



DTA Activities of Daily Living Grocery Shopping Unit

Welcome to the DTA Activities of Daily Living Skills Program, designed to help students with complex communication needs build the essential skills needed for a successful life. The **Grocery Shopping Unit**, a part of the All About Food ADL Kit, will introduce students to the basic food areas of the grocery store, bagging items, and how to use a shopping list. Each lesson is crafted to be accessible and meaningful, providing students with opportunities to learn the skills needed to become more independent in their daily lives.



Students will explore relevant vocabulary related to grocery shopping, reinforced by a book that sets the foundation for focus skills. Hands-on activities and varied practice opportunities are included to help students learn through repetition in a dynamic, supportive environment.

WHY?

The purpose of the Grocery Shopping Unit is to help students build real-world independence by learning **grocery store navigation, related vocabulary, and functional grocery shopping routines** (e.g., creating a list, bagging, etc.) through meaningful, accessible, and hands-on practice.

WHO?

These lessons and activities are created specifically for **Middle and High School students** with complex communication and learning needs in mind, however many of the activities are appropriate for elementary aged students.

WHEN?

Be intentional about finding and scheduling specific **time for students to learn** about grocery shopping. Use your classroom kitchen, role play, and community-based activities to discuss key items.

WHERE?

Learning happens everywhere! Pair the desk activities with hands-on experience to make learning stick! The activities should be used every day to provide **repetition with variety**.

WHAT?

For the Grocery Store unit, you will receive the following resources:

- Teacher's Guide (this document)
- Book - Going to the Grocery Store
- Desk activities (e.g., Grocery Store Sorting, Let's Bag Our Groceries, Grocery Store Map)
- Vocabulary Cards
- Communication Board
- Mind Map

Grocery Shopping: Sample Goals & Prepare

Sample Goals:

- **Grocery Store Organization** - The student will use a simple map to navigate the store to locate grocery items.
- **Grocery Store Organization** - The student will understand grocery store areas like “frozen,” “household,” and “bakery.”
- **Making a Shopping List** - The student will plan a list based on a weekly meal plan, specific recipe, or personal need.
- **Vocabulary Use** - The student will correctly use and identify key grocery store vocabulary in structured and/or hands-on activities.
- **Putting Away Food** - The student will unpack, sort, and organize cold and pantry items.
- **Bagging Groceries** - The student will successfully pack groceries and put heavy items in the bottom fragile items on top of the bag.

Skills-at-a-Glance



Basic Skills	Advanced Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bagging groceries • sorting and putting away food • group items by category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a shopping list • exploring grocery store ads • use a simple store map

General Preparation:

- Review materials in this guide.
- Determine when grocery store instruction will take place.



Tip: Use the Classroom Routine Planner to create your plan! DTA Website members can access the full planner on the DTA Website. All others, please find the planner on [Teacher's Pay Teachers](#).

- For students using AAC devices, make sure the support team is able locate necessary vocabulary for modeling purposes.
- Print one copy of the Communication Board and worksheets for each student.

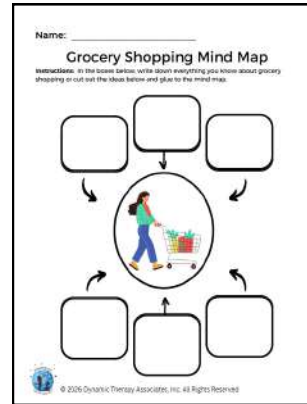
Grocery Shopping Materials

See the Teacher Tips and Schedule-At-A-Glance for ideas on how to use these materials!

Book



Mind Map



Worksheets

Name: _____

Grocery Store Map

Instructions: Look at the Grocery Store Map. Read each area below and decide where you would find it. Write the section number next to the item.

Grocery Store Sorting

Instructions: Cut out the food items and put them in the correct grocery store group.

Let's Bag Our Groceries

Instructions: Cut out the grocery items below. Put heavy items in the bottom of the bag and put fragile items on top.

Top

Bottom

Vocabulary Cards

Shopping Vocabulary Cards

grocery store	aisle	checkout	cashier
cart	receipt	price	money
list	canned goods	beverages	deli
produce	dairy	frozen foods	

Communication Board

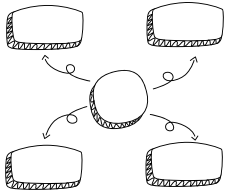
Teacher Note: Use this board in combination with the student's adult communication system.

Grocery Shopping Communication Board (Fringe Vocabulary)

grocery store	aisle	shelf	cashier	change
shopping basket	shopping cart	fruit	produce	deli
money	grocery list	nutrition label	dairy	frozen foods
handing change	check-out	scale	beverages	bakery
weigh	scan	bag groceries	canned goods	blocks

Grocery Shopping: Teacher Tips

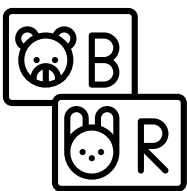
Ideas to Support Learning



Help students learn new concepts by using the Mind Map to brainstorm before each lesson.



Make learning stick by reading the book every day for a week (or more!) to enhance cognitive functioning and to increase knowledge.



Use the vocabulary cards to provide visual supports during lessons and activities.



Worksheets can be completed as a group activity or as individual desk work. They can also be used to assess student knowledge.

Ideas to Support Communication



Use communication boards to help students actively participate during lessons. Give one to every student to support vocabulary learning.



For students who use AAC devices, make sure to locate related words before starting a lesson.



Provide wait time! Pause for 10 seconds after commenting or asking a question. This gives students time to process and respond.



Point to symbols on communication boards and devices as you talk. This is called modeling.

Grocery Shopping: Schedule At-A-Glance

Use the following daily schedule as a guide and adjust to meet the specific needs of your classroom. The goal should be to provide **repetition with variety** as students learn about grocery shopping. This strategy builds confidence and empowers students to succeed and gives students many opportunities to learn and practice new skills.

Day 1: Introduction to Skill

- Build background knowledge - Explore the Mind Map to activate prior knowledge.
- Read the Going to the Grocery Store book. Pause on each page and invite students to engage and process.
- Use communication board and AAC devices to model relevant vocabulary.
- Use vocabulary cards to provide visual support while reading the book.

Day 2: Vocabulary

- Read the Going to the Grocery Store book again. Pause on each page and invite students to engage and process.
- Project the books using your classroom smart board. Use the questions at the back of each book to lead group discussion.
- Use vocabulary cards and communication boards to provide visual support.
- Complete the Grocery Store Sorting worksheet.

Day 3: Hands-On Skills

- Read book again. Pause on each page and invite students to engage.
- Watch the Let's Talk About Shopping video (link on p. 7).
- Use the Grocery Store Map worksheet to explore areas in the store.
- Help students who use AAC devices find vocabulary on their system.
- Plan to make something yummy and make a grocery list. Need inspiration? Use the attached recipe cards.

Day 4: Skill Practice

- Read book again. Pause on each page and invite students to engage.
- Use the vocab cards to play games (e.g., memory game, go fish, etc.) to support learning.
- Watch supporting videos (links on p. 7).
- Practice bagging. Use the Bagging Groceries worksheet to discuss "heavy on the bottom" and "fragile on the top" or grab some items from the pantry.

Day 5: More Practice

- Repeat lessons, as needed. All activities can be used for small group or whole class instruction.
- Set up a mock grocery store in your classroom or visit one during a CBI trip. Provide an opportunity to locate groceries, check items off the list, correctly bag groceries, and then put them away.

Grocery Shopping: Scope and Sequence (More ideas!)

Use the progression of skills outlined below as a guide. It's important to recognize that older students may need instruction or practice in foundational skills introduced earlier in the sequence.

Kindergarten–2nd Grade: Early awareness of grocery stores and basic food concepts

- What a grocery store is and why people go there
- Identifying common grocery items (milk, apples, bread, cereal)
- Using simple shopping-related vocabulary to request, comment, and choose
- Participating in pretend-play shopping routines

Grades 3–5: Beginning to navigate and understand how stores are organized

- How a shopping list helps us remember what we need
- Expanded store sections (frozen, canned goods, snacks, household items)
- Beginning comparison skills (size, color, brand)
- Sorting groceries by where they belong (pantry vs. refrigerator)

Grades 6–8: Functional Shopping and Problem Solving

- Navigating a store map and locating items with minimal support
- Comparing items by price, size, or preference
- Practicing checkout routines (waiting, paying, bagging)
- Bagging groceries safely (heavy items on bottom, fragile items on top)

Grades 9–10: Applied Shopping and Decision Making

- How to create a simple shopping list based on a recipe or need
- Reading price labels and making budget-friendly choices
- Identifying who to ask for help in a store and how to communicate needs
- Understanding store expectations (waiting in line, staying with the group)

Grades 11–12: Independence and Community Participation

- Budgeting for groceries and comparing prices across stores
- Understanding marketing on packages (sales, “family size,” “value pack”)
- Making healthy, affordable choices
- Demonstrating safe, confident, and independent behavior in community settings

Grocery Shopping: Extension Ideas and Resources

YouTube Videos

Use videos to support learning. A simple search on YouTube will give you loads of visual and auditory tools to use to support learning. Here are a few to get you started:

[Blippi's Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt!](#)

[The Carter Family - The Grocery Store](#)

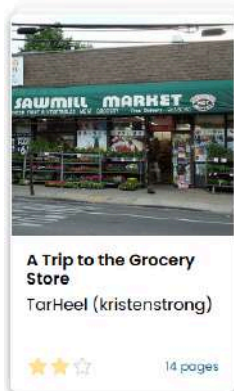
[Grocery Store Shopping - Life Skills Lesson](#)

[Let's Talk about Shopping at the Grocery Store](#)

[Bagging Groceries](#)

Monarch Reader

[Monarch Reader](#) is an online library of free books for beginning readers of all ages and adapted books for special education. Search for books related to going to the grocery store or create your own!



Thanks for Learning with us!



For additional books, recipes, AAC and Special Education products, please visit DTAschools.com & AACchicks TPT Store!



© 2026 Dynamic Therapy Associates, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

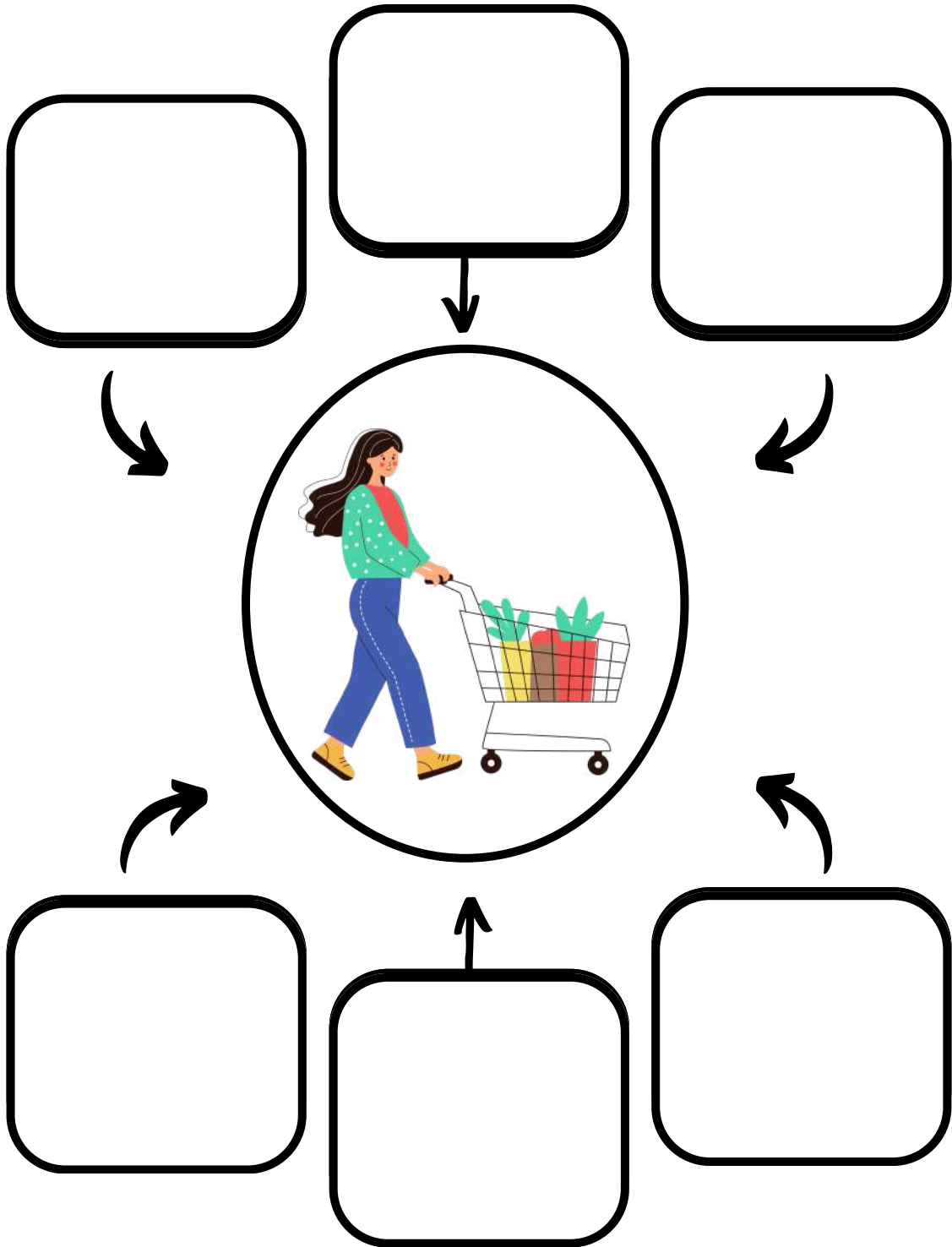
Purchase grants a single-use license to the original buyer for personal or classroom use only.

Commercial use, reproduction, redistribution, uploading to the internet, copying, altering, or sharing this material in any form is prohibited without written permission.

Name: _____

Grocery Shopping Mind Map

Instructions: In the boxes below, write down everything you know about grocery shopping or cut out the ideas below and glue to the mind map.





shopping cart



cashier



pay



bag



canned goods



check out



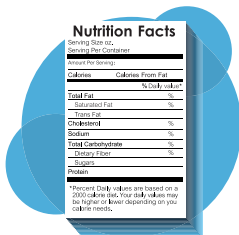
list



freezer



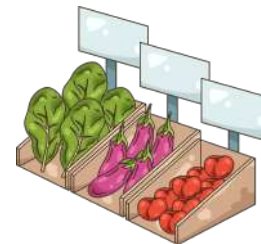
aisle



nutrition label



dairy

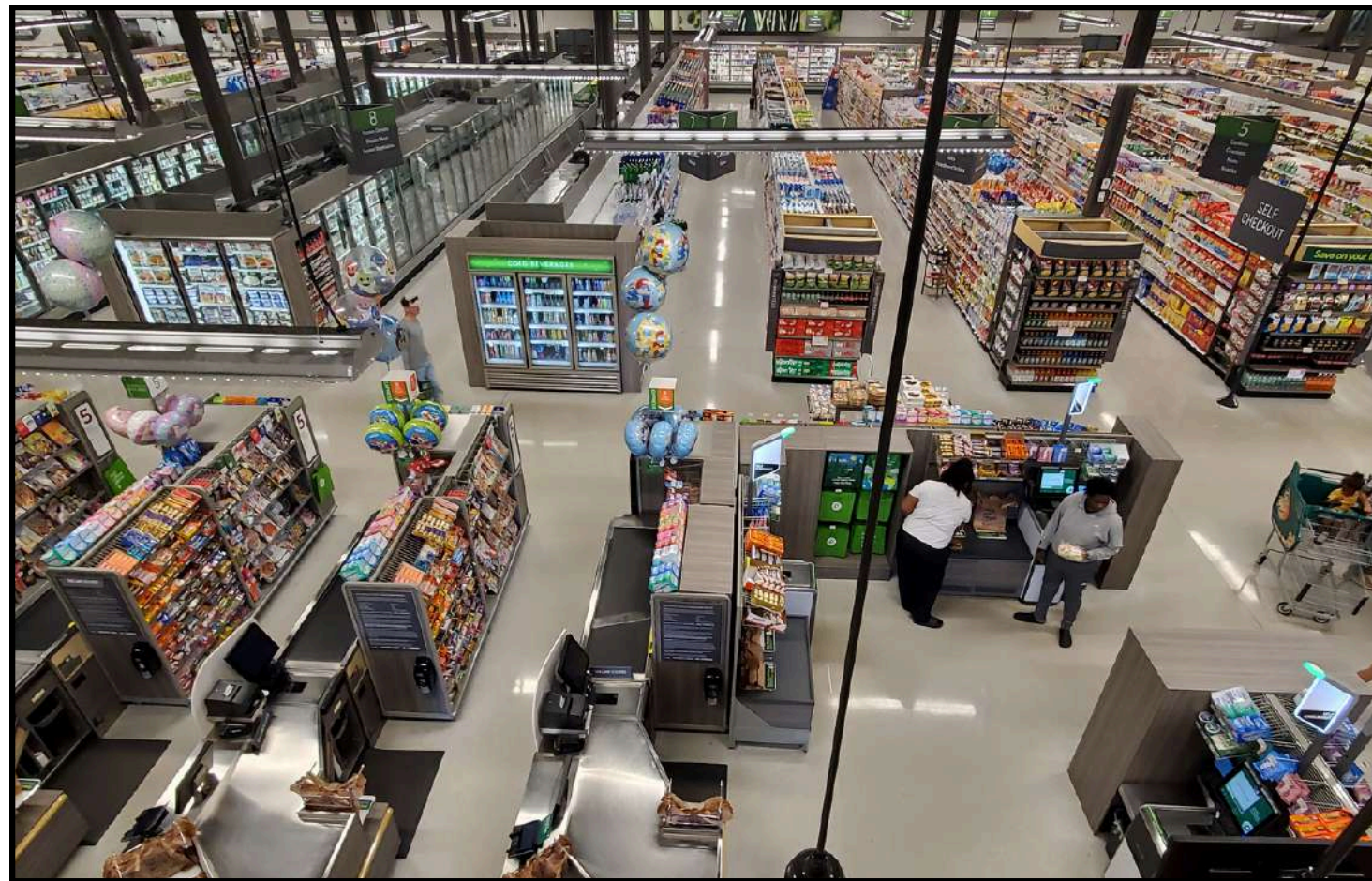


produce

Going to the Grocery Store



A grocery store is a place where people go to buy food and other household items. Some stores are big. Some stores are small.



Is your grocery store big or small?

Most grocery stores have different sections. Each section has a different type of food. Signs above the aisles will help you know what items are in each section.



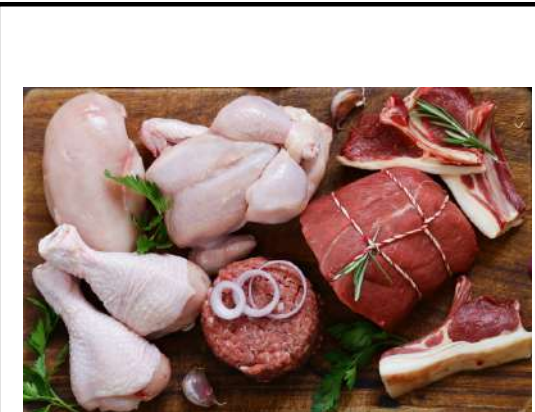
Do you know the different sections in the grocery store?



produce



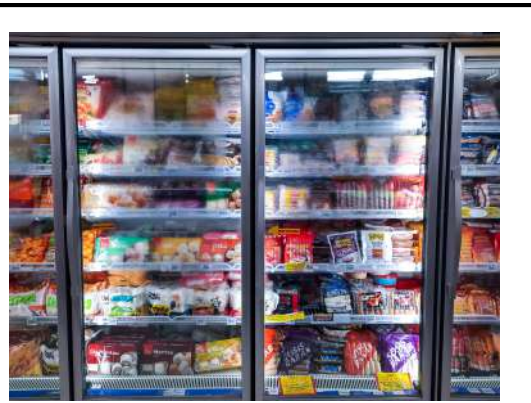
dairy



meat



bakery



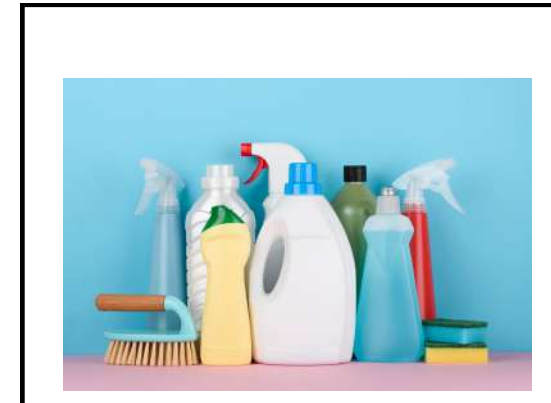
frozen foods



snacks



drinks



household items

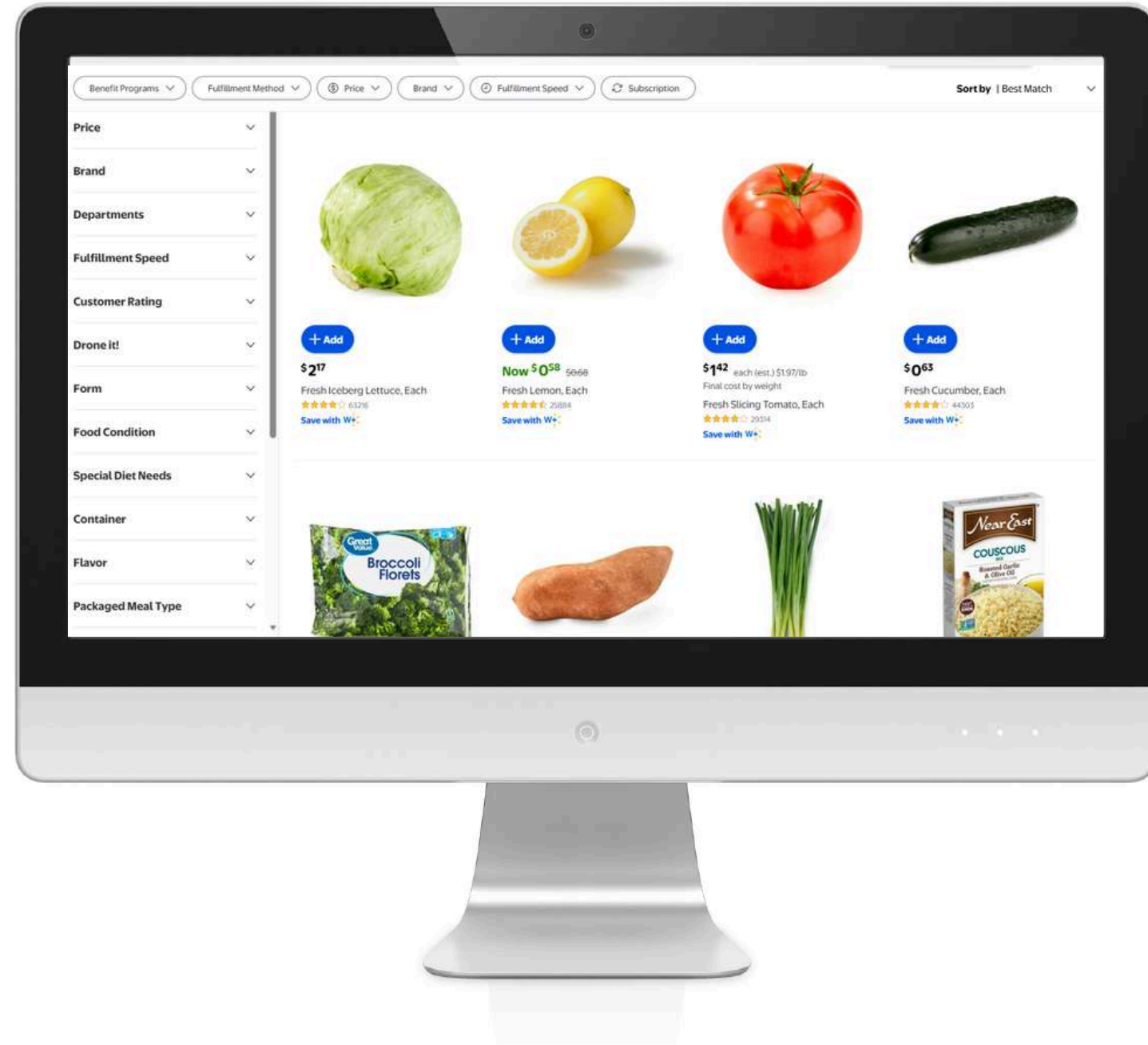


Before you go to the grocery store, make a shopping list. A shopping list helps you remember what you need. To make a list, look in the refrigerator, check the pantry, or think about meals you want to make.



Have you ever made a grocery list?

You can also check the grocery store ad to see what is on sale.



Produce
Have a Peaceful Ramadan
International NORRIDGE
SALE DATES: MAY 24TH - MAY 30TH

Memorial Day Sale

SALE!

- Gov't Insp. PORK BABY BACK RIBS: 2.99 LB.
- Homemade SAUSAGE: 1.99 LB.
- USDA Choice INNER SKIRT STEAK: 4.99 LB.
- 48 OZ. BREYER'S ICE CREAM: 2.99
- 1 lb. Oscar Mayer MEAT WIENERS: 99¢
- 8 oz. brick Kraft PHILADELPHIA CREAM CHEESE: 99¢
- 59 oz. Simply ORANGE JUICE: 2/\$5
- 6 oz. Yoplait ORIGINAL YOGURT: 10/\$4

BLACKBERRIES 6 OZ. PKG. 99¢ EA.

KIWI FRUIT 10/\$1 FOR

JUICY LIMES 20/\$1 FOR

HANGING BASKETS 14.99 EA.

BASIL OR ROSEMARY PLANTS 1.49 EA.

AVOCADOS 98¢ EA.

VIDALIA SWEET ONIONS GREAT FOR GRILLING! 39¢ LB.

FAVA BEANS 14.1 oz. Sultan 99¢

NESTLE PURE LIFE WATER 28 Pk. 2/\$5

SKINNY POP POPCORN 4.4 oz. 2/\$4

BAUDUCCO WAFERS ORIGINAL, SUGAR FREE, OR GLUTEN FREE 99¢

HELLMANN'S MAYONNAISE 30 oz. 2.99

Danya Harvest ORGANIC BEANS 16 oz. 1.99

HODGSON MILLS WHITE, WHEAT, OR RYE FLOUR 5 lbs. 2/\$3

PRINCE PAUL WAFERS CLASSIC AND DARK CHOCOLATE 4/\$1

NO COUPONS ACCEPTED ON SALE ITEMS. NO RAIN CHECKS.
Not responsible for typographical errors. We reserve the right to limit quantities. While supplies last.

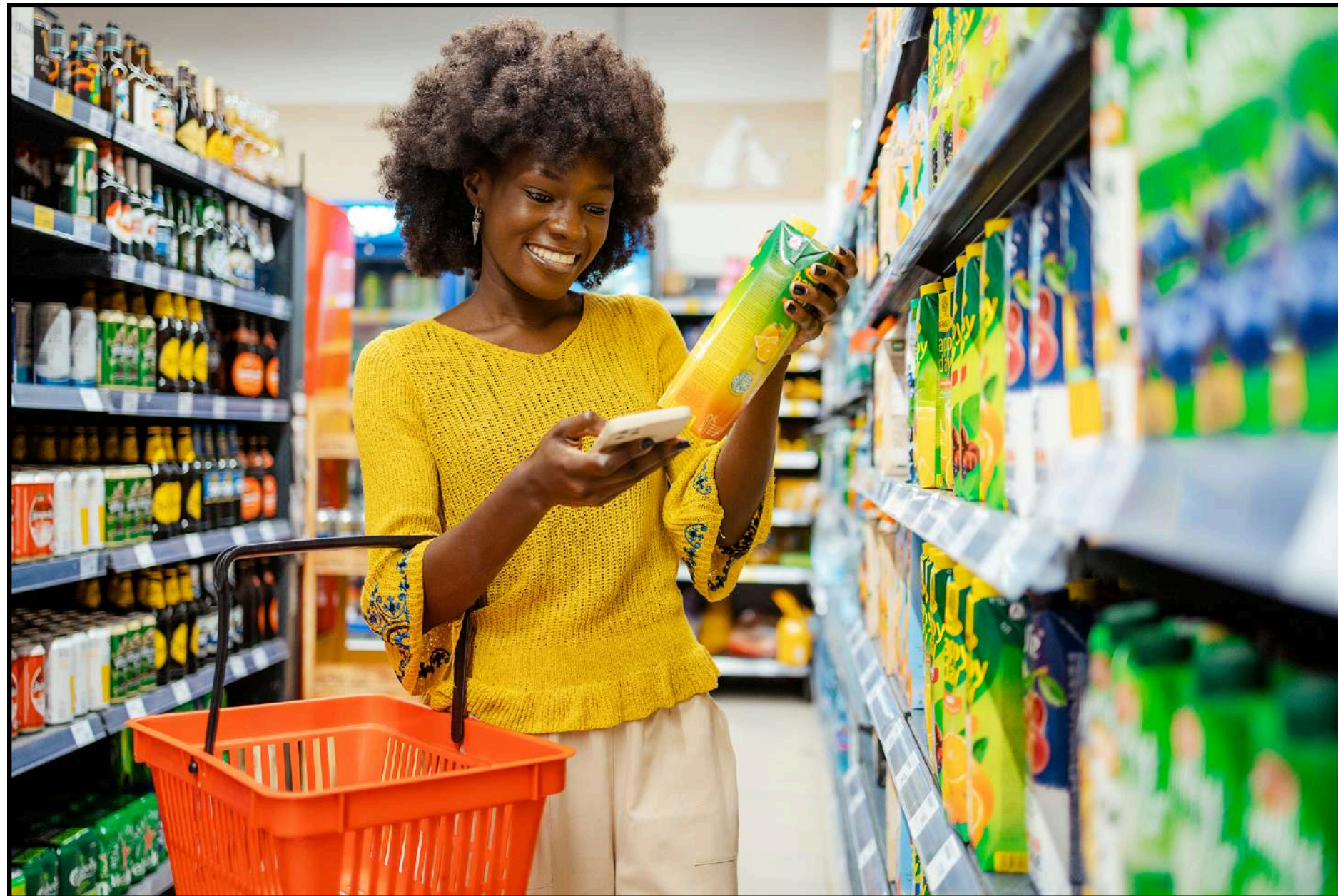
When you walk into the store, you should get a cart or a basket. A cart is good if you need many items. A basket is good if you just need a few items.



To find the things on your list, walk through the store and look at the signs above each aisle. If you can't find something, it's OK to ask a store employee for help.



When you find something on your list and put it in your cart or basket, don't forget to check it off your list. Try to keep your things organized in your cart. Put cold items together and fragile items, like eggs or bread, on top.



When you are finished shopping, go to the checkout line. At checkout, your items will be scanned. The scanner reads the barcode and shows the price.



Do you know what a barcode looks like?

When everything has been scanned, you can pay with cash or a with credit card. After you pay, you will get a receipt. The receipt is a long piece of paper that shows what you bought and how much it cost.



Some stores have employees who bag your groceries, or you may have to bag your own. Putting groceries in a bag helps keep your food safe and organized. When bagging groceries, put heavy items on the bottom, and put fragile items on top.



When you get back from the store, it's time to put the groceries away. This helps keep food fresh and easy to find.



Put away cold items away first. Then put away pantry items. Household items, like paper towels and cleaning supplies, should be put away last.

1



2



3



You did it!

- ✔ You made a list.
- ✔ You found items in the store.
- ✔ You checked out and paid.
- ✔ You put everything away.



Grocery shopping is an important life skill. Every time you practice, you get more confident and independent.

Conclusions: Think About It!

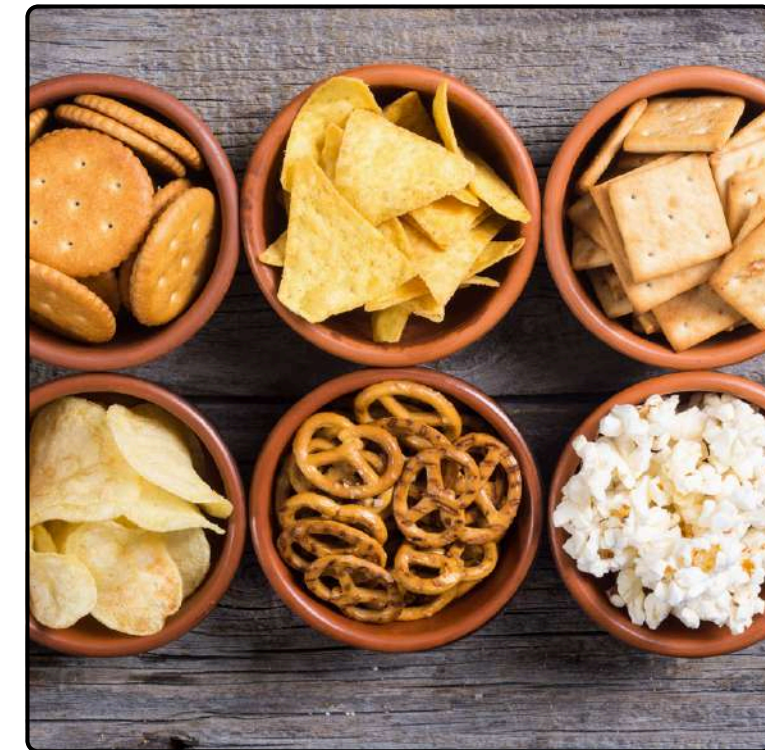
What things can you buy at the grocery store?



produce



household items



snacks

Conclusions: Think About It!



What can you do if you need help finding something?



ask an employee



look at your list



look at the signs

Conclusions: Think About It!

What can you do to help write a grocery list?



look in the refrigerator



look in the pantry



think about something you want to make

Thanks for reading with us!



For additional books, recipes, AAC and Special Education products, please visit our website & AACchicks TPT Store!



Shopping Vocabulary Cards



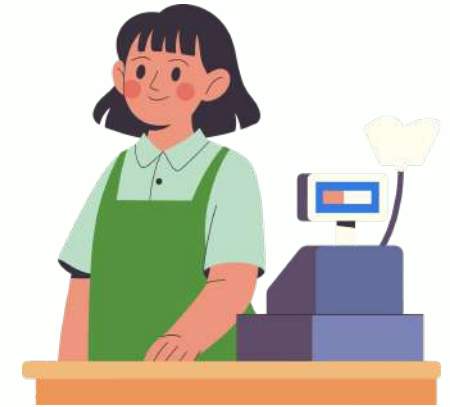
**grocery
store**



aisle



checkout



cashier



cart



receipt



price

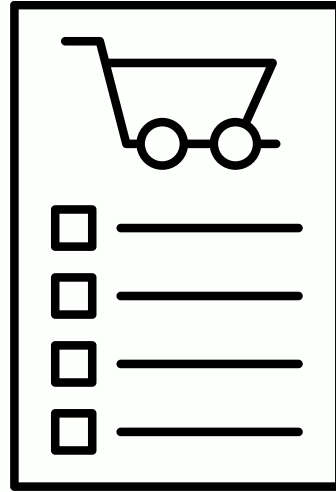


sale

Shopping Vocabulary Cards



money



list



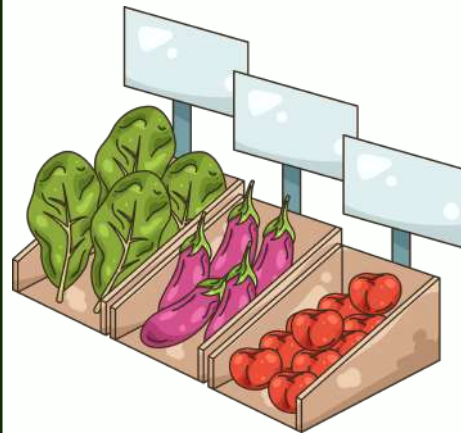
canned goods



beverages



deli



produce



dairy

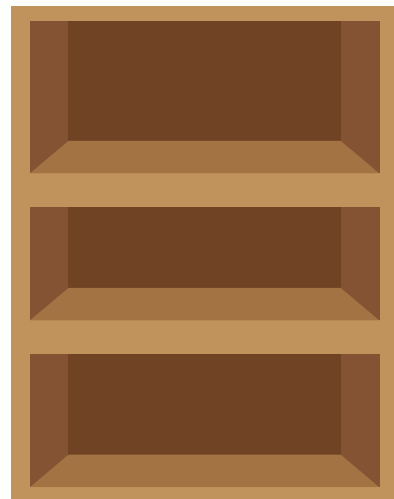


frozen foods

Shopping Vocabulary Cards



basket



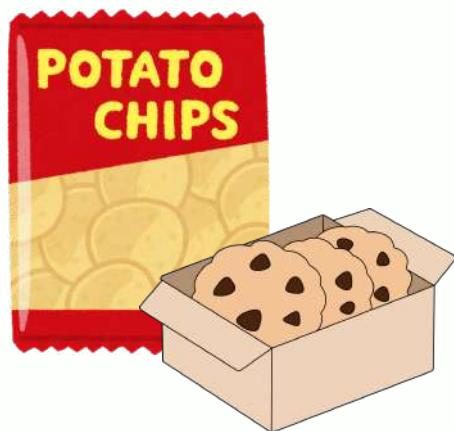
shelf



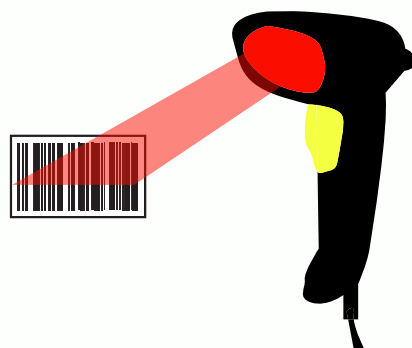
bakery



weigh



snacks



scan



bag

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size oz.
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving:

Calories	Calories From Fat	% Daily value*
Total Fat		%
Saturated Fat		%
Trans Fat		%
Cholesterol		%
Sodium		%
Total Carbohydrate		%
Dietary Fiber		%
Sugars		%
Protein		%

*Percent Daily values are based on a 2000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

nutrition label

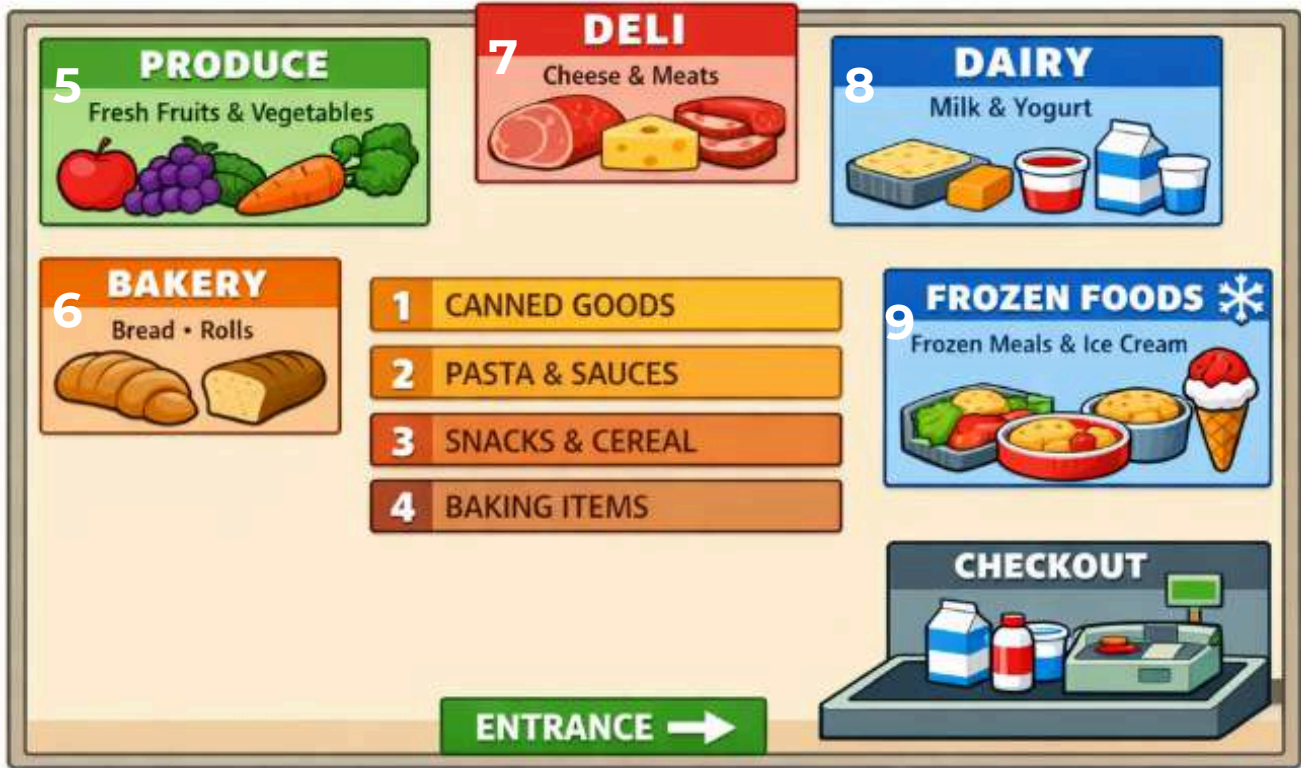
Grocery Shopping Communication Board (Fringe Vocabulary)

 grocery store	 aisle	 shelf	 cashier	 receipt
 shopping basket	 shopping cart	 find	 produce	 deli
 money	 grocery list	 nutrition label	 dairy	 frozen foods
 healthy choice	 check out	 price	 beverages	 bakery
 weigh	 scan	 bag groceries	 canned goods	 snacks

Name: _____

Grocery Store Map

Instructions: Look at the Grocery Store Map. Read each item below and decide where you would find it. Write the section number next to the item.



apple



cookies



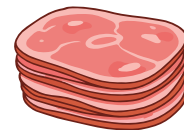
sugar



milk



soup



sandwich meat



popsicle



bread



pasta

Name:

Grocery Store Sorting

Instructions: Cut out the food items and put them in the correct grocery store group.



Dairy



Produce



Frozen Foods



Household Items



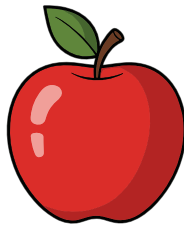
laundry detergent



lettuce



milk



apple



popsicles



cleaning spray



chicken nuggets



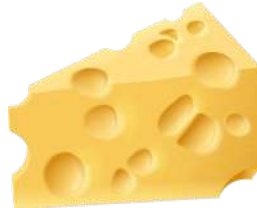
eggs



carrot



broccoli



cheese



paper towels



ice cream



frozen pizza

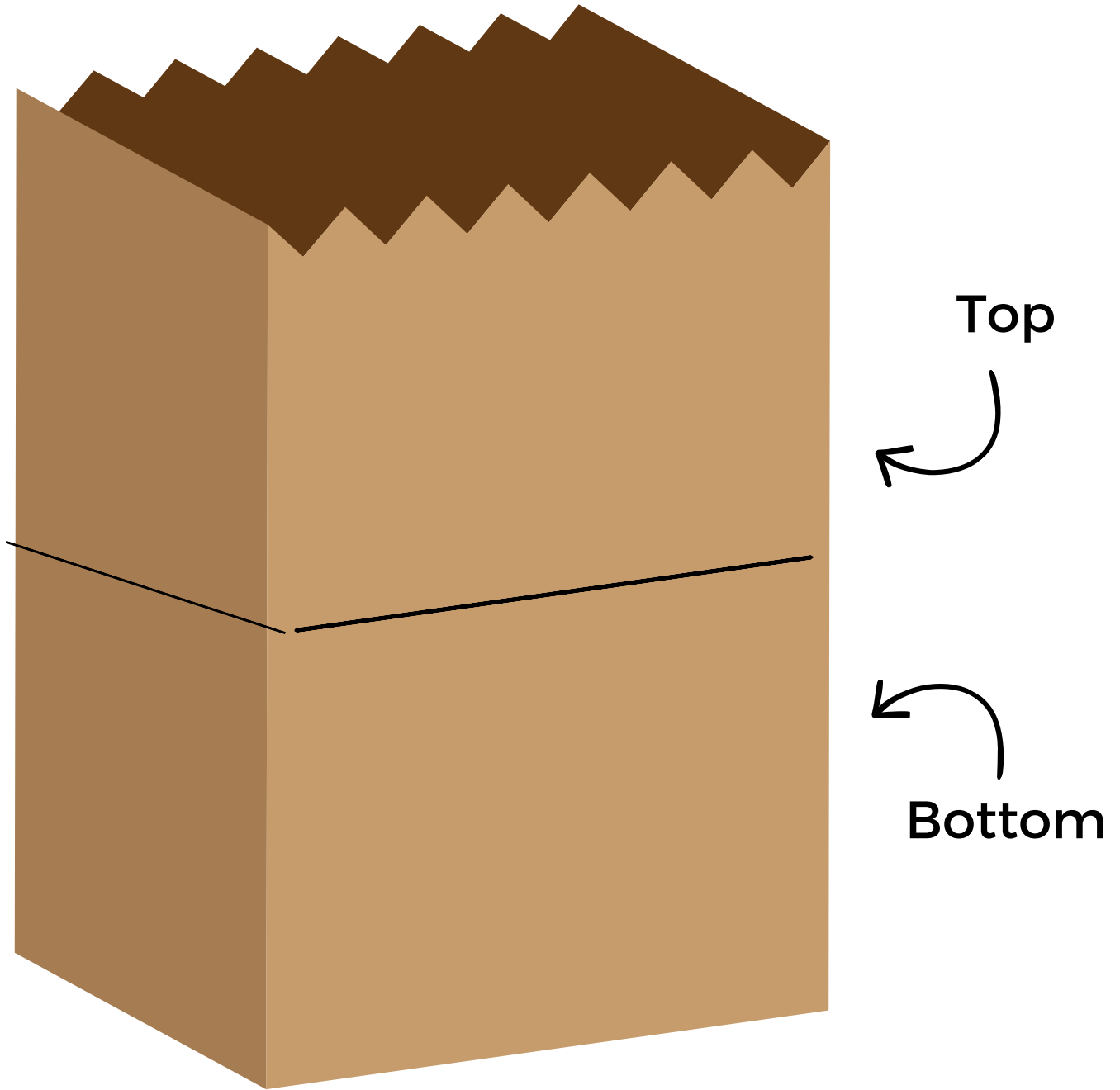


yogurt

Name: _____

Let's Bag Our Groceries

Instructions: Cut out the grocery items below. Put heavy items in the bottom of the bag and put fragile items on top.





bread



cans



bagels



chips



milk



bananas



sugar



eggs



juice

CARROTS, CELERY, AND RANCH DIP



INGREDIENTS



celery



carrots



ranch dressing

SUPPLIES



bowl



knife



plate

DIRECTIONS



1. Wash and cut vegetables.



2. Carefully cut celery and carrots.



3. Put celery and carrots on the plate.



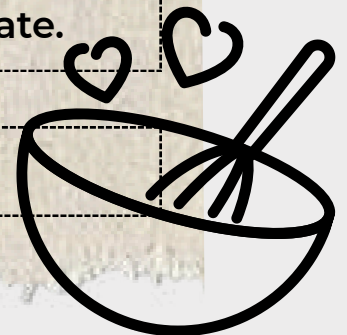
4. Pour some ranch dressing in bowl.



5. Add the bowl of dressing to the plate.



7. Eat and enjoy!





1
Gather ingredients



2
Wash carrots and celery



3
Cut carrots and celery



4
Pour ranch dressing into a bowl



5
Put everything on a plate and enjoy

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



Food appearance

Taste of the food

Smell of the food

Recipe difficulty

Would you make again?

CHOCOLATE CAKE IN A MUG



INGREDIENTS



egg



cocoa



powdered
sugar

SUPPLIES



mug



microwave



Measuring
spoons & cups



fork

DIRECTIONS



1. Crack egg into mug.



2. Wisk egg with fork.



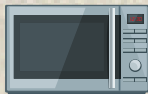
3. Add 2 Tablespoons of cocoa powder.



4. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of powdered sugar.



5. Mix with fork.



6. Microwave for 50-60 second.



7. Let cool and enjoy!





1 Gather ingredients



2 Whisk egg



3 Add 2 Tbsp cocoa and 1/4 C powdered sugar



4 Mix together



5 Microwave for 50-60 seconds



6 Let cool and enjoy

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



Food appearance

Taste of the food

Smell of the food

Recipe difficulty

Would you make again?
