

Chapter 16

Meal Planning

Planning Healthy Meals

Directions: Read the following selection. Then answer the questions under *Thinking Critically*, and complete the activities as directed by your teacher.

Planning healthful meals requires the management of many resources. Resources are anything you use to accomplish a task in order to meet a goal. The resources you use are *human resources*, such as knowledge, skills, creativity, energy, and time. You also use *material resources*, such as money and any objects or tools needed to accomplish the task.

When planning a meal, you use your knowledge about nutrition, food processes, and food preparation equipment. You also use food preparation skills. Part of using these skills is considering how to use your time and energy wisely so that all foods are prepared at the same time. In addition, management skills are used to organize food supplies or ingredients and to make certain the equipment needed to complete the recipe is available. Money management skills are practiced when purchasing such things as food, equipment, utensils, and cookbooks.

Using Your Resources

Perhaps you would like to have spaghetti for dinner tonight. To accomplish this task you have many resource questions to answer. Is there time to make spaghetti using a favorite family recipe? What options do you have? Will a prepared spaghetti sauce save you time and energy and still meet your goal? What ingredients do you have on hand, and which do you need to purchase? What equipment and utensils are needed to complete the task?

Your knowledge and creativity are valuable resources. For example, once you learn to scramble eggs, you can continue to use your knowledge and skill to make scrambled eggs. If you want to enhance your plain scrambled eggs, you can use your creativity to vary a new scrambled egg recipe you find in a magazine. Consider topping your scrambled eggs with salsa, shredded cheddar cheese, or chopped vegetables.

Serve scrambled eggs on toast with a slice of cheese melted over the top, or roll the scrambled eggs in a tortilla. When you take the time to use all resource options effectively, you will discover the magic and fun behind meal planning!

Money

It is important to recognize what factors influence grocery shopping. Consider the following:

- ◆ **A shopping list** A list can help you distinguish between the foods you really need and the foods you want. A list saves time and reduces the temptation to buy on impulse.
- ◆ **Eye-catching displays** An attractive display of fresh fruits and vegetables near the store entrance or a bakery filled with the aroma of fresh bread puts shoppers in a positive mood for buying.
- ◆ **Product placement** Items may be placed at eye level, at the end of an aisle, or in checkout lanes. Placement of items, such as marshmallows next to cocoa mixes or peanut butter with jellies and jams, attracts shopper's attention and entices them to spend money.
- ◆ **Advertising** Compare prices of similar food products. Words used to promote a product can be very powerful—and sometimes misleading. Make sure that what appears to be a bargain isn't too good to be true.
- ◆ **Appearance** Bright colors and package design attract the eye.

You need to make many decisions everyday about how to use your resources to best meet your nutrition needs.

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Thinking Critically

1. One shopper saw that canned tomatoes were priced at 4 cans for \$2.79 so she bought four cans instead of the one can on the shopping list. The regular price for a can was \$.70. Was this a reasonable purchase? Why or why not?

2. Where do supermarkets place children's cereals? Why?

3. Perspective: Some people say you should never shop for groceries when you are hungry. What is your perspective on this statement? Do you think it is true or untrue? Why?

4. Explain how family or friends can act as a resource in meal planning.

For Further Study

- ◆ You have decided that French toast would be a good choice for breakfast. What other food options do you have available? Explain how resources, such as knowledge, skills, time, energy, and money, are shifted in each available option. Which option would you choose most often? Why?
- ◆ Try a new breakfast approach for one week. Create healthful menus that could be prepared in 15 minutes. Analyze the resources (knowledge, skills, time, energy, and money) used. How can you continue to improve your breakfast nutrition and use of resources in breakfast menu planning?
- ◆ Create a tri-fold brochure for elementary school children on the importance of eating breakfast. Include at least two age-appropriate menus or recipes as well as tips for managing time to help eating breakfast to become a habit.
- ◆ Find the food advertisements in your weekly newspapers. Create a menu plan for three days using the food specials for the week. Make a shopping list and estimate food costs. Is this an effective way to develop weekly meal plans? Why or why not? Analyze how you used resources of knowledge, skill, creativity, and time.