like to add something.
- Would you like to contribute something?
- I'd like to raise a point.
- If I could speak for a moment...
- I'd like to cut in here.
- You haven't answered my question.

Persuading

- Can you see where I'm coming from?
- I challenge you to give this a try/chance.
- I want you to see it my way.
- Put yourself in my shoes.
- Am I getting through to you?

Expressing an Opinion

- In my honest opinion...
- It is my belief that...
- From my experience...
- From where I look at it...
- From my point of view...

Clarifying/Rephrasing

- Let's be clear here...
- I think you misunderstood what I said.
What I said was... (repeat a point that was misunderstood or confused)
- What I meant to say was... (rephrase something in a way that is clearer)
- In other words...
- What I was trying to say before I was interrupted is that...

Summarizing/Concluding

- So let me get this straight, you think...
- To conclude...
- I'd just like to summarize by saying...
- Finally, I'd like to reiterate that...
- It's time to take stock of what we've heard today.
- Both sides have some valid points.
- The stronger argument/team today is...

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7. Many people believe that, instead of being safe places, schools today are unhealthy places for students.