



COMFORT FOOD

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

5+ MINUTES

- Lead this quick cognitive warm up to build attention, nimbleness and self-awareness, as well as group connection.
- Ask students to take turns, one at a time, naming a food that brings them comfort or common comfort foods. No repeats. Continue as long as time allows.
- Have everyone clap or snap fingers to set a good pace.
- When repeating this class, ask students to name foods from their family traditions.
- Encourage distance learners to join in from home.

Hello! I'm glad we are all here for our Total Brain Health "Brain Play." These fast-paced workouts are an important way we can keep our thinking focused, quick, and nimble.

Today's Brain Play is "Comfort Food." Do you have some favorite comfort foods? For example, we may associate tea with milk and sugar with cozy moments from childhood. Or we may have foods that culturally we think of as comfort foods, like mashed potatoes. We'll go around taking turns naming foods that we find comforting, or that we think of as comfort foods. Let's try not to repeat a food that was already said. We'll (clap/snap) together to set a nice pace so we think quickly. Ready?



COMFORT FOOD

TAKE-HOME WORKSHEET

TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH BRAIN PLAYS

Studies show your gut health impacts your risk for dementia. Findings even suggest that gastrointestinal changes may be a cause of increased beta-amyloid, a recognized pathology linked to Alzheimer’s disease.

BUILD YOUR BRAIN

Foods high in probiotics, friendly bacteria that improve your health, can bolster the aging gut and potentially reduce risk for cognitive decline. Take 3 minutes and identify the foods below that are traditionally high in probiotics or live cultures (hint: many of them are fermented!). Put a checkmark next to the items you like the best.

Circle only the foods traditionally high in probiotics:

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Milk | Popcorn | Eggs | Kombucha |
| Yogurt | Mushrooms | Pasta | Pickles |
| Nuts | Kefir | Chicken Soup | Ketchup |
| Cauliflower | Raisins | Tempeh | Mayonnaise |
| Kimchi | Bran Cereal | Apples | Traditional Buttermilk |
| Salmon | Sauerkraut | Miso | Natto |
| Olive Oil | Black Beans | Pizza | Sausages |

- | | | | | | |
|--------|------------|----------|---------|-------------------------|-------|
| Yogurt | Kimchi | Kombucha | Pickles | Traditional Butter Milk | Natto |
| Tempeh | Sauerkraut | | | | |

The following foods are traditionally high in probiotics. However, it's important to read product labels to confirm the presence of live bacteria and also to avoid foods or drinks high in sugar.

Answer key: