

Food Colours: A Closer Look at Labels

An activity of "Coloured foods need a closer look".

When you were very young, you learnt your ABCs. You learnt to read and write, not just in one language but often in two. That is the most basic type of literacy (say "litra-see"). There are different types of literacy. They go beyond simply reading and writing. One of these is **nutrition literacy**. Nutrition literacy is about being able to figure out what different foods have in them. One way to do this is to read and understand **food labels** of packaged foods. Carry out this activity to strengthen your nutrition literacy.

ON YOUR OWN

1. Read "Coloured foods need a closer look" (page 16, *What's Up* February 2026). The good news is that more and more big companies are making food products that do not use artificial food colours. Being able to select them by reading their food labels is an important part of nutrition literacy.

AS A WHOLE CLASS

2. Pick a large supermarket. Option A: As a whole class, visit the supermarket to look at food labels. Option B: Go to the supermarket's website as if you are going to shop online.

IN PAIRS

3. Study the food labels of bright, colourful foods such as cereals, jams, and sweets. Zoom in on "INGREDIENTS". Find ONE food label that says there is food colouring. Sketch the label on a fresh sheet of paper. Next, find FIVE labels that say that no artificial colours were added. Sketch these too.



4. Design an infographic about looking at food labels to find out about food colours that may (or may not) have been added. Make an attractive poster to share the infographic.

AS A WHOLE CLASS

5. Have a mini exhibition by displaying (with permission) your infographic posters in the canteen so that your whole school can look and learn.