



STEM CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

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# THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Teacher Handout



## FOREWORD

# THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET: WHY SO SPECIAL?

Students will learn about the Mediterranean diet— what foods are included and why it is known to be so healthy.

They will then compare and contrast their own dietary choices with the Mediterranean diet and identify 2-3 ways to improve their current diet.

### ***Concepts students should learn in advance:***

*Biochemistry & macromolecules, how to read a nutrition label, MyPlate guidelines. They should have also had some chance to engage in discussion about the modern American diet, although this can also be incorporated into the below activity.*



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Carlie Frydman** is a high school Biology teacher based out of Denver, CO. She began her teaching career at a small charter school in Boston and is now in her 3rd year at a traditional high school. She received a B.S. in Nutrition from The University of Nevada, Reno and went on to receive a M.S. in Nutritional Sciences from The University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Carlie has previously taught other biological science courses, including AP Biology, Environmental Science, and Human Nutrition.



## CONTACT US

### General Information

*For group leaders or schools:*  
800-888-ACIS / [info@acis.com](mailto:info@acis.com)

# TIMELINE



This activity is intended for one class period. If you want to extend it into multiple days, you can teach about MyPlate and nutrition labeling the day prior, and/or continue afterwards to teach students about other common diets and dietary restrictions (e.g. vegetarianism, veganism, Atkins diet, etc..).

## **PART 1 ORIGINS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET**

Students will read an article about the origins of the Mediterranean diet and answer questions that relate the region to development of the modern-day diet. See 'The Mediterranean Diet- An Up-Close Look at its Origins in Pantelleria' in relevant links.

## **PART 2 DIET ANALYSIS & CLASS DISCUSSION**

Students will analyze the handout to engage in a class discussion that contrasts this with the modern-day American diet. Instructors can run this part however they feel comfortable, incorporating additional power point slides to guide discussion.

## **PART 3 REFLECTION/GOAL SETTING**

Students will independently reflect on their current dietary habits and will then identify specific ways they can incorporate the Mediterranean diet into their eating habits. Optional partner or class debrief.

## **RELEVANT LINKS**

1. ['The Mediterranean Diet - An Up-Close Look at its Origins in Pantelleria'](#) from *Today's Dietitian*, 2013.
2. Additional/optional reading: ['What Can You Eat on the Mediterranean Diet?'](#) from *Time*.

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