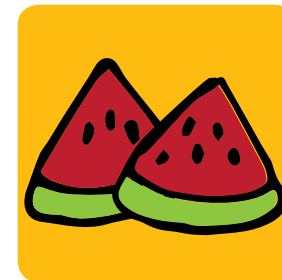


# Redesign the Lunch Line



## A Lesson Plan for Engaging Students in the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

### EDUCATOR INFORMATION

#### Smarter Lunchrooms Background:

This lesson plan will help participants complete a lunch line redesign, using six behavioral economics concepts from the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement.

#### Smarter Lunchrooms Process:

This lesson follows the 4-Step Path for Building a Smarter Lunchroom. This lesson plan should be used after Step 1 of the 4-Step Path has been completed by one or more persons in the school where this lesson will be taught. Step 1 includes completion of the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard, taking photos indicated on the photo checklist, and review of the photos. By assessing the cafeteria and service lines, students can identify opportunities for redesigning the lunch line.

#### Please review these resources:

- > [Smarter Lunchrooms Handbook](#)
- > [Montana Smarter Lunchrooms Success Stories](#)
- > [Montana Educational Standards](#)

#### LESSON TIMEFRAME:

This lesson requires one visit to the lunchroom and 3-4 (50-minute) class periods to complete.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

#### Students will:

- Identify ways that the school lunchroom environment can impact their behavior through influencing food-related decisions.
- Analyze the results from the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard and discuss ways that the school lunchroom environment could be redesigned to promote healthy choices.
- Develop and describe a plan for redesigning the lunchroom environment to promote healthy choices.
- Discuss ways to measure the success of plans to redesign the lunchroom environment.
- Discuss ways to work cooperatively to advocate for their plan to redesign the lunchroom environment.

### LESSON MATERIALS, PREPARATION, & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### For this lesson, the following items will be needed:

- Completed Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard displayed for students via projector and photos from the photo checklist
- A photo presentation of photo checklist results displayed through a PowerPoint
- Equipment to show YouTube videos (internet, screen, speakers)
- Multiple sets of large poster paper with colored markers or a large classroom white board if activity is conducted as a class
- Post-It notes of different colors or other art supplies to use to depict lunchroom set-up on posters

#### Helpful hints and further resources:

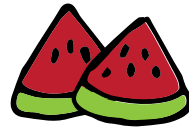
- Inform the Food Service Director about this Smarter Lunchrooms lesson, and invite her/him to collaborate with you on it.
- Schedule a time for your class to go to the lunchroom and meet the Food Service Director.
- It is ideal to have the students visit the lunchroom and/or complete part of the lesson in the lunchroom so that they can visualize the layout. If this isn't possible, it may be helpful to have the basic design of the lunchroom drawn out for students beforehand.
- Consider providing extra credit to students who eat a school meal in the lunchroom during this lesson, as it provides opportunity for hands-on observation.

> Look at the Smarter Lunchrooms [Redesign the Lunch Line activity](#) with lunchroom redesign game pieces provided

> Watch an [introductory video](#) for the Redesign the Lunch Line activity.

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## Introduction to the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

Say: **“Today we are going to look at ways we can make small changes to encourage students to select, eat, and enjoy healthier foods in school without eliminating their choices.”**

### Questions for students:

- Why do you think eating healthy foods is important?
- How do you think food choices impact our health?
- We make food choices every day. What do you think influences the food-related decisions that we make on a daily basis?
- Do you think our school environment impacts our food decisions? If so, how?
- Do you think there are ways we can improve our school lunchroom environment or the lunch line itself to encourage healthier choices?

Say: **“Today I’m going to introduce to you the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement, which is a project that works to promote healthy eating in the lunchroom, without adding cost for schools or taking away choices for students.”**

Introduce the Smarter Lunchrooms project. Consider reviewing or showing the [Smarter Lunchrooms Makeover video](#).

**Let’s look at how Behavioral Economics influence behavior and choice in the cafeteria.**

Summary of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement: <https://www.smarterlunchrooms.org/sites/default/files/documents/SLM-Flyer-Inkjet.pdf>

## Step 1: Spot

Say: **“Doing a Smarter Lunchrooms project consists of completing four simple steps. Those steps are Spot, Plan, Do, and Prove. Let’s start with hearing how our lunchroom did on the ‘Spot’ step.”**

**Review the ‘Spot Findings - the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard and the photo checklist.**

The Scorecard and photos may have already been completed by a school food service staff member, or a parent or community member. If not, a teacher and several

students should complete this task together, asking the Food Service Director for information as needed. Then, using the completed Scorecard and photo checklist findings, share the photos with students and discuss any unchecked areas of the Scorecard that indicate possible options for a lunch line redesign. The purpose of considering “redesign” is to help students to choose healthy foods. (This is often done mindlessly - students make a healthy choice without knowing it!)

## Step 2: Plan

Say: **“Now that we have reviewed how our lunchroom did on Step 1, ‘Spot,’ let’s start the 2nd step – ‘Plan.’”**

### Information for educator:

A lunch line redesign can include any of the following changes to increase selection and consumption of healthy food. Many of these strategies fall under multiple categories on the scorecard.

- Changing the placement of items on the lunch line
- Rearranging or changing the way items are displayed or presented
- Offering items multiple times
- Adding signage
- Giving healthy items fun, descriptive names
- Coupling, bundling, or prepackaging items

Hold a class discussion to prompt planning for lunch line changes using the questions below. Identify unchecked Scorecard items and refer to the Scorecard for ideas under each category.

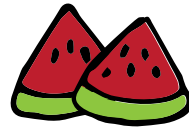
### Questions for students

(example answers found on scorecard under each topic):

- In what ways could we redesign the line to focus more on fruit?
- In what ways could we redesign the line to vary the vegetables?
- In what ways could we redesign the line to highlight the salad?
- In what ways could we redesign the line to increase the sale of white milk?
- In what ways could we redesign the line to boost the sale of balanced meals?
- In what ways could we redesign the line to improve the lunchroom atmosphere?

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## ✓ Step 3: Do

Say: **“Now let’s move towards the 3rd step in the Smarter Lunchrooms process – which is to ‘Do’ the redesign of our lunch line.”**

Break the students into groups of 3-4 participants and hand out markers and large poster paper for mapping out the lunchroom changes.

- If time and schedules allow, a lunchroom visit is highly recommended, or a basic drawing of the current lunchroom layout could be provided.
- Another option would be to work together as a class on the marker board or chalk board if time is limited. If this option is selected, group presentations would not be included.

Say: **“Let’s look at our current lunchroom design, and come up with ideas for using Smarter Lunchrooms techniques to help students make healthier choices.”**

Have students begin by drawing out the current lunchroom design on their poster.

Consider including the following areas:

- Hot lines, cold lines, and snack windows
- Milk coolers with white and flavored milks, other beverages
- Snack stands, refrigerated coolers
- Fruit and vegetable locations
- Condiment area
- Tray and cutlery pickup and return
- Trash cans, cleaning materials, and recycling and compost areas
- Cashiers/POS stations
- Vending machines
- Tables
- Bulletin boards, menu boards, signs, and posters
- Windows, entrances, and exits with traffic flow patterns
- Staff or lunchroom monitors’ positions
- Any other notable items within the lunchroom serving/dining space

Ask the students to review the Smarter Lunchrooms Scorecard to determine what strategies have not been checked and allow time for them to redesign the lunch line. Have each group present their poster and share their ideas.

## ☆ Step 4: Prove

Say: **“Great job coming up with ideas for redesigning the line! The 4th and final step of the 4-Step Path to Building a Smarter Lunchroom is to ‘Prove.’ To wrap up our lesson, we will talk about how we might do that, and what our final steps would be if we actually want to start creating changes in our lunchroom (if applicable).”**

### Information for educator:

The success of a lunch line redesign can be measured in several ways:

- Number of items selected – Using a counter, count the number of students choosing a specific food item each day (examples: fruit, vegetable, white milk vs. chocolate milk). Or, if you have access to past food records, ask food service staff if they can determine this number for you, or if the amount served has changed.
- Amount of plate waste – As students are returning their trays, measure the amount of food waste of a specific item, since “food is not considered nutrition until it is eaten.”
- Number of students choosing salad bar – Using a counter, count the number of students making selections at the salad bar, or determine if the amounts of items selected by students have changed.
- Number of students choosing school lunch – Using meal participation records, determine the number of students participating in the school lunch program or any changes in the number of students participating in school lunch over time.

Say: **“Once we make a change, it is important to find out if it is actually increasing the number of students making healthy choices, so using the ideas we came up with, we are going to try and ‘Prove It.’”**

Review with the students that in order to prove something, information or data has to be collected before and after the change(s).

### Questions for students (as a class or in small groups):

- How could we find out if the changes that we make help students to make healthier choices in the lunchroom?
- Is there a way to measure any change in the food choices being made or consumed?
- Considering the lunch line redesign ideas you just came up with, can you think of a way to measure one of the proposed changes and explain your plan to “Prove It” to the class?
- Now that we have come up with some lunch line redesign ideas that promote healthy changes, how might we advocate for some of these changes, or be involved in making our ideas happen in the lunchroom? (if applicable)

> Assessment Tools