

Unit 2.2.4 – Developing Individual Food Skills

Key Knowledge 2.2.4

The economic, social, emotional and physical benefits of developing individual food skills and applying these skills in the home, and factors that enable the development of these skills.

Key Skills 2.2.5

Analyse the benefits of developing practical food skills and identify factors enabling the acquisition and application of these skills.

Key Skills 2.2.8

Design and develop a practical food solution in response to an opportunity or a need in a domestic or small-scale setting.

Key Skills 2.2.9

Undertake practical activities to explore domestic and small-scale commercial food production.

V.C.E. Food Studies Study Design p. 19, *Extracts from the V.C.E. Food Studies Study Design (2023-2027) reproduced by permission; © VCAA. V.C.E. is a registered trademark of the VCAA. The VCAA does not endorse or make any warranties regarding this study resource. Current V.C.E. Study Designs and related content can be accessed directly at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au. Readers are also advised to check for updates and amendments to V.C.E. Study Designs on the VCAA website and via the VCAA Bulletin and the VCAA Notices to Schools.*

Key Terms and Definitions

In relation to cooking, **economic benefits** refer to the positive outcomes or advantages that can be derived from cooking, specifically in terms of saving money.

Emotional benefits, in the context of cooking, encompass the positive outcomes and experiences that evoke various emotions, such as happiness, pride, satisfaction, and more. These benefits are often associated with the act of cooking and the results it produces.

Food skills refer to the level of proficiency and knowledge one possesses in various aspects of food preparation, cooking techniques, and a broader understanding of food, including ingredients, culinary practices, flavours, nutrition, and sustainability.

Physical benefits refer to the positive impact food has on our health, such as meeting nutritional requirements, promoting overall well-being, and preventing the onset of lifestyle diseases through healthy eating habits and proper nutrition.

Social benefits are the positive outcomes derived from cooking that are associated with our interactions and connections with others, including family members, friends, and broader social circles. These social benefits highlight the role of cooking in creating meaningful connections, nurturing relationships, and fostering a sense of community.









Developing Individual Food Skills

Individual food skills go beyond just being good at preparing and cooking food. These skills also involve understanding more about the food we eat, where it comes from, and how it affects our health and daily life.

Having food skills enables people to plan and make healthy meals for all ages and diet needs, while adhering to a budget. It also means understanding food labels and knowing if food information is true and accurate.

Good food skills include knowing how to read food labels, understanding where food comes from, knowing the importance of a healthy diet and correct portion sizes, and understanding how food can affect our health. People with these skills can find reliable food information, follow simple recipes, know how to store and prepare food safely, and plan meals with what they have.

These skills bring many benefits, including saving money, improving social connections, emotional wellbeing, and better health. It's also important to understand how to learn these skills.

			
Reading and understanding food labels	Understanding where food comes from	Knowing the importance of eating a nutritious diet and portion control	Understanding the relationship between food and lifestyle diseases
			
Being able to identify accurate and reliable food information	Having the knowledge and skills required to follow simple recipes	Understanding how to store, prepare and safe food safely	Being able to plan for meals using available resources such as money and time

Benefits of Developing Individual Food Skills

Economic Benefits

Learning to cook and use these skills at home can save a lot of money. It's usually much cheaper to cook at home than to eat at restaurants, order takeaways, or buy ready-made meals from the supermarket. This is because when we pay for these services, we also pay for things like staff wages, rent, utilities, and equipment. It's even been reported that it can be five times more expensive to order food from a restaurant than to cook the same meal at home.

Cooking at home also lets us manage our money better. In Australia, people spend about \$250 a week on food. With good planning and budgeting, this cost can be cut down. We can plan meals around sales or buy in bulk to save money and use cheaper cuts of meat to make healthy meals. This means we can eat well even on a tight budget and might have a bit of money left over for special treats.

Cooking skills can also help people earn money. For those who are good at cooking, they can sell their homemade food. Some people with skills in cooking different kinds of food, baking, or preserving sell their products at markets or online. Websites like Facebook Marketplace, Gumtree, Uber Eats, Menu Log, and Deliveroo make it easy for people to sell food from their homes.

A lot of people are now using these platforms to sell dishes from their home countries. Their customers can be international students missing food from home, or Australians who want to try authentic international dishes. As long as they get permission from local councils, this can be a great way to earn some extra money.

Watch this video about the economic benefits of making homemade food: <https://youtu.be/pAAv7gWV6SU>

Social Benefits

Buying, preparing, and eating food all have a social element.

When we shop for food, we talk to others. This can help us improve our communication skills and learn about social behaviour. This is good for everyone, especially people who live alone or older people who may feel lonely.

When we prepare food with others, we have to work together. This means we need to discuss who does what and cooperate with each other. This helps us to build skills like teamwork and leadership. Plus, talking about food gives us something in common with other people.

Also, cooking food from different cultures can help us learn about and connect with those cultures. It also helps to keep food traditions alive from one generation to the next.

Sharing a meal with others is a special time. It allows us to share our thoughts and feelings and connect with family and friends. When we cook for others, it shows we care. All of this helps to make us feel like we belong.

Watch this video about the social benefits of having food skills: <https://youtu.be/vY4tDJmzn8c>

Emotional Benefits

Cooking can be good for our emotional health. It helps us to relax and gives us a sense of achievement. We need to focus when we cook, which helps us stay in the present moment.

Knowing where our food comes from can make us want to choose food that is good for the planet. This makes us feel good because we know we are making a difference.

Cooking also makes us feel good about ourselves. It helps us feel satisfied and happy. Plus, when others enjoy the food we cook, it makes us feel valued.

In short, developing food skills and using them at home can help improve our relationships and emotional health. It's about more than just feeding our bodies. It's also about feeding our minds and hearts.

Physical Benefits

Learning food skills can lead to better physical health. Let's look at how.

Understanding Food Labels

When we know how to read food labels, we can make healthier food choices. Labels tell us how much fat, salt, and sugar is in food, and what ingredients have been added. This can help us pick foods that are better for us, and avoid those that can lead to health problems like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

Sourcing and Preparing Nutritious Foods

Knowing where our food comes from and how it's made helps us choose what to eat. When we understand how food affects our health, we're more likely to choose nutritious food.

When we plan, prepare, and cook our meals, we have more control over what we eat and how much we eat. People often eat too much when they have pre-made or fast food. But when we make our own food, we decide how much to eat. This helps us eat the right amount of food for our bodies.

Food Safety and Allergies

Cooking at home also means we know how our food has been stored and prepared. This can help us avoid food poisoning. We also know what's in our food, so we can avoid things we're allergic to.

Watch this video about the social, emotional and physical benefits of eating together: <https://youtu.be/QXtkaydQrfY>

Factors Enabling the Acquisition and Application of Food Skills

To develop food skills like cooking, a mix of exposure, learning, and practice is needed. A range of factors can help people build these skills.

Education and Exposure

Learning about food and cooking can start at home or school, where family traditions or school programs can get you interested. Today, you can learn a lot from resources like cookbooks, cooking shows, and online tutorials.

Websites like YouTube have many channels that offer step-by-step instructions for specific cooking skills or recipes.

Cooking classes are also available online, often provided by community and government support agencies. Since these classes are now online, they're easier for many people to access.

Time and Location

Having the time to cook and a suitable place to do it can affect how well you can develop your cooking skills. For example, people who had to stay at home for work or school found they had more time for cooking. Some people even found cooking a good way to relieve stress during these times.

Family and Cultural Norms

Your family and the cultural norms you grow up with can shape your food skills. Families are often where we learn about food, pick up cooking skills, and develop our eating habits. Food knowledge and cooking skills can be passed down from generation to generation.

Income

The amount of money you have for groceries can also affect your cooking skills. Some people think that healthy food and cooking at home are expensive, which can put them off. But the truth is, the cost of ingredients can drop over time as you buy fewer pantry items in subsequent grocery trips.

Accommodation

The place where you live can either encourage or discourage you from cooking. For example, people living in shared or limited kitchen spaces may find it difficult to practice their cooking skills. On the other hand, those living in modern homes with fully equipped kitchens may find it easier to try out different cooking techniques and become better cooks.

Watch these videos about programs that help people develop food skills: <https://youtu.be/QXtkaydQrfY> and <https://youtu.be/naGpRKdhISg>

Written Activity One

10+ Questions!

Read the content at this link: <https://foodstudies.com.au/courses/unit-2-2-4/>

Answer the questions below.

1. How can developing individual food skills lead to economic benefits?

2. What are some strategies for saving money through cooking at home?

3. How can cooking skills be used as a means to earn money?

4. What are the social benefits of developing individual food skills?

5. How does cooking food from different cultures contribute to social connections?

6. In what ways can cooking enhance emotional wellbeing?

7. How does knowing where our food comes from impact our emotional health?

8. What are the physical benefits of developing food skills?

9. How does understanding food labels contribute to better physical health?

10. What factors can enable the acquisition and application of food skills?

Written Activity Two

Magazine Mosaic of Food Skills

In this task, you are required to work in small groups to create a collage that visually represents the benefits of developing practical food skills.

1. Use poster paper, magazines, scissors, glue sticks, and textas to complete this task.
2. Search through the magazines provided to find images, words, or phrases that relate to the benefits of developing food skills. These can include images of healthy meals, cooking utensils, people cooking together, fruits and vegetables, social gatherings around food, or any other visuals.
3. Annotate the images with your own notes.
4. Cut out the selected images and words and arrange them on your poster paper. Use the textas to add any additional drawings, captions, or decorations that enhance their collage.
5. Present your collage to the class.
6. Explain the benefits you chose to represent and why you selected the particular visuals for your collage.

Written Activity Three

The Heart Foundation Koori Cooking Program

Read the article about The Heart Foundation's Koori Cooking program at this link:

Watch the video about the program: <https://youtu.be/LcXFX-JTKM0>

Answer the questions below:

1. What specific skills do participants learn in this cooking program? How do these skills contribute to their ability to prepare healthier meals?

2. What are the economic benefits of developing practical food skills and applying them in the home? How can these skills help individuals and families save money and make more cost-effective food choices?

3. What are the social benefits of participating in this cooking program? How does it foster a sense of community and connection among the participants?

4. How does the cooking program address emotional well-being? In what ways can learning and applying food skills positively impact participants' mental health and overall happiness?

5. What are the physical benefits of developing practical food skills? How can these skills lead to improved nutrition, better health outcomes, and reduced risk of chronic diseases?

6. Why was this cooking program successful? Identify the key factors or strategies implemented in the program that contributed to its effectiveness and positive outcomes.

7. In what ways do participants and the wider community benefit from this cooking program? How does it promote healthier eating habits, improved food choices, and overall well-being?

8. How might this program inspire participants to become advocates for healthy cooking and nutrition within their own communities? Discuss the potential ripple effect and the broader impact on public health.

9. What other types of cooking programs do you think communities in Australia would benefit from?

10. How can the development of practical food skills contribute to sustainability? What are the potential benefits for both individuals and the broader community?

Written Activity Four

The Heart Foundation Koori Cooking Program

Read the article about The Heart Foundation's Koori Cooking program at this link:

Watch the video about the program: <https://youtu.be/LcXFX-JTKM0>

Group Work

Discuss and reflect on the following questions in small groups or pairs.

1. What were the key messages delivered in the cooking program?
2. What were the economic, social, emotional, and physical benefits highlighted in the transcript?
3. Why do you think the program was successful?
4. How do you think the participants and the wider community benefited from the cooking program?
5. What other types of cooking programs do you think communities in Australia would benefit from?

Independent Work

Independently create an individual reflection plan.

Your action plan should include the following:

1. Specific food skills you would like to develop or improve upon.

2. Healthy cooking and eating habits you want to adopt or enhance.

3. Strategies for incorporating these skills and habits into your daily life.

4. Potential challenges you might encounter and how you plan to overcome them.

5. Ways you can share your knowledge and inspire others to make healthier food choices.

Group Work

Share one aspect of your action plan with your group members.

Practical Activity One

Jamie Oliver Kick-Start Breakfasts

A delicious, nutritious breakfast is the perfect way to start the day.

Cooking eggs is one of those skills that everyone should know!

Eggs are a versatile and quick food to cook! They are not just delicious. They are also incredibly nutritious.

Whether you prefer them boiled, scrambled, or poached, eggs are a great source of high-quality protein, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals such as iron.

Watch this video where Jamie Oliver demonstrates how to cook eggs five different ways:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPFoYpgUpY4>

Your task is to showcase your cooking skills by preparing a 'Kick-Start Breakfast' using the ingredients listed below. One can only assume that the more gourmet and extravagant your breakfast is, the better your food skills are!

Planning and Managing

Plan a kick-start breakfast that using the ingredients selected below.

Print a copy of the recipes you plan to use.

Make notes on the recipes about and the quantities of ingredients and what you will do first etc.

If working in pairs, ensure the quantities of ingredients serve two people.

If working individually, ensure the quantities of ingredients serve one person.

Select the ingredients you would rather have:

- | | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 eggs | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 100 grams tofu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 grams salt-reduced butter | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 tablespoon olive oil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50 ml low-fat milk | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 ml low-fat soy milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 wholemeal English Muffin | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 wholegrain wrap |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 cup baby spinach | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 cup kale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 slices low-fat tasty cheese | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 grams parmesan cheese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 slices ham | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 mushrooms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 chives | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 spring onion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ¼ avocado | or | <input type="checkbox"/> ½ corn on the cob |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ½ tomato | or | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 cherry tomatoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh Basil | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh Coriander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turmeric | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Cayenne Pepper |

Producing

Make your meal in class.

List the food skills that you used when planning, preparing, and cooking your kick-start breakfast.

Evaluating

Rate yourself on each of the skills, 1 = Poor and 10 = Excellent

Food Skills	Rating									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

1. Reflecting on your kick-start breakfast, which food skill(s) do you feel most confident in? Why?
2. Identify one food skill that you would like to improve upon based on your kick-start breakfast experience. How do you plan to work on developing that skill?
3. Discuss the economic benefits of your kick-start breakfast. How did it provide value for money or help you save on food expenses?
4. Explore the social benefits of your kick-start breakfast. Did you share your meal with others? How did it contribute to social connections and interactions?
5. Reflect on the emotional benefits of your kick-start breakfast. How did the meal make you feel emotionally? Did it contribute to your overall well-being and satisfaction?
6. Discuss the physical benefits of your kick-start breakfast. How did the nutritious components of your meal support your physical health and energy levels?
7. Identify the factors that enabled you to acquire and apply the food skills during the preparation of your kick-start breakfast. Consider factors such as resources, support, prior knowledge, and personal motivation.
8. Reflect on the challenges you encountered while planning, preparing, and cooking your kick-start breakfast. How did you overcome those challenges, and what did you learn from them?
9. Based on your kick-start breakfast experience, discuss the importance of developing practical food skills for leading a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle.

Practical Activity One

Look at what I made!

Here is a list of possible reasons why people should develop their food skills.

1. Identify whether these reasons for developing food skills are of economic, social, emotional, and or physical benefits.

Reasons why people should learn to cook	Economic	Social	Emotional	Physical
You'll have the advantage of knowing what's in your food				
You won't have to decide between cheap delivery for dinner				
You can bake people cakes for their birthday				
You'll be eating healthier without even trying				
Your friends and family will be SO impressed				
Everyone at work will LOVE you because you bring in cookies				
You'll save so much money				
You can finally stop buying instant ramen				
You'll develop knife skills				
You can satisfy your <i>every</i> craving				
Cooking is kind of hot				
You can make this				

Source: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/learn-to-cook_n_4761621

2. Identify a recipe that you have developed the skills to prepare and cook.

You will make this recipe in class, so ensure that you can make it during class time and that you do not order too many ingredients.

Fill out the food order form or recipe template provided by your teacher.

3. Explain why you would like to prepare and cook this recipe.

Refer to the reasons above for stimulus.

Physical Benefit	
------------------	--

Social Benefit	
Emotional Benefit	
Economic Benefit	

Planning and Managing

1. Plan your chosen recipe.
2. Provide a copy of your recipe and completed food order to your teacher.
3. Remember to reduce the quantity of ingredients to make a smaller portion.
4. Some of the ingredients in your recipe may be challenging to source. In this case, substitute the ingredient with something similar that is available from your local shops.

Producing

1. Make your recipe.
2. Identify one of the most challenging food skills in your recipe.
3. Record a short video of you completing this food skill.
4. Annotate your video with an explanation of how to perform this skill successfully.

Evaluating

1. List the most challenging food skills that you used when planning, preparing, and cooking your recipe.
2. Rate yourself on each of the skills, 1 = Poor and 10 = Excellent

Food Skills	Rating									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Identify the factors that enabled you to acquire and apply these skills.

Complete the recipe template below:

Student Name:		
Recipe Name:		
Source/ Weblink:		
Serves:		
Preparation Time:		
Cooking Time:		
Specialised Equipment:		
Ingredients: (include the quantities required for one or two serves only)		
Method:		
Process/ Term and Definition:		
Principles of safe and hygienic food handling practices:		

Summary Activity

Complete the following tasks.

What is the main idea about this key knowledge and key skills?

Write two or three sentences in your own words.

Identify a range of food skills.

Identify and **discuss** the economic benefits of developing food skills.

Identify and **discuss** the social and emotional benefits of developing food skills.

Identify and **discuss** the physical benefits of developing food skills.

Identify some factors that can assist in acquiring and applying food skills.

Exam Preparation Activity

Multiple-Choice Questions (5 marks)

Choose the response that is correct or that **best answers** the question.

1. What is a physical benefit of developing food skills?
 - a. People might learn how to prevent cross-contamination.
 - b. People may be able to read food labels accurately.
 - c. People may develop the ability to cook using ingredients that are low in saturated fat, sugar, and salt.
 - d. All of the above.
2. What factor significantly limits the development of skills in preparing nutritious meals?
 - a. Inadequate access to nutritious foods.
 - b. Lack of access to the internet.
 - c. Limited availability of specialised equipment, such as a food processor.
 - d. Family and friends that provide support.
3. Being able to prepare treats for birthday parties can be of _____ benefit.
 - a. Economic.
 - b. Spiritual.
 - c. Psychological.
 - d. Physical.
4. Mia prepares homemade burgers for her teenage children rather than purchasing them at the fast-food outlet opposite their home. The most likely benefit of doing so will be:
 - a. Her children will like them better than burgers from a well-known burger franchise.
 - b. Mia is likely to save time and money.
 - c. Mia will save money and reduce the amount of saturated fat her children will be consuming.
 - d. Her children will learn some cooking skills.
5. Which benefits of cooking are related to interactions and connections with others?
 - a. Economic benefits
 - b. Emotional benefits
 - c. Physical benefits
 - d. Social benefits

Short Answer Questions (14 marks)**Question 1** (8 marks)

Read the case study below:

Meet Sophie, a secondary-aged school teenager who is eagerly developing her cooking skills as part of her school's cooking program. Every week, Sophie's class dives into exciting culinary adventures, learning about various ingredients, cooking techniques, and nutrition. However, Sophie's enthusiasm for cooking is met with a challenge at home, where her family heavily relies on convenience foods.

At home, Sophie's family often opts for pre-packaged meals, takeout, and fast food due to their busy schedules and limited time for meal preparation. The kitchen remains largely unused, with the microwave being the most frequently used appliance. Sophie's exposure to fresh ingredients, culinary practices, and the joy of cooking contrasts with her family's reliance on ready-made meals.

Despite the disparity, Sophie's newfound passion for cooking extends beyond the classroom. She begins to cook homemade, nutritious meals at home.

- a. Explain how Sophie might benefit socially by being part of the cooking program at school. 2 marks

- b. Explain how Sophie's family might benefit physically by eating the homemade meals that Sophie makes. 2 marks

- c. Explain how Sophie might benefit emotionally by participating in the cooking program at school. 2 marks

- d. Explain how Sophie and her family might benefit physically from the homemade meals she makes. 2 marks

Question 2

- a. Identify one factor that would enhance someone's ability to acquire food skills in preparing nutritious meals and explain how this factor enables someone to acquire food skills. (3 marks)

- b. Identify one factor that would deter someone's from acquiring food skills and explain how this factor deters someone to acquire food skills. (3 marks)