

Chapter 28

Fruits

Facts About Fruits

Directions: Read the following selection. Then answer the questions under *Thinking Critically*, and complete the activities as directed by your teacher.

If you have a taste for adventure, you might search supermarkets, farmer's markets, or health food stores for some of these more exotic fruits. Which of these fruits have you already tried?

- ◆ **Carambola** Often called star fruit, you will recognize this fruit by its star shape and yellow-green, fluted, waxy surface, which changes to yellow as it ripens. This Southeast Asian fruit is bittersweet and rich in vitamin C. To serve, slice the fruit cross-sectional into star shapes, and remove the seeds. Add to fruit salads or use in jellies, jams, or canned syrups.
- ◆ **Currant** Dried currants are a type of grape used for baking. Fresh currants are similar to grapes in that they are plump, round, and grow in clustered strings that resemble bunches. The varieties are black, white, and red, although red and white varieties are better choices for eating fresh. They make excellent jams and jellies, and all varieties have a sweet-tart taste.
- ◆ **Feijoa** The feijoa (fay-YOH-uh), also called pineapple guava, is the fruit of an evergreen shrub. With its squat shape and wrinkled green skin, it can mistakenly be sold as guava. Inside, it resembles a melon, with cream-colored flesh and slippery seeds. Its flavor is similar to pineapple or strawberry.
- ◆ **Kiwi** The furry brown skin of this fruit explains why it was named after New Zealand's native bird. It softens slightly when ripe for eating. The bright green flesh has a delicious tangy-sweet flavor, and the fruit's small black seeds are edible. After peeling the fruit, you may cut slices or wedges to eat it fresh, toss wedges in fruit salads, or add pieces to desserts.
- ◆ **Kumquat** Resembling tiny, oval oranges, this fruit derives its name from the Chinese name meaning gold orange, the color of its skin. The kumquat can be added to fruit salads, pickled, or used in preserves and marmalades.
- ◆ **Mango** The mango is native to countries of the Far East. The skin is a firm yellow-red, but the flesh is yellow. With a flavor similar to apricots and pineapple, it is delicious eaten fresh or in fruit salads. To serve, slice it lengthwise on each side of the large, flat stone in its center.
- ◆ **Papaya** Also known as pawpaw, this fruit from South America has a pear shape. The skin turns yellow-orange when ripe. The flesh is pink-orange and has dark, inedible seeds. With a flavor similar to peaches and apricots, papayas can be eaten fresh or used in fruit salads. To serve, cut the fruit in half lengthwise, remove the seeds, and cut the fruit into wedges or slices.
- ◆ **Passion fruit** Passion fruits are among the most colorful items in the produce section. Their thick skin, which wrinkles as it ripens, may be purple, red, or yellow. The pulp is yellow-orange near the rind, changing to yellow-green in the center. The fruit's skin is not eaten, but the pulp and seeds are edible. Passion fruits have a sweet aroma to complement a sweet-tart taste.
- ◆ **Sapotes** Sapotes (suh-POH-dees) are high in potassium. They have green to yellow-green skin and taste like a blend of bananas and peaches. They are eaten fresh like apples or pears.
- ◆ **Ugli fruit** The name of this fruit is pronounced *ugly*, and even those who enjoy it admit that it is not the most attractive food. The ugli fruit originated in Jamaica as an unintended cross between a grapefruit and an orange. It resembles a pink grapefruit inside but bears the sweet taste of an orange. Its lumpy, loose-fitting, yellow-green skin is quite distinctive.

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Thinking Critically

1. Which fruits can be used successfully in a fruit smoothie beverage, a main dish, a side dish, or a dessert? Explain why you chose these fruits.

2. In recent years, American consumption of the papaya and mango has increased more than many other tropical fruits. Why do you think this is true?

3. List at least three specific ways different fruits can be served as part of any meal plan.

For Further Study

- ◆ Create a delightful yet persuasive children's book on the benefits of eating fruits everyday. Illustrate your book with colorful images of a variety of fruits. Work with your teacher to make arrangements to read your book to a group of young children at a preschool, day care center, elementary school, or library hour at your local library.
- ◆ Create a child-friendly cookbook. One section of your cookbook may include nutritious snack ideas. For example, you may have a child prepare fresh fruits cut into fun shapes. Include directions and sketches of different meal options, and include a variety of options for each meal. For example, breakfast may consist of recipes for fruit smoothies and juices; quick breads, such as muffins, pancakes, or waffles; fruits, used as toppings for cereals; or as creative dishes composed of fruit leftovers. You may also want to introduce kids to different types of foods, such as unusual fruits. Introduce kids to unusual fruits in the breakfast section of your cookbook with appealing arrangements, recipes, or show and tell activities.
- ◆ Find two brands of fresh orange juice (not from concentrate), two brands of frozen orange juice concentrate, and two brands of canned orange juice. Compare the cost per serving, calories per serving, percent Daily Value for vitamin C, the fruit juice percentage, and the flavor of each. Chart your comparisons. Based upon your results, what are your conclusions and recommendations? Share your findings with the class.
- ◆ Create three to five different public-service announcements on the benefits of and research behind eating five fruits a day. With the assistance of your teacher, arrange to deliver your messages on the school public address system.