

**Title:** FIBER: THE AMAZING SUBSTANCE

**Purpose:** To discover the importance of eating high-fiber foods  
To identify foods that are high in fiber

**Materials:** Handout: **F-I-B-E-R**

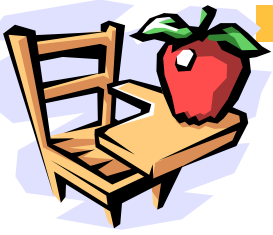
One pear and one celery stalk (optional, but recommended)

Knife (if a pear and celery are used in the discussion on fiber)

### INTRODUCTION (3 minutes)

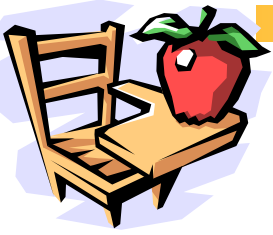
Use the following to introduce the topic of fiber.

- ☆ Today we're going to talk about foods that contain an amazing substance. This substance is so amazing that, when we eat enough of it, our chances of getting some types of diseases like cancer go way down.
- ☆ This substance is like a scouring pad used to clean pots and pans—but *it* cleans the places inside your body where food passes through.
- ☆ This amazing substance is spelled F-I-B-E-R. What does that spell? fiber
- ☆ Here are a few more facts about fiber. 1) It's found only in plant foods, and never in foods that come from animals. (Ask students to name a few foods from each category).



2) The more a food looks like it did when it was growing on a tree or in the ground, the more fiber it has. That's why an apple has more fiber than applesauce or apple juice.

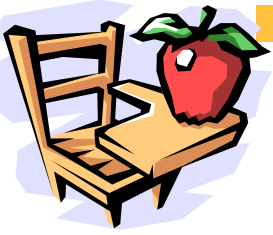
- ☆ 3) In some foods, like celery, fiber is easy to see; in other foods, like the inside of a pear, fiber isn't so easy to see. (If you have chosen to use a pear and a celery stalk to demonstrate, first circulate among students showing them the fiber in the celery, some of which can be pulled away from the stalk. Then cut the pear and circulate among them showing how the fiber is not apparent.)
- ☆ Two kinds of foods we already know a lot about are high in fiber—fruits and vegetables. Some cereals, like the toasted o's type, are high in fiber. Some breads, especially some of the "wheat" kinds, are high in fiber, but the "white" kinds of breads have less fiber. And, since popcorn is a grain, it's loaded with fiber, too!
- ☆ Raise your hand if you've ever eaten beans—not green beans, but beans that look more like cooked huge seeds, such as pinto beans, red beans, lima beans, or black beans. Did you know you were eating *legumes*? Legumes look like big seeds because that's what they are. And legumes are great to eat because they have lots of fiber.
- ☆ Some legumes have the word *bean* in their name—like soybeans and kidney beans. But others legumes don't—like lentils, black-eyed peas, and chickpeas. And probably most of you have eaten a very famous legume that's a favorite of elephants: peanuts!



## HANDOUT (8 minutes)

### Distribute the F-I-B-E-R handout.

- ☆ We will complete this handout as a group, checking the foods on the list that are high in fiber.
- ☆ Remember: fiber is found only in plant foods and never in foods that come from animals.
- ☆ Will someone read the item(s) and say whether you think the item is high in fiber? Check the item if it is high in fiber. (Circulate among the students to make sure they are correctly checking the high-fiber foods).
- ☆ Now, circle the high-fiber foods you already like and underline one food you will try to eat for the first time. (As time permits, have them share the food they underlined).
- ☆ The list is completed, so will someone read the facts about fiber at the bottom of the page?
- ☆ Take the handout home, so that your family members can also learn why fiber is amazing.



## CLOSURE (3 minutes)

- ☆ Eating enough fiber helps your body in two ways: your chances of ever getting some types of diseases like cancer go way down, and the places where food passes through your body get a good cleaning.
- ☆ Who do you think wants you to eat foods high in fiber?  
Answers will vary but will probably include family members, doctors, and media figures who promote health.
- ☆ Foods high in fiber include fruits and vegetables, popcorn, some “wheat” kinds of breads, high-fiber cereals, and legumes like pinto beans, red beans, black-eyes peas, and refried beans.
- ☆ Try to eat a food high in fiber some time today or maybe tomorrow for breakfast.