

Teaching Ideas

Sugar

Sugar and Fruit

In 2017, the ABC published an interesting article describing how the current prominence of sugar-free diets is leading towards people avoiding fruit because of the sugar content.

Dietitian Charlene Grosse, well describes this situation stating whilst it is good to see we are interested in looking at what we are consuming in our diets and reducing sugar intake, we also need to consider that "...we don't eat sugar in its pure form — we eat foods, and it's important to look at the food we are eating as a whole". For example, whilst fruit may contain sugars they are also a core food group and contain a variety of different vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants and fibre.



To read the full article click [here](#).

This article links well with the *Year 10 Exploring Energy Sources* unit. It also addresses Australian Curriculum general capabilities of literacy and critical and creative understanding.

Suggested classroom icebreaker questions include:

- *What is this article about?*
- *Why do you think people worry about sugar in fruit?*
- *Where could you find reliable information about this topic?*
- *What would be your advice about eating fruit?*

The sugar tax

Debate on the topic of a sugar tax regularly appears in the Australian media. In 2015 *Refresh.ED* presented a teaching idea article focusing on the sugar tax introduced in Mexico in 2014. In its first year, this tax resulted in the sale of sugary drinks dropping by up to 12%.

Since then a handful of countries have planned to introduce a similar sugar tax, including the United Kingdom. In this case, all sugary drinks containing at least 5g of sugar per 100ml will be taxed; with a higher levy rate for those with more than 8g per 100ml.

According to Cancer Research UK estimates a 20% tax on sugary drinks could prevent 3.7 million cases of obesity over the next 10 years. Read the full article [here](#).

This article links well with the *Year 9 Know Your Drinks* unit. It also addresses Australian Curriculum general capabilities of literacy, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding and critical and creative understanding.

Suggested classroom icebreaker questions include:

- *What is this article about?*
- *What do you think some of the arguments would be from the soft drink industry and its lobbyist against this tax?*
- *How do you think we should respond to these arguments?*
- *Do you think this tax would work in Australia? Why or why no*

Consumption of Sugar

In April 2016, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released their latest data on the consumption of sugars. Added sugars include sucrose, glucose, fructose, dextrose and lactose which are added during manufacture of foods or added by the consumer. Free sugars include added sugars plus sugars naturally present in honey, fruit juice and fruit juice concentrates. Intrinsic sugars are natural sugars in intact fruits, vegetables and milk. According to this latest data, Australians consume an average of 60 grams of free sugars per day, with intakes being highest amongst teenage males (14-18 years old) who consume an average of 92 grams (over 20 teaspoons) of free sugars per day. Close to three-quarters of young people aged 9-18 years exceed the WHO recommendation to derive no more than 10 per cent of their energy from free sugars. The majority (81%) of free sugars consumed came from the energy-dense, nutrient-poor 'discretionary' foods and beverages. To read the full ABS report, [click here](#).



Information in this report links well with the *Year 5 Limiting Salt, Fat & Sugar* unit and the *Year 10 Exploring Energy Sources* unit. It also addresses Australian Curriculum general capabilities of literacy and critical and creative thinking. Suggested classroom icebreaker questions include:

- *What was this report about?*
- *What were some of the key findings from this report?*
- *How do you think these statistics compare to the amount of added sugars in your diet?*
- *How do you think you could reduce the amount of added sugars in your diet?*

Sugar-sweetened beverage tax – the pros and cons

On January 1, 2014, Mexico introduced a national tax on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs). Since this tax, a recent study has found a greater national awareness of the health risks of SSB consumption and an overall reduction in consumption of these harmful drinks. [Click here](#) to read the article.

This article links well with the Year 9 Know Your Drinks unit. It also addresses Australian Curriculum general capabilities of literacy, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding and critical and creative understanding. Suggested classroom icebreaker questions include:

- *What is this article about?*
- *What is the main problem addressed by introducing this tax?*
- *What do you think are some benefits of introducing this tax?*
- *What do you think are some negatives of introducing this tax?*
- *Do you think this tax would work in Australia? Why or why not?*