

THE COALITION  
FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD



**Activities Toolkit**

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The [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#) is a growing network of over 230 non-profit member organizations from across Canada. We are advocating for public investment in and federal standards for a universal cost-shared school food program that would see all children having daily access to healthy food at school. Building on existing programs across the country, we hope that all schools will eventually serve a healthy meal or snack at little or no cost to students. These programs will include food education and serve culturally appropriate, local, sustainable food to the fullest extent possible. See [our guiding principles](#) for what our ideal school food program looks like!

# What is the Great Big Crunch?



The Great Big Crunch is a time dedicated to celebrating healthy food at school and highlighting the need for a universal, healthy school food program for Canada.

## Our Goal This Year

This year presents a huge opportunity. We are close to achieving a milestone in Canada! The federal government has promised to invest \$1 billion dollars in school food over 5 years. As Budget 2023 approaches, we're calling on the government to act on its promise by committing funds to a National School Food Program.

It is an important time for us to come together and stand in solidarity to maximize this opportunity. We invite you to collectively raise awareness of the government's promise with a **Crunch** to highlight this momentous time. It can be a special day, class, online meeting, lunch break, or even an intentional 5 minutes, ending with a synchronized **Crunch** into an apple or another crunchy fruit/vegetable, like dried wild blueberries.

**Together, we can make sure that the federal and provincial/territorial governments hear us!**



# History of the Crunch

The [Great Big Crunch](#) is an original initiative from [FoodShare Toronto](#) that began in 2008. Now, 15 years later, it has grown into a Canada-wide event that demonstrates anti-silence in support of a universal school food program.

**To date, over 1 million participants have joined in the Great Big Crunch!**

FoodShare is a food justice organization that envisions a Toronto where all people can feed themselves, their loved ones, and their communities with dignity and joy. The Coalition for Healthy School Food has participated in past crunches and hosted Canada-wide Great Big Crunch events since 2016. We are proud to bring the Great Big Crunch 2023 to communities across Canada with the incredible support of our members, staff, interns, and participants. The Coalition hopes to inspire students, teachers, and their broader communities to celebrate the CRUNCH, make some noise, and promote a Canada-wide school food program.

This 2023 Toolkit is inspired by Great Big Crunch activities first developed by FoodShare. It is designed to support the annual Great Big Crunch campaign, which focuses on the collective crunching of apples or any crunchy fruit/vegetable, and offers fun activities with teachable moments for students.

Special thanks to Flora Zhang, University of Toronto MPH student, for her work on curriculum and activity development and Gustave Le for his communication support for this toolkit. A great big thanks to Elizabeth Smith, RD, MPH, Hamilton Public Health Services and Luisa Magalhaes, RD, MHSc, Peterborough Public Health, members of Coalition, Ontario Dietitians in Public Health, for reviewing and providing feedback on this year's Toolkit.

## How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit offers a step-by-step guide on how to organize a Great Big Crunch event in your community. It is flexible and easy to use. Feel free to adapt it for your own Crunch needs!

For high-res versions of the Great Big Crunch logos and other communication materials, click [here](#). Check out our [Communication Toolkit](#) for more ways to engage online and spread the word!

This 2023 Toolkit is licensed under CC-BY, a Creative Commons license that allows reuse, redistribution, derivative works, and commercial use, provided that you give credit to the Coalition for Healthy School Food. FoodShare requests that you acknowledge them as the original creator of the Great Big Crunch concept, various resources, and previous toolkits. This includes any media coverage you may receive with local Great Big Crunch events.



# Why Participate in the Great Big Crunch?



It's really fun and you'd be joining hundreds of thousands of other folks across the country (and beyond) celebrating nourishing food at school!



It's a great way to get involved in Nutrition Month, organized by [Dietitians of Canada](#).



It's a simple way to show your support for [#NourishKidsNow](#), a grassroots campaign from the Coalition for Healthy School Food, calling on the federal government to invest in a universal school food program for Canada. For more ways to get active and support our call, visit [the Coalition's website](#).

## When is it?

Join us **Thursday, March 9 at 1 pm ET** for a Virtual Canada-wide Great Big Crunch. Or, you can organize a Crunch any time throughout the month of March!

Register with us and share details about your event. We want to count your crunches in the grand total no matter when you do it or what you crunch!

## Who & Where?

Anyone can participate! From student and teachers in classrooms and gymnasiums, to people at home, workplaces or video call meetings, and all across communities from coast to coast! Get on board, and get others to celebrate nourishing school food with you.



# How to Take Part

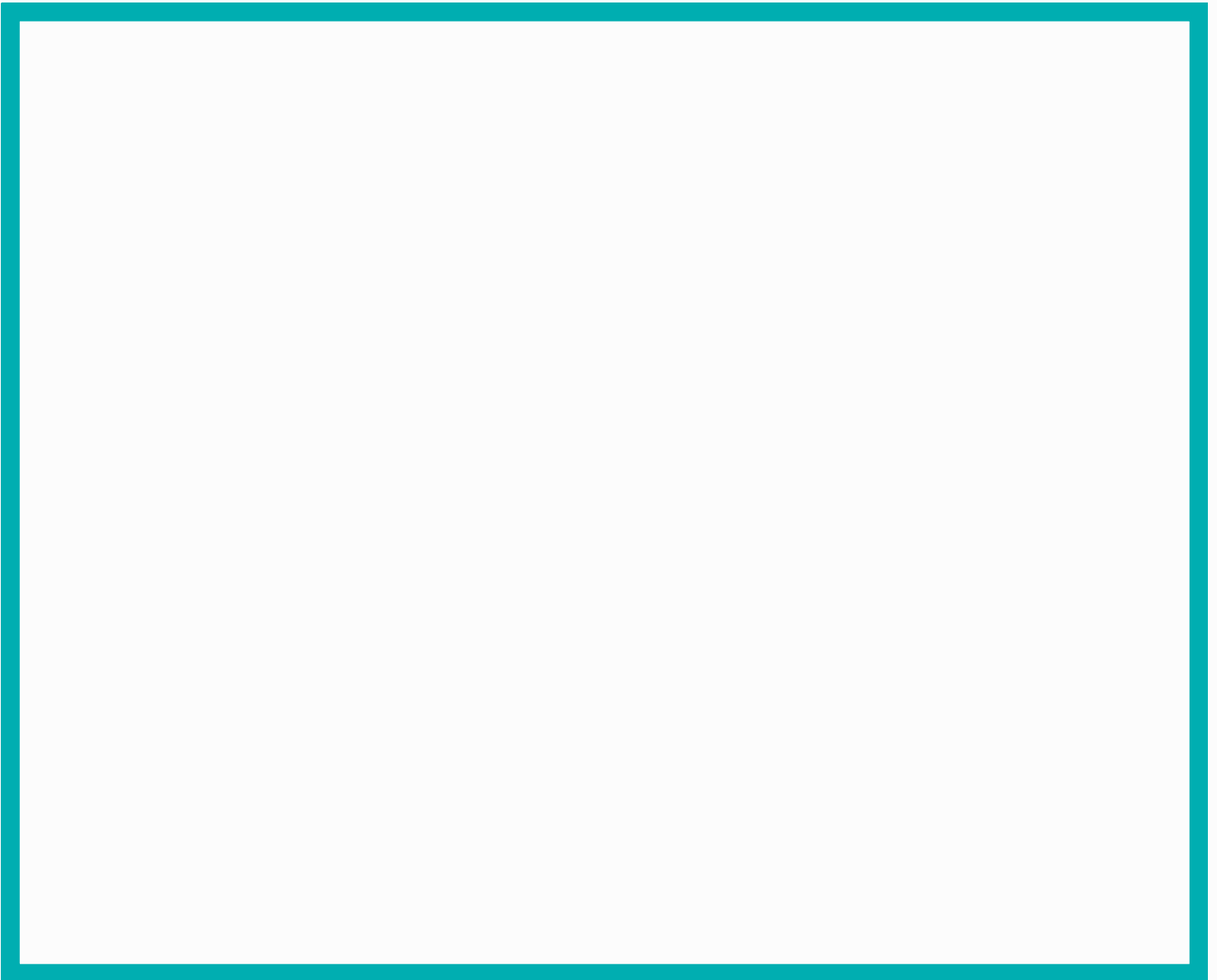
-  Choose a date for your Crunch, and invite your colleagues, friends, or family to join you! If an in-person crunch is not possible, plan an online video call.
  -  Join us on March 9 @ 1-1:30 pm ET for the virtual Canada-wide Great Big Crunch by registering [here](#), or participate any time throughout the month of March! This will help us make some noise and call for a universal school food program for Canada!
-  Register your crunch by filling out our [online form](#). We want to count your crunches towards the grand total, no matter when you do it or what you crunch.
-  Prepare for your crunch and choose locally sourced fruits or vegetables if possible.
  -  With your class, check out our fun activities to bring the Crunch to life for children of all ages at home or safely in the classroom! View [past toolkits](#) and the "Additional resources" section for more ideas.
  -  At home, at work, or online, organize a time and place to crunch together.
  -  Prepare for our virtual Great Big Crunch event on March 9, 2023 at 1 pm ET.
-  Amplify the sound of your crunch by letting your federal, provincial, territorial or city representative know you support a School Food Program for Canada! Look up their contact info and invite them to your crunch. Invite local media as well! Check out email templates in our [Communication toolkit](#)!
-  Share on social media! Take a photo of your Crunch and share on social media, which helps us make even more noise for nourishing school food. Here's a message you can copy and paste:
  -  Healthy food means healthy kids. That's why we're taking part in the #GreatBigCrunch and asking the Government of Canada to #NourishKidsNow by moving forward with their promise to invest in a National School Food Program! #cdnpoli
  -  Tag us on Facebook: [@CHSF.CSAS](#), Twitter: [@C4HSchoolFood](#), Instagram: [@thegreatbigcrunch](#) or Tiktok: [@greatbigcrunch](#)
-  Share your Great Big Crunch highlight with us! You can send us photos/videos of your own Great Big Crunch along with your story by sending an email to [greatbigcrunch@healthyschoolfood.ca](mailto:greatbigcrunch@healthyschoolfood.ca) or use [this link](#) to upload them. We will share your content on our site and social media to amplify the sound of your crunch.
-  Fill out our [evaluation form](#) to provide feedback on our toolkit and event, so that we can improve for next year!

Past Great Big Crunches:    

# MY FAVOURITE SNACK

Draw your favourite snack below! Make sure to share your creation by emailing [greatbigcrunch@foodsecurecanada.org](mailto:greatbigcrunch@foodsecurecanada.org) or tagging us on social media #NourishKidsNow #GreatBigCrunch2023.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I'm \_\_\_\_\_ years old and my favourite snack is \_\_\_\_\_ .



# Activity 1: Crunchy Puzzles







**Grade Level: 1-6**

This fun activity is a hands-on way to raise awareness around various foods and what they mean to each unique student. This activity was created by University of Toronto's MPH Student Nina Trask in 2022, and updated by MPH Student Flora Zhang in 2023.



## Directions

-  Instruct each student to draw and colour-in their favourite crunchy fruit or vegetable on a piece of paper.
-  Ask them to cut the paper into X number of pieces. Put the pieces into small paper bags. Now they have created their "puzzle".
-  In pairs, have them share their "crunchy puzzle" with another student, and ask the other student to piece together the puzzle to identify their partner's favourite crunchy fruit/vegetable.
-  Once the pairs have guessed each other's food item, ask each student to share why they chose that particular crunchy fruit or vegetable.

### Prompts:



Why is this food special to you?



Do you have a story or memory about this food you want to share?





Can you think of a way you would like to share/eat this food with your friend(s)?



Is there a name for this food in another language that you know?

## Materials

-  Stationery items: Blank paper, writing and colouring tools, scissors
-  Small paper bags







# Activity 2: Tasty Apple Names & Games






Grade Level: 1-12

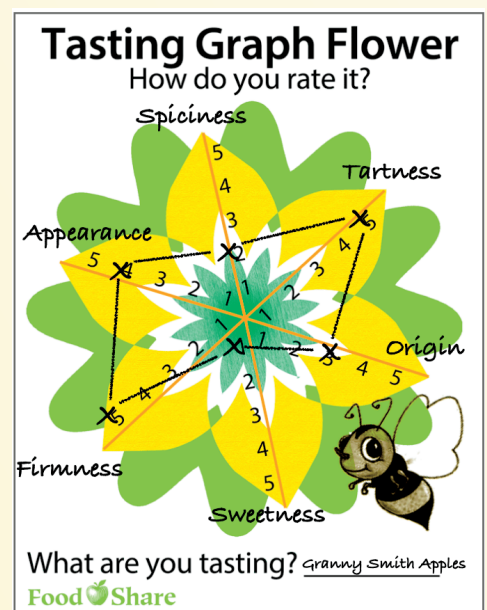
This sensory, creative activity will give students a chance to tune in on their senses and get their creative juices flowing! Everyone will be exploring, describing, and promoting apples in new ways. (Adapted from FoodShare)

## Directions


-  Provide 2-3 apple varieties and enough of each type for all students to taste. Label the apples "1, 2,..." to keep the apple's name a secret.
-  Provide students with the Tasting Graph Flower on p. 10 (one graph per apple) to guide their apple judging session.
-  Ask each student to create their own set of 6 criteria and record on each flower petal.
  -  Optional: Consider providing an example of 6 criteria for all students to use to make comparison easier.
-  Give students the opportunity to observe, feel, taste each apple variety provided and ask them to compare/contrast the unique flavours, textures, and appearances of each apple variety using the Tasting Graph Flower on p. 10.
-  In pairs, ask students to share their flower graphs with each other.


### Prompts:


-  Which apple variety did you prefer and why?
-  What factors may influence the flavour of produce?
-  What similarities and differences are there between each variety?








 Now, together as a class or in small groups, create a varied list of adjectives and nouns that do and don't relate to apples.


 Examples of adjectives: sweet, sour, bitter, salty, silly, sneaky, spiky, bumpy, shiny, round, etc.

 Examples of nouns: beauty, sphere, summer, flower, ball, someone's name, dessert, etc.

 \*A list of words to describe food (EN) created by ODPH is available for inspiration for you and your students. FR version available [here](#).


 In small groups or pairs, ask students to create unique names for the "mystery" apples by pairing the adjectives and nouns together.

 Using the newly named apples, engage students in making fun and creative advertisements, pitches, or songs about the "mystery" apples.


 Give students the opportunity to share their creations with the class.



## Materials


 2-3 varieties of apples (provided by school/teachers)


 Tasting Graph Flower

 [List of Words to Describe Food \(EN\)](#)



## Extension Activity (Optional)

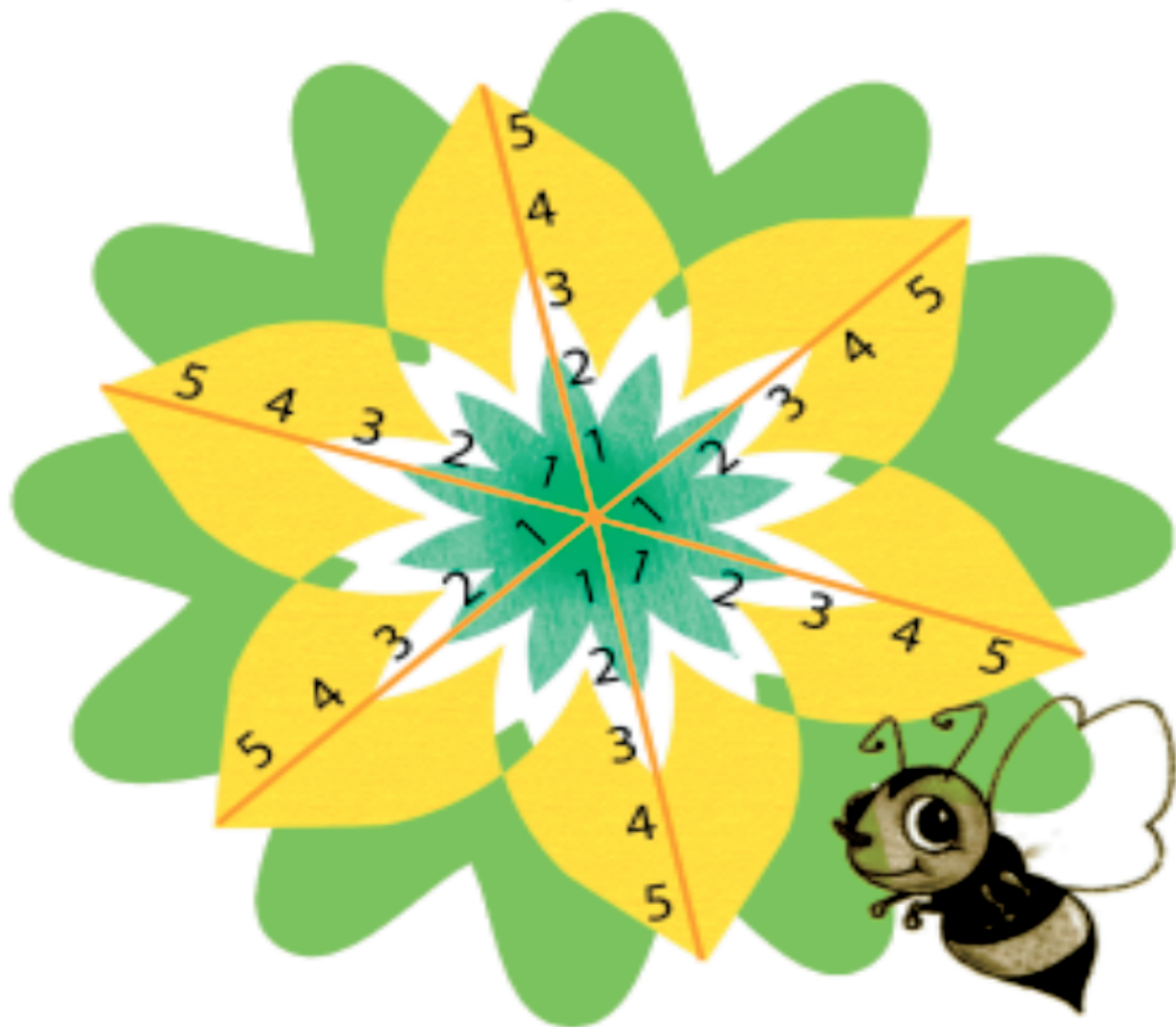
 Explore how tastes can differ within the classroom, across the country, and around the world to help student make community connections.

 Ask students if they know of any apple dishes/recipes or crunchy fruit or vegetable dishes/recipes. How would you describe these to someone who has never tried this dish or recipe before (encourage using newly learned vocabulary)?

*Print this!*

# Tasting Graph Flower

How do you rate it?



What are you tasting? \_\_\_\_\_

Food  Share


# Activity 3: Crunchy Poems




Grade level: 1-8

This simple and creative activity will have students critically thinking and learning about different crunchy fruits and vegetables, while nurturing their inner poet! (Adapted from GBC 2021 toolkit)

## Directions

 Ask students to create a word puzzle or poem on blank paper about their fruit(s) and/or vegetable(s) of choice. Students can create more than one acrostic poem if they wish and can doodle/draw alongside their poem.

 Rhyming is not necessary. Simply start each line with the letters in the word. Here is an example to get their creative juices flowing:

**C**runchy and crispy


**A**mazing carrots help your eyes see better


**R**ipe and fresh

**R**ich in flavour

**O**range, bold, and bright

**T**asty carrots are my favourite snack to eat!

 Ask half of the class to create a poem for **SEAWEED**. Explain that seaweed is a sea vegetable, and has been an important coastal food for Indigenous peoples for thousand of years. It can be crunchy, especially when dried!





 Ask the other half of the class to create a poem for **BLUEBERRY**. Explain that wild blueberries are the national fruit, enjoyed by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. A long drying session in the sun, a dehydrator or freeze drying can produce crunchy blueberries. Some companies sell crunchy dried wild blueberries, like Van Dyk's.

# Activity 4: An Apple's Journey





Grade level: 3–12

For this activity, use the provided apple-related terms and pictures to test the knowledge of your students and increase their awareness of the journey of the apple, from seed to kitchen to compost.


## Directions

-  Print off the terms and pictures on the next page for all your students. They have already been scrambled.
-  Ask students to cut out the terms and pictures.
-  In small teams, ask students to arrange them in order and then draw it out in their notebook.
-  Once complete, as a class, discuss the process that the apple goes through to get from seed to kitchen to compost.

**Expand students' understanding of the apple food cycle with the following scenarios as a class.** What happens if...

-  You turn the apple to apple pie or apple sauce?
-  You grew the apple yourself?
-  You live in a country that doesn't grow apples?
-  You don't compost the apple core?

## Materials

-  Stationery items: Notebook, scissors, glue, writing, colouring tools

Selling the apple to a customer



Transporting the apple



Eating the apple



Growing the apple tree in the orchard



Packaging the apple



Composting the core



Planting the apple seed



Harvesting the apple from the tree



Preparing the apple in the kitchen for eating



Cut these out and arrange them in order!





# Activity 5: Connection through Circles





This activity is informed by resources from First Nations, Metis, and Inuit organizations and created in partnership by the Coalition's Indigenous Lead (BC), Sue-Anne Banks.






“The Medicine Wheel represents unity and balance between all things, including living a healthy life mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. By understanding the teachings of the Medicine Wheel, we can gain a deeper understanding of our holistic health”. (Medicine Wheel Workbook)

## Part 1 - Traditional Foods

Grade Level: All

-  Provide each student with a blank Indigenous medicine wheel from p. 16 and a reference guide of Traditional foods.
-  Using this reference guide, ask students to pair up and generate a list of Traditional foods that match the 4 colours of the medicine wheel.
-  Ask students to draw and colour-in the foods on blank paper, then cut out and glue them to the corresponding colour quadrant within their wheel.
-  Ask pairs to share the foods they included with another pair, and then discuss as a class.

- Prompts:**
-  Have you ever heard of or tried these foods?
  -  What are the benefits of these types of food (i.e., enjoyment, celebration, culture, nutritional content, protein source, energy, and medicine)?
  -  Why are traditional foods important for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples?




Consider inviting a First Nations, Métis, or Inuit Knowledge Holder/Keeper, Elder, or community member into the classroom to help guide this activity in your local context.





## Part 2 - Medicine Wheel Teachings



### Grade Level: 1-6




-  Share that different nations have different medicine wheel teachings according to their stories, beliefs, traditions, and values.
-  Explain that the 4 areas of the wheel can be assigned different “attributes”. E.g., 4 directions, 4 seasons, 4 elements, 4 states of Being, etc.
-  Have students identify the 4 seasons, elements, and directions, then have students guess which colour of the wheel they correspond to. As a class, ask students to share their guesses and explain why they think certain colours correspond to the attribute. Use the provided Medicine Wheel Poster on p. 17 to guide answers.


### Grade Level: 7-12

-  Show students this [4-minute video \(Medicine Wheel Teachings 101\)](#) and provide them with the Medicine Wheel Poster found on the next page..
-  After the video, have students discuss 2-3 new learnings in pairs. Then, have students share their answers as a class.

## Part 3 - The States of Being

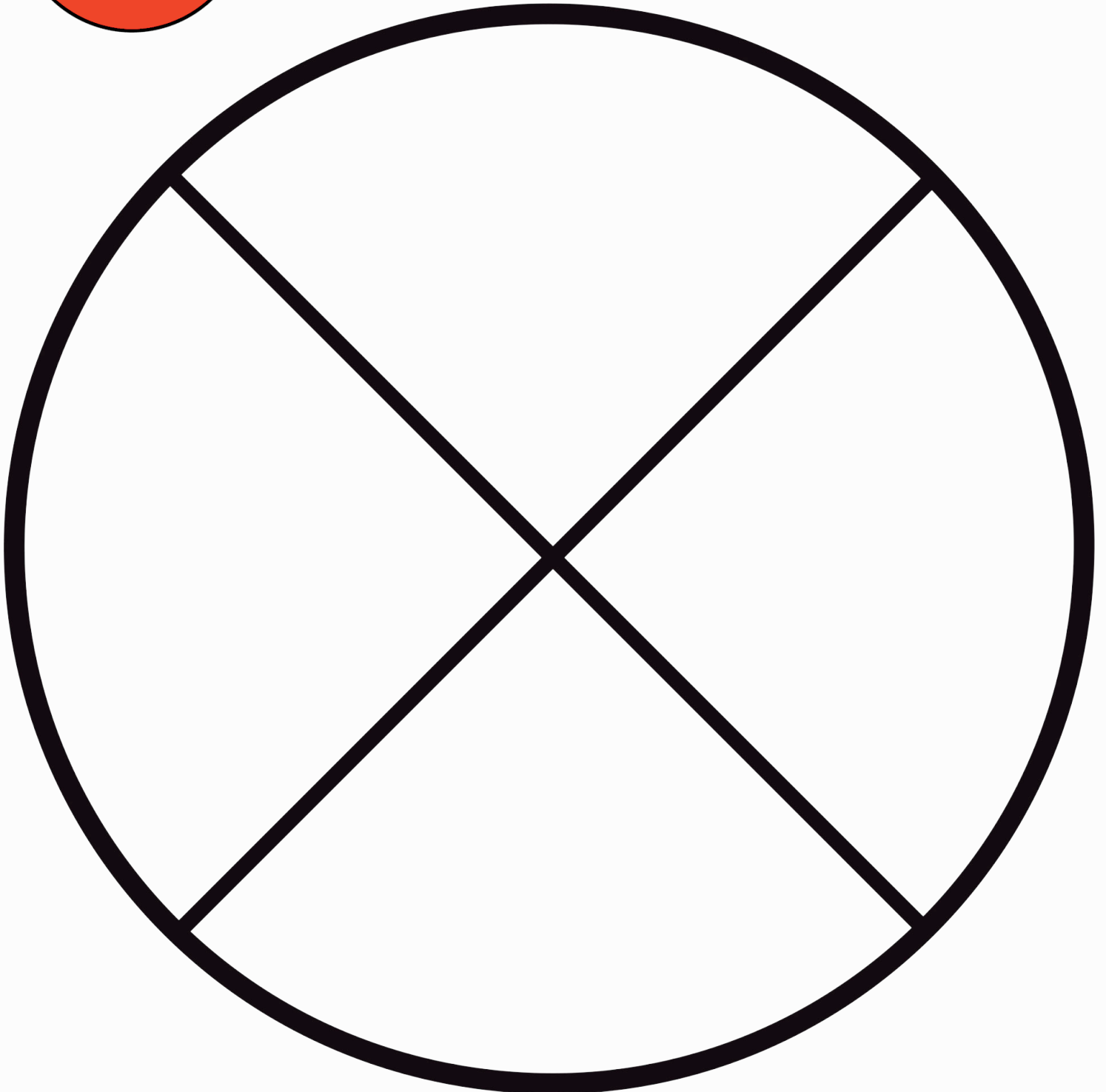
### Grade Level: All

-  To learn more about the 4 States of Being: Mind, Heart, Spirit, Body, ask students, in pairs, to generate ideas about things they do in the classroom and/or at home to nurture the Mind, the Heart, the Spirit, and the Body.
-  Have students write it on chart paper, and students can draw/colour too.
-  When done, share with the class and welcome an open discussion.

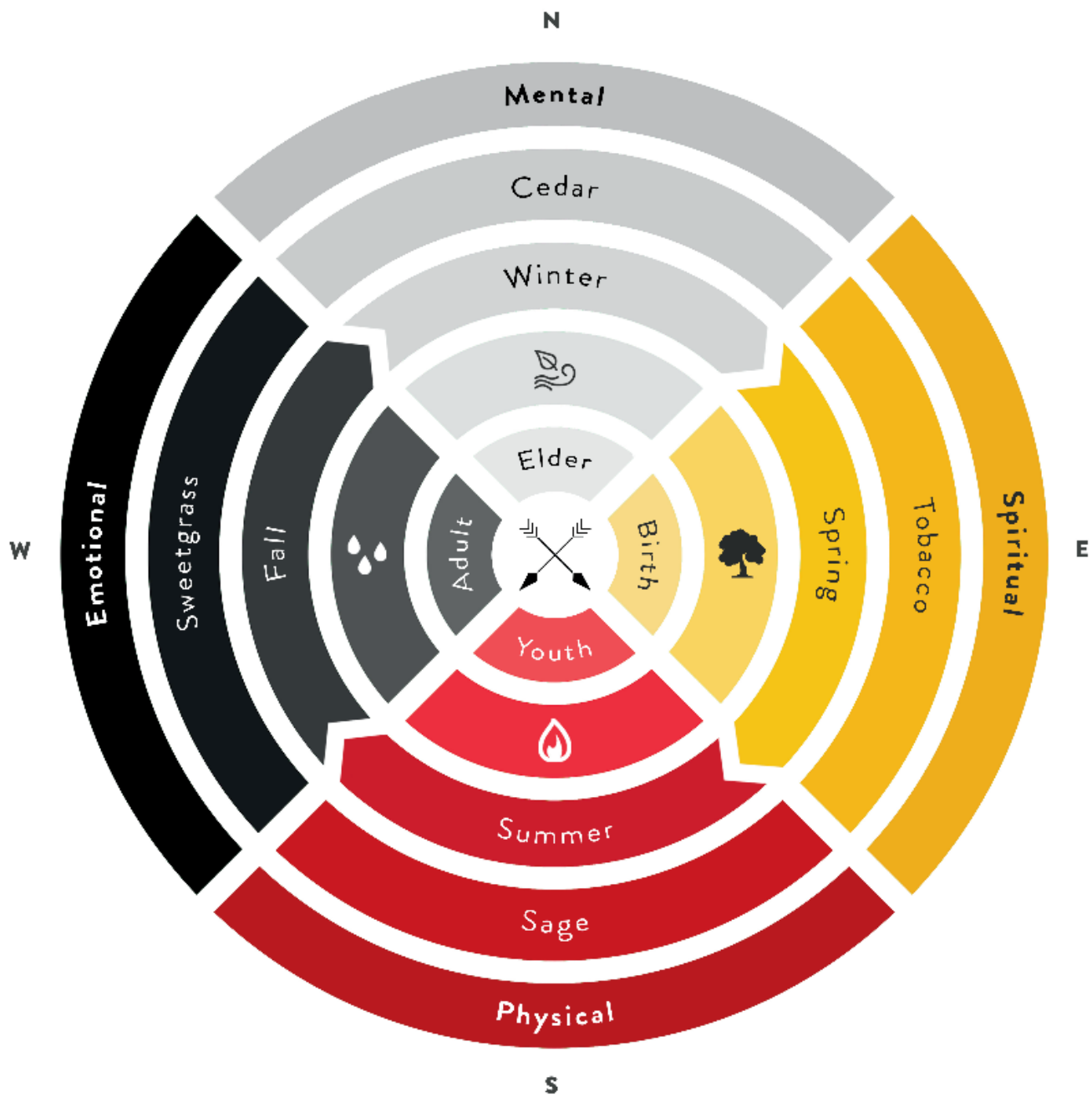
**Prompts:**  Was it hard to choose which category to assign things to? Why? (The idea here is that all four attributes work cohesively, so some things may seem like they could fit in any category)



# Traditional Foods



# The MEDICINE WHEEL



The circle represents balance, connection, and the continuous nature of all creation.

A system of teachings and visual tool for passing down indigenous cultural knowledge.

To learn more visit [tribaltradeco.com/medicine-wheel](http://tribaltradeco.com/medicine-wheel)

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# Recipes: Apple Cider Vinegar, Nature's Superhero



Grade Level: All

Apple cider vinegar is very versatile. It can be used to make tangy salad dressings, flavourful marinades, and delicious pickles. It can even be used to clean!

Apple cider vinegar is a great way to use up apples that may not be suitable for eating. It is made by crushing apples, squeezing out all their juice, and adding bacteria or yeast to the apple liquid to ferment it. Eventually, the sugars in the juice turn into acetic acid, which is what gives vinegar its tang!

Below, you will find 3 versatile recipes that incorporate apple cider vinegar:

## 1. Blueberry Sweetgrass Vinaigrette







Vinaigrettes can be used to dress so many different salads! Try this sweet [recipe](#) created by Mohawk Chef, Tawnya Brant:

(Image credit: Tawnya Brant)

- 2 cups blueberries (fresh or frozen)
- ½ cup pure maple syrup
- 2 tbsp sweetgrass
- ½ cup sunflower oil (or any oil)
- **½ cup apple cider vinegar**

## Instructions

-  Place blueberries and sweetgrass in a pan and bring to a boil. Let simmer on low for 5 minutes. Turn off and set aside to come to room temperature.
-  At this point berries can be strained, or the sweetgrass pulled out and the whole berries can be used in the dressing.
-  Put blueberries in the blender and blend for 10 seconds.
-  Place the rest of the ingredients into the blender for 30 seconds. All done!



## 2. Tangy All-Purpose Vinaigrette

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup olive oil
- 2 tsp mustard
- 1 tsp honey or maple syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup apple cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp freshly ground pepper

### Instructions



Whisk all ingredients in a bowl or shake them in a jar. You're ready to dress your crunchy salad!

## 3. Crunchy Pickles

Create the pickles of your dreams! You can pickle almost any vegetable or fruit – cauliflower, carrots, kelp, pears, the list goes on! We will show you a pickled onion recipe adapted from [www.kitchn.com](http://www.kitchn.com).

Throughout history, traditional food preservation methods like pickling, drying, and smoking have been important for many Indigenous Nations to increase their foods' shelf life while maintaining their nutritional value. When it comes to pickling, some Indigenous Nations pickle kelp, seal flipper or blubber, berries, and various seeds.

- 1 small red onion (or something else!)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp fine salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup apple cider vinegar (or white vinegar)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water



(Image credit: Dana Velden)

### Instructions



Peel and halve the onion lengthwise. Thinly slice the halves and set aside.



Bring the vinegar, water, sugar, and salt to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve the salt and sugar.



Remove from heat, add the onion, and stir to combine, making sure all the onions are submerged in the liquid. Let sit for 15 minutes before using.



Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

# Additional Resources

Below are additional activities and teaching ideas for your class to do!

## Previous Great Big Crunch Toolkits

- [GBC Toolkit 2022](#)
- [GBC Toolkit 2021](#)
- [Past GBC Activities from FoodShare](#)

## Additional Activities and Recipes

- [Memory Game: Traditional Indigenous Foods](#) – Learn about traditional Indigenous foods in your community while playing a fun matching game!
- [Green Thumbs](#) – Consider vermicomposting with students after they take their Crunch! This adds a Food Waste Management component to our Great Big Crunch.
- [BC Agriculture in the Classroom](#) – Plenty of food literacy activities and handouts highlighting apples, for grade 9–12
- Indigenous-inspired [Harvest Salad and Maple Vinaigrette](#).

## Teaching Food Literacy in the Classroom

- Teachfoodfirst – [Grade-Specific Guiding Principles](#)
- Teachfoodfirst – [Tips for Teaching Food Literacy](#)

## Educational Resources on Indigenous Teachings

- First Nations Education Steering Committee/First Nations School Association – [Teacher Resource Guides Units, Lessons, and Activities for Blended or Remote Learning Contexts](#)
- [Weaving Indigenous Education Into Your Practice: A Teacher’s Resource Guide](#)
- [Medicine Wheel Workbook: Finding Your Healthy Balance](#) – Through a careful selection of teachings and interactive activities, the workbook will encourage children to live well and find their healthy balance with the help of the Medicine Wheel.
- Teachfoodfirst – [An Educator’s Toolkit for Exploring Canada’s Food Guide \(Traditional Foods\)](#)
- [Kidsnacks Indigenous Farm to School Curricula](#) – Traditional Foods for a Healthy Future: A Traditional Snack Guide Based on Ojibwe Foodsit