LABEL LANGUAGE

SUBJECTS: Language Arts

STUDENT SKILL: The student will use prereading-strategies independently to preview, activate prior knowledge, predict content of text, formulate questions that might be answered in the text, establish and adjust purposes for reading (e.g., to find out, to understand, to enjoy, to solve problems.

OBJECTIVE: Students will become familiar with the purpose of labeling food and will practice reading and using label information.

BACKGROUND
Food labels tell us exactly what is in the food we are eating. Some people need to know this because they have health problems and have to avoid some foods. Some people can't eat certain foods for religious reasons. Most people who read labels just want to know what's in their food so they can avoid foods that are bad for them and get plenty of the foods that are good for them.

Until recently, most food manufacturers were required to do no more than provide a list of all the ingredients that went into their products. Some didn't even have to do that. The makers of standard foods like macaroni, ketchup and jelly weren't required to list all their ingredients as long as they followed a certain recipe. Jelly makers didn't have to say what all went into their jelly, as long as they made sure that they used at least 45 percent fruit. If they used any less, they couldn't call it jelly. Most people knew that jelly was about half fruit and half sugar, because not too long ago many people made their own jelly.

Even though the recipe for standard foods haven't changed much, people these days aren't so familiar with what goes into them, so they want the ingredients listed on the package. A law passed in 1993 says eve manufacturers of standard foods have to list all their ingredients.

The first ingredient on the list will be the main ingredient. On a jar of jelly, the first ingredient listed may be fructose or sucrose. Those are two kinds of sugar. If they are first on the list you know there is more sugar in the jelly than anything else. The next ingredient on the list will probably be some kind of

MATERIALS
Assorted print advertisements or taped commercials
Assorted products with labels for students to read

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fruit. That means after sugar there is more fruit than anything else.

Another law says food manufacturers have to show how much of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s recommended daily allowances (RDA) are in one serving of the food. Recommended daily allowances are what nutrition experts way we need to eat every day to be healthy.

**ACTIVITY**

1. Bring in an assortment of print advertisements or taped commercials. Discuss the many reasons students would or would not be interested in the products they see advertised. Discuss the eye-catching colors, special offers, the models or actors used, etc. Ask students if they are swayed to buy the product more by packaging or by what their families or peers like.

2. Share the background information with students.

3. Bring a variety of products into the classroom, and hand out student survey worksheets. Have students pair up to complete the worksheets, using labels form the products.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

1. Discuss the pros and cons of having a law that requires fast food restaurants to list and label all of their products.

2. Have students list names or bring n the packaging from products that originate in Oklahoma.

3. Bring a blender or food processor to class, and help students make peanut butter. Pour about one cup of unsalted, roasted peanuts into the blender, cover it and set it for grind. Scrape the peanut butter from around the blades periodically. Add one tablespoon vegetable oil to help the peanuts blend more quickly. When the peanut butter is the desired consistency, use a spatula to scrape it from the sides and bottom of the blender. Bring two or three jars of commercial peanut butter to class. One jar should be natural peanut butter (no sugar, salt or preservatives added) and the other should be a familiar brand. Let students taste all the commercial and class- made peanut butter to see which they like best. Then have students read the labels of the commercial peanut butter and compare the ingredients with those used in the class-made peanut butter.

**VOCABULARY**

- standard foods
- fructose
- sucrose
- recommended daily allowances (RDA)
EXTRA READING

EVALUATION
Were the students able to use the products provided to answer the questions on the product survey sheets? Did they understand that the label is there to provide information to the consumer?
Label Language

Fill out the survey form, using the information from the package of your choice.

1. What is the name of your product? ________________________
2. Where is it made? ________________________________
3. What is the name of the company that makes this product?______
4. How many servings are in a container?______________________
5. How much did the product cost? __________________________
6. Would you buy this product? (circle one) Yes    No
   Why, or why not? ______________________________________
7. Is the packaging of the product appealing to you? (circle one) Yes   No
   Why, or why not?_______________________________________
8. Divide the serving sizes by the total price of the product. How much
does one serving cost?____________________________________
9. Are there any vitamins or minerals listed on the package as providing
100% of the USDA daily requirements? What are they? __________
   _______________________________________________________
10. Are there any vitamins or minerals listed on the product as
    contributing 0%? What are they? __________________________