



CRITICALLY EXPLORING SUPERMARKET CIRCULARS

INTRODUCTION

Food advertisements are all around us: on television, on websites and social media and on the streets. Have you also thought about supermarkets? How do they advertise their products? One way that supermarkets advertise their products, and especially offers, is through circulars.

Do the students ever look at supermarket circulars? What type of food do they advertise? Is there a lot of offers? For what?

In this activity students will explore circulars from different supermarkets and reflect on what type of food is advertised and how this is connected to healthy and sustainable dietary habits.

THE ISSUE

1. Watch the video “Food advertisements” with your students as an introduction to the topic.
2. Ask your students if they have ever looked at supermarket circulars.
3. Tell your students that they are going to explore circulars from different supermarkets around them and discuss how food offers can influence dietary habits.

INTO THE COMMUNITY

4. Ask your students to find supermarket circulars. They can be in either physical or digital form. If you want to save time you can ask the student to find a supermarket circular in local stores or from home and bring to the next class as a home assignment.
5. Ask your students to discuss with their families if they ever look at supermarket circulars and what they think about them and the food that they are advertising.

AIMS

- To explore what type of food is advertised in supermarket circulars.
- To reflect on how food offers can influence dietary habits.
- To create a supermarket circular that better promotes healthy and/or sustainable food consumption and to raise awareness among the school community.
- To discuss with food companies what they can do to promote healthier and more sustainable dietary habits.

SUSTAINABILITY COMPETENCES

- Critical thinking
- Envisioning future scenarios

SOCIETAL ACTORS

- Food companies
- School community
- Families

KEYWORDS

Food marketing, food choices, food offers, dietary recommendations

AGE RANGE

13-16 years old

THE CO-CREATION PROCESS

6. In the classroom, divide the students into groups and let them analyze what type of food that is being advertised in the supermarket circulars. Discuss with the students what is the best way to analyze the content of the circulars:
 - What type of food is advertised (e.g., select food groups such as fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, dairy products (sweetened/unsweetened), seafood, red and processed meat, sweets and snacks, premade dishes, sugary drinks etc. and look at how they are represented in the circulars).
 - Food offers (what type of offers and what type of food).
7. Look at the national dietary guidelines together with your class and let them discuss in groups if the dietary guidelines are reflected in the supermarket circulars.
8. Discuss in the class what they have found and share your own thoughts with the class as well.
9. Discuss with the class if and how they think that food offers affect people's dietary choices.
10. Help the students to find food companies that they can contact and ask questions about how they develop their circulars and if they could do something to promote better and more sustainable dietary habits through their circulars/offers.

THE (SUGGESTED) SOLUTION

11. Ask the students to create a campaign raising awareness about the foods that are advertised in the circulars.
12. As a part of the campaign, let the students create their own circular that better reflects the dietary guidelines both in respect to health and the environment. This can be done by cutting and pasting from physical circulars or it can be done using computers.
13. Share the campaign within the school community and with the food companies that they have been in contact with.

SUBJECTS

Citizenship / Civic participation,
Home and consumer science

TOPICS

Citizenship / Civic participation:

Sustainable development

Home and consumer science:

Food choices

SETUP

Part of the activity will be developed outside school, around the school premises. The rest of the activity will be developed inside school.

MATERIALS

- Supermarket circulars (physical or digital)
- Stationery items to be used for creating a circular, or computers with access to PowerPoint or another program that can be used to create a digital circular