

# Fatty Foods Flunk Out Of School

Move over, french fries, extra-cheese pizza, and chocolate chip cookies. School cafeterias across the country are trimming the fat!

Dozens of states have passed nutrition laws to limit unhealthy foods in schools. Texas officials **nixed**<sup>1</sup> deep-fried foods from school menus. Connecticut lawmakers **banned**<sup>2</sup> the sale of high-fat, high-sugar snacks in vending machines, cafeterias, and school stores.

Legislators in New Jersey passed one of the toughest school nutrition laws in the country. No schools in that state will be able to sell foods or drinks, such as candy and soft drinks, that list sugar as the main ingredient. Experts predict that more states will soon follow New Jersey's lead.

So what's prompting the menu makeover? Over the past 25 years, the percentage of overweight U.S. kids has tripled. Today, more than 9 million people ages 6 to 19 are overweight, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

School lunches aren't entirely to blame for the obesity crisis, but many experts say the cafeteria menu is a good place to start. More than 26 million children buy lunch at school each day.

Educators and lawmakers hope that providing good food choices at school will help kids make good food choices at home. "Schools play an important role in improving the nutrition of young people," Julia Lear, director of the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, told *Senior Edition*.

Experts say **obesity**<sup>3</sup> at a young age can lead to health problems, such as heart disease, later in life. "Childhood obesity just can't be ignored anymore," Lear says.

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<sup>1</sup> **nix**: to reject; to veto

<sup>2</sup> **ban**: to forbid, especially by law or social pressure

<sup>3</sup> **obesity**: the condition of being very much overweight

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. According to the passage, about how many children buy lunch at school each day?
  - A 6 million
  - B 9 million
  - C 19 million
  - D 26 million
  
2. The passage describes the problem of childhood obesity. How are legislators trying to solve the problem?
  - A They are requiring that children exercise an hour each day.
  - B They are putting all overweight Americans on a healthy diet.
  - C They are passing laws to limit unhealthy foods in schools.
  - D They are making eating unhealthy food against the law.
  
3. After reading the passage, what can you conclude about the new nutrition laws?
  - A The new laws will convince all Americans to stop eating fatty foods.
  - B The new laws will increase the number of overweight parents.
  - C The new laws will have no effect on the nutrition of young people.
  - D The new laws will help reduce the number of overweight kids.
  
4. Read this sentence from the passage: "School lunches aren't entirely to blame for the obesity crisis, but many experts say the cafeteria menu is a good place to start."

In this sentence, the word **crisis** means

- A a carefree moment
  - B a serious situation
  - C a mysterious clue
  - D an easy accomplishment
  
5. Which statement best describes the main idea of this passage?
  - A New nutrition laws were passed to fight childhood obesity.
  - B Many foods sold in the United States are high in fat and sugar.
  - C Most Americans are overweight because they eat junk food.
  - D Too many children in the United States buy their lunch at school.

6. What was the New Jersey school nutrition law?

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7. Do the reasons provided in the article support the points the author is making about eating healthy foods? Why or why not?

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8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

In Connecticut, schools are not allowed to sell high-sugar \_\_\_\_\_ high-fat snacks.

- A for
- B and
- C but
- D from

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Lawmakers in New Jersey passed a tough school nutrition law to improve the nutrition of young people.

Who? \_\_\_\_\_

(did) What? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? in New Jersey

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

10. **Vocabulary Word:** nix: to reject.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Guide and Answers**

**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 1140

**Featured Text Structure:** Problem/Solution – the writer poses a problem and suggests possible solutions

**Passage Summary:** “Fatty Foods Flunk Out of School” describes the solution that legislators have implemented to deal with the problem of childhood obesity in the United States.

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2. The passage describes the problem of childhood obesity. How are legislators trying to solve the problem?

- A They are requiring that children exercise an hour each day.
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- C **They are passing laws to limit unhealthy foods in schools.**
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- A The new laws will convince all Americans to stop eating fatty foods.
- B The new laws will increase the number of overweight parents.
- C The new laws will have no effect on the nutrition of young people.
- D **The new laws will help reduce the number of overweight kids.**

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In this sentence, the word **crisis** means

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5. Which statement best describes the main idea of this passage?

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- B Many foods sold in the United States are high in fat and sugar.
- C Most Americans are overweight because they eat junk food.
- D Too many children in the United States buy their lunch at school.

6. What was the New Jersey school nutrition law?

**Suggested answer:** "No schools in that state will be able to sell foods or drinks, such as candy and soft drinks, that list sugar as the main ingredient." [paragraph 3]

7. Do the reasons provided in the article support the points the author is making about eating healthy foods? Why or why not?

**Suggested answer:** Yes. The reasons provided support the points about why eating healthy is important. The author gives statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showing how obesity is on the rise in the United States and the reasons why healthy eating is important. [paragraphs 4 and 7]

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

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(did) What? **passed a tough school nutrition law**

Where? in New Jersey

Why? **to improve the nutrition of young people**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** nix: to reject.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.