

Where to start

Following a year group assembly where health research has been raised, the class teacher and class choose a health topic to focus on. This could include:

- Healthy eating
 - Fruit and vegetables
 - Eating a balanced diet
- Exercise
 - Participation in sport
 - Activity in everyday life (e.g. walking to school)

The class then discuss this topic and potential questions they are interested in. These might be questions such as "how many?", or "how long?". Alternatively they may be questions about how they feel such as "How much do you agree with the statement..?", or "How does ... make you feel?".

For example if the topic was "eating fruit and vegetables" the questions the class are interested in might be

- How many portions of fruit and vegetables do our class eat a day?
- Do we eat more fruit or vegetables?
- What are the most popular fruit and vegetables?
- Do our class agree that fruit and vegetables are good for you?
- Do you feel that you have more energy after eating fruit and vegetables rather than sweets and chocolate?
- Would you eat more fruit if it was free at school?



These questions can be made more interesting by collecting the information separately for boys and girls or other subgroups. The class then divide into groups of four or five children interested in a similar question and work together to undertake a mini health research project. This leads to the preparation of a large poster about their research.



Thinking of a question

The pupils need to think about



- What am I interested in?
- How can I make it interesting and exciting?
- BUT I must be able to collect some data easily and quickly
- If I am going to measure or weigh things, I need to have the right tools at school like a ruler or some scales

Think about how you will collect the data

- Make sure people will understand your question (you could ask a few people first whether they understand it correctly before you ask the whole class)
- Make a chart or list to help when collecting the data to make it quick
- Think how you are going to present the data before you start
- Make sure you collect all the information you need For example, if you want to look at differences between boys and girls, make sure you collect information separately for boys and girls

Top tips about starting

- Make the question simple
- Make it easy to collect the data
- Think about how you'd present the data

How do we tell people about our research?

Often in health research we make a poster about what we've found out so we can tell other people.

A poster tells a story. It tells us

- What someone is interested in
- Why they are interested in it
- How they collected the data to answer the question
- What the data show using pictures
- What they mean (this is very important)