



ANZAC Rations

Year Levels 3–6

Curriculum Links

History:

- Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, Harmony Week, ANZAC Day, NAIDOC week) and the importance of symbols and emblems (Year 3, ACHHK063).

Resources

- images or props, such as a helmet, rucksack and other items that make up a 'uniform' would be useful
- images of ANZACs, maps and images of the area or conflict under study, e.g. Gallipoli or Vietnam

Location

The classroom and the kitchen

Duration:
45 minutes

Vocabulary

ANZAC
criteria
dehydrate/
rehydrate
malnutrition
nutrient
pulses
ration
reconstitute
terrain

Teacher's note:



This imaginative unit facilitates students making a connection to the ANZAC experience while absorbing an understanding of the energy inherent in different food sources. The year level is flexible: younger students will enjoy the stories and the situational task; older students can take on the extensions relating to health and nation-building (below). Ideas for kitchen class links follow.

As the focus of this activity is on identifying foods that are dense sources of concentrated energy (i.e. not 'everyday' foods), you will want to stress the situational element – this ration pack is for survival, not a part of a long-term diet.

Students need to see energy-dense foods within the context of the story: the people in this story need to survive in the cold, wet trenches, walk long distances carrying heavy packs, face periods of attack and fear. Food is fuel for physical activity. They need intense energy for fight-or-flight reactions, and slow energy to keep their bodies warm at night, when hiding or at rest.

Low-kilojoule items on the student page are there specifically to prompt you to discuss food choices for every day, as opposed to the ANZAC life-and-death experience.

Getting started

- Ensure that your students understand the term 'ANZAC' as the unit name for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps to a level appropriate to your students' age. (A useful resource is 'Dawn of the Legend', from the Australian War Memorial: www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/dawn/spirit)
- Tell a story or read a book that relates to the ANZAC experience.
- You may already be reading such stories, in which case retell the experience, focusing on the conditions and difficulties of the situation. The role of food for energy and/or for warmth becomes clearer in this context rather than in the realm of our ordinary lives.

During activity

- Students discuss their knowledge of a soldier's experience related to the conflict the class is studying. Is it always hot? Cold? Wet? What is the terrain like? Steep? Flat? Boggy? (This depends on the conflict you are studying: Gallipoli, World War II, Vietnam or others.)
- Discuss how food is important to us, and if we want to understand another person's experience in history, one way to do that is to look at what they ate.
- Discuss the energy and food needs of the situation and compare them to a typical day at school. We need energy too, but we are warm, dry and safe at school. We don't have to sleep outside in cold rain.
- Ask: What do you think these people ate? Why?

Student rationales for ration packs

- Ask the class: Do you think they had refrigeration? What about storage? What kind of cooking equipment and heat source might they have used? Discuss the limitations on each of these factors.
- Using the worksheet on the next page, students start to gather their thoughts about the limitations of the situation. Which foods are logical choices for portable ration packs, and why?

- Ask students questions as you walk around the room: How are you going to carry that? What will you do when it gets wet? Do you think there is anything in the local environment we can add to our ration packs (e.g. rainwater for cooking, local vegetation or fruit)? How long do you think this will last?

Preserving foods

- Remind students of any experience they have had preserving foods, such as drying, salting, pickling or making jam.
- When we preserve foods, what are we trying to exclude? (Light, air, moisture) Why? (So that bacteria do not grow) What else? (We need to protect it from insects and other pests such as mice.)

Extension ideas for older students

- Students work out the nutritional value of their ration pack plans. If an adult were to eat this pack and nothing else, would they suffer malnutrition? Why? What would the students add?
- Look at modern military rations. This extension introduces more nutrition science. The Australian Government Department of Defence posts lists of current ration packs and their nutritional value at: www.dsto.defence.gov.au/research/5170
- Collect the items in your pack. How much does the pack weigh? Find out what else a soldier in your scenario would typically carry, and make a decision about whether to reduce the weight of your rations. How will you do this?
- How does food science (such as the development of tinned foods, freeze-dried or vacuum-packed foods) relate to conflicts, shipping, exploration and scientific expeditions? Students examine an explorer or journey from history and find out what methods of preservation they did or did not have at that time. What about food in space?



ANZAC Rations

Links between the Kitchen and the Classroom

The kitchen class can provide valuable links to support this lesson.

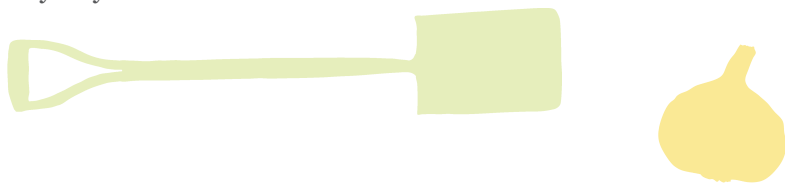
Students may already have had classes in which they preserve foods by salting, drying, storing under oil or in sugar. If not, the Kitchen Specialist might consider experimenting with drying fruit and vegetables such as onions and tomatoes, in a dehydrator or solar dehydrator. Thickened tomato paste can be dried to a leathery paste and excess fruit from the garden made into fruit leathers.

Students can learn how dried ingredients can be reconstituted into dishes such as soups and stews.

Discussion might focus on how these dishes use lightweight ingredients and can be cooked in a single pot over any kind of heat source.

Cooking sessions in the kitchen may include recipes using any of the ingredients mentioned in the lesson. Try dishes made from dried pulses, such as dhals and lentil stews, different forms of flatbread that can be cooked directly over a flame, and recipes using nuts or seeds as a source of protein and essential oils.

In the kitchen, discuss the nutrient value of fresh foods, including leafy greens, fresh herbs and citrus – would the soldiers in our imaginative scenario be suffering from malnutrition if they ate our ration pack every day for months?



Kitchen Garden Foundation recipes that may be of use include:

- Berbere lentils
- Brown rice salad with celery hearts & orange zest
- Chickpea soup with mint & lemon
- Green tomato jam
- Indian flatbread
- Preserves (recipe collection)
- Silver beet with brown lentils & currants
- Spicy cous cous

All these recipes can be found on the Shared Table at kitchengardenfoundation.org.au. Simply log in, visit the Resource Library and search by name for these recipes.

Situation Severe

You are going on a long hike over rocky and hilly terrain. There is a war going on all around you. You are aware that you might come under attack at any time.

You will need energy to run and fight. You need to carry all your food with you but you can't afford to be weighed down by heavy packs. You will need lots of food fuel for your body to have quick energy, but you can't stay in one place for long to prepare and cook food. What will you do? You will also need slow energy to keep warm, especially if you are hiding out of doors at night. There will be no refrigeration.

What should you take?

What do you think will be important when you choose what to take?

Circle all the things you will consider when you choose your rations.

What the food looks like – it should be nicely 'plated up'

Food that is light in weight but can be cooked easily in water

Sources of 'quick energy', such as sugar and fats

Whether it's been advertised on TV or not

Food that is mainly dried, such as rice, dehydrated fruit and dried peas

Nice packaging that looks good

Food that needs to be cooked in a microwave

'Slow energy' food like pulses (dried beans, peas, lentils), nuts and seeds

Low-kilojoule health products that are designed to make you feel full



Now list a few foods you think would be good to take in this situation. Remember that this is different from a normal school day (we hope your school day is not like going to war!) The guidelines for what you eat might be very different from normal life.

Look at the things you circled on the previous page to help you explain why you chose what you did. Foods I would take:

- _____
Why? _____
- _____
Why? _____
- _____
Why? _____
- _____
Why? _____

