

Children's Literature Reviews

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Eat right! : how you can make good food choices

by Matt Doeden ; illustrated by Jack Desrocher.

Cataloging in Publication

Minneapolis : Lerner Publications, c2009.

p. cm.

Annotations:

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Best Books:

[New Series Nonfiction for Youth, 2008](#) ; Booklist; United States

Reading Measurement Programs:

Accelerated Reader

Interest Level Middle Grade

Book Level 5.2

Accelerated Reader Points 1

Reviews:

Ian Chipman (Booklist, Oct. 15, 2008 (Vol. 105, No. 4))

Part of the Health Zone series, this book offers a highly readable, never preachy exploration into the benefits of providing quality fuel for your body. It opens with an anecdote of a kid who snacks on soda and chips while playing volleyball. A friend challenges him to eat better for a week, and he comes back with more sustained energy and a fresh outlook the next weekend. While this story is overly purposeful, the following chapters do a great job of detailing everything from the food pyramid and benefits of different nutrients to warnings against following faddish, ineffective diets. Colorful sidebars help with specifics such as the advantages of going organic and the necessity of iodine in one's diet. Photos of kids enjoying being active will reinforce the underlying message to treat your body well. The most valuable lesson children will learn here, though, is that simply being aware of what is listed on nutrition facts labels, and not fretting over adding up grams and calculating percentages, will lead to smarter and healthier eating choices. *Grades 4-7*

Gwynne Spencer (Children's Literature)

Doeden's latest effort is part of the "Health Zone" series of books on stress, skin care, getting in shape, keeping safe, and anti-bullying. Its trim size indicates that it is an easy read, with reading level at about 4th grade, but it is written for a hi-lo audience and is probably most appropriate for middle school and high school special education students. The first chapter, "What Is Nutrition?" sets the tone for this volume. Simple definitions are formatted with multi-colored text cues and accompanied by lots of full-color photos to support basic concepts. For instance, the food guide elements of the new USDA Pyramid are illustrated with photos, to enhance quick recognition of grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, meat, beans, and oils. Brief discussion of eating healthfully (at least they use the right word!) emphasizes cutting down on junk food, soda, candy, and fast foods, while a sidebar mentions organic foods. The second chapter, "What's in your Food?" discusses calories and nutritional labeling; longer sections are devoted to carbohydrates, fats, cholesterol, proteins, vitamins, minerals, water, multivitamins, and digestion. These have about 150 words each, and a multitude of illustrations and varied typefaces are used to keep reluctant readers on the page longer. The third chapter, "Watching What You Eat" focuses on nutritional labeling and examines the

percentages of daily values (what used to be called recommended daily allowances (RDA)), sodium intake, and caloric calculations. Next is "The Benefits of Nutrition," which includes a short self-quiz that is followed by discussion of weight problems, malnutrition, anorexia and bulimia, improper nutrition and illness, and a very, very brief chart of vitamin deficiencies. (Note: A couple of photos of obesity and pathological thinness would go a long way in this chapter). The fifth chapter, "More About Diets" defines "diet" as the combination of all that you eat, but then focuses on several popular types, including low-fat diets, low-carb diets, points diets, and crash diets. The sixth chapter, "Making Healthful Choices," focuses on choosing activities, burning calories, drinking water instead of soda, making a plan that includes eating breakfast, choosing smaller portions. It also admonishes readers not to eat in front of the TV or when bored. The final chapter includes a ten-item multiple choice quiz drawn from the text, an example of a nutrition log, a glossary, and a selected bibliography of additional resources (all books, no websites, no magazines). This book also includes a "More About Nutrition" section which lists five books, the USDA food pyramid web site, and one other site. The cover and most of the photos inside show middle school, athletic-looking youngsters (no fatties, no bad teeth, no bad skin). While the message of the book is clearly "eat well, live better," the bland presentation make this a secondary choice for most library collections. 2009, Lerner, \$30.60. Ages 10 to 14.

Series:

[Health zone](#)

Subjects:

[Nutrition--Juvenile literature.](#)

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Language	Call Number	LCCN	Dewey Decimal	ISBN/ISSN
English (eng)	TX355 .D635 2009	2007043322	612.3	9780822575528 (lib. bdg. : alk. paper) 0822575523

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