

## Ideation exercise

### Breakfast for Teenagers

“Teenagers who like to sleep in late need an easy way to eat breakfast on the go because they don’t have time to eat breakfast before leaving their home and yet breakfast is the most important meal of the day.”

#### Listing Ideas:

1. Grab and go food
2. Breakfast at school
3. Breakfast on the way to school
4. Skip breakfast and have school serve early lunch
5. Sit down and eat breakfast with the family before school

#### Eliminating a Constraint:

*If I identify the constraint as a lack of time, then:*

1. Grab and go food stands out
2. School could start later in the day (some schools are actually doing this now)
3. Make it more desirable to eat breakfast- say encouraging their friends to meet up before school for coffee and a pastry. (Much like the Swedish Fika.)
4. Combining other activities with breakfast. Maybe saving some homework for the morning and sitting down before school to work on breakfast and homework. This gives them more free-time in the evening, which might be a good trade-off for some.
5. Other morning time-savers might be things like: taking showers at night so they have the extra 15 minutes in the morning for breakfast, setting clothes out the night before, etc.

#### Making an Analogy:

1. The early bird gets the worm- getting up earlier would solve the problem.
2. Your metabolism is like a fireplace- If you wanna have energy, you must eat.
3. Your car can’t run on an empty gas tank- and neither can you. Food is fuel.
4. Dinner is to breakfast as dusk is to dawn- they are mirrors of each other, and both important
5. Breakfast is as important to a growing human as fish is to a cat. Yeah, it’s that important.

#### Exaggerating:

1. A student passing out because they skipped breakfast. (This actually happened to me in middle school.)
2. Someone skipping breakfast and lunch and not eating until they get home from school.
3. Some poor teenager having to get up at 4:45AM so they have time to eat breakfast, do their make-up, and get out the door by 7:45AM.
4. A student getting up at 5AM so he can make breakfast for all of his siblings, but he doesn’t have time to eat himself.
5. A student failing all of their classes because they’re too tired/hungry to study. (Sadly, I’m finding many of the exaggerations regarding the importance of breakfast to be too factual.)

### Getting in the Garbage:

1. Be late for school, or skip first period, so they can have more time to eat breakfast.
2. Someone driving to school, in their car, drinking their coffee and eating breakfast all at the same time. (Obviously a very bad idea for a new, or any, driver.)
3. Go to bed at 8PM so they have time to get enough sleep and get up early enough for breakfast.
4. Host breakfast parties.
5. Get high schools to have first period in the cafeteria.

### Most Useful:

What I think is the most useful is grab-and-go food. It solves the problem of lack of time and it solves the problem of not eating food. The biggest hurdle here is to make it taste good enough to eat, but still contain protein and slow burning carbs.

### Most Desirable:

The idea most desirable is for schools to offer free breakfast for all students during first period. Students don't have to come to school early and they can eat for the first few minutes of class. This way, nutritionists also have a hand in what the students are eating and cost isn't a hurdle for low-income kids.

### Easiest:

For parents- schools offering free breakfast. Parents literally don't have to participate.  
For students- a cross between grab and go foods and breakfast at school. The important thing is that with both of these, they save time and still get fed.  
For schools- grab and go foods provided by the families. It is burdensome on the schools to have to provide free breakfast.

### Most Functional:

Grab-and-go foods are the most functional. They require minimal effort on the parent's part (purchasing at the store) and the kids don't lose time but still eat breakfast.

### Most Sustainable:

I would like to think that free school breakfast would be sustainable, but realistically, it's not. I'm left to conclude that grab-and-go foods are the most sustainable. They are inexpensive and most families can afford them.

### Reflection:

Listing ideas and getting in the garbage were my favorite ideation methods. In a way, they are opposites- one very practical and the other helping me to get out of my "listy" head and forcing me to see things outside of the box.

My least favorite was the exaggeration. I'm not sure why, but I found this to be difficult to come up with ideas on. I think that exaggeration has an air of silliness to it, and hungry children are certainly not silly. Perhaps this method would work better for me with a different topic.

I went into this project with a bias. I have thought about this topic a lot and already had some well-formed opinions on it. Honestly, I think it makes it more difficult in a way to see things from an etic point of view when you are living in it. I have children and have seen how two different school systems deal with breakfast. I currently live in a school district that is mostly low-income and they are offered free breakfast. It is amazing to me how many of those kids wouldn't eat if it weren't for the school's program. Even though I advocate for grab-and-go foods as the "best" or "most sustainable," I actually do think that Americans need to realize that protecting our children and our future starts with the most basic- food and education.