Discovering Food and New Dinosaurs with the Scientific Method

This is a story about Connor.

Connor likes to explore new things.

That’s how he learned about rocks, planets, and dinosaurs.

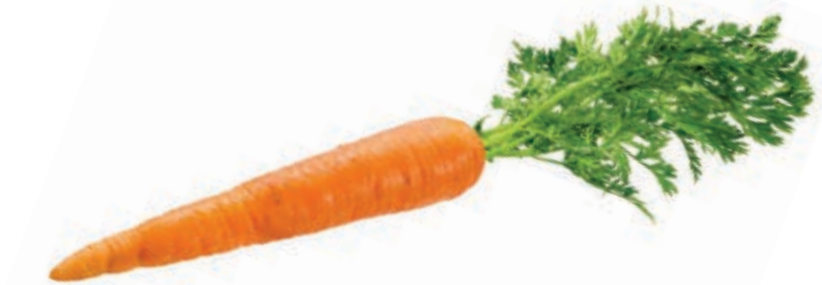
Connor wants to be a paleontologist and dig up dinosaurs when he grows up.

Connor has fun trying many other things, except foods. For Connor, it is easier to learn a new game than it is to taste some foods. Some kids like to taste new foods. For other kids, unfamiliar foods are not as easy. This is okay.

Many years have passed. Connor is older now. He is studying paleontology at the university. Connor is also learning a lot about food with his own, “Scientific Method for First-Time Foods.”

First, every time Connor is presented with an unfamiliar food, he thinks, “Will I like it?”

Second, Connor conducts research about each food sample. When he's not around or dining with other people, he even plays with the food sometimes. It helps him to learn more about the smell, composition, texture, and other characteristics of each food.



Connor often asks questions to research new foods, too. Some food samples, like carrots, are simple. There's just one food. Other food samples, like beef stew, are more complicated. Simple or complicated, asking questions helps Connor gather information.

For example, this casserole is the focus of one of many of Connor's food experiments. Connor's mom has made Shepherd's Pie. Connor asks, "What foods are in it?" He takes notes and lists the main ingredients:

1. potatoes; 2. hamburger;

3. carrots; and 4. green beans.

Connor forms a guess, a *hypothesis,* about whether he will like the food sample or not. Research suggests that if Connor's hypothesis is that he *will* like the new food, the probability that he will like it increases.

Since Connor likes hamburger, potatoes, carrots, and green beans, his hypothesis is that he will like Shepherd's Pie.

Fourth, Connor tests his hypothesis.

Connor tastes the Shepherd's Pie and is surprised. He does not like it.

Connor takes a second bite with just the hamburger. He likes it.

Connor takes a third bite with just the carrots. He likes them, too.

Connor takes a fourth bite with just green beans. He doesn't like it.

Connor's fifth and final step in his, "Scientific Method for First-Time Foods" is to analyze his data and form a conclusion. Connor concludes that he likes green beans, but not in Shepherd's Pie. He shares his findings with his family.

Connor's mom says, "Shepherd's Pie doesn't have to have green beans in it!" She offers to make it with corn next time.

Connor forms a new hypothesis that he will like Shepherd's Pie with corn. He will follow the steps of his "Scientific Method for First-Time Foods," listed on the next page.

Connor's Scientific Method for First-Time Foods

1. Question: Will I like it?
2. Conduct research to learn more about the food sample.
3. Form a hypothesis about whether it will taste good, or not.
4. Test the hypothesis by tasting the food.
5. Analyze the data and form a conclusion.

Sometimes a conclusion leads to a new question or hypothesis and the steps are repeated.

This week, Connor will travel to Thailand to learn about the discovery of a new dinosaur called Phuwiangvenator. It is a predator that is smaller and older than it's cousin, Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Connor travels a lot now. Unfamiliar foods aren't a problem for him anymore. Connor is excited about learning about Phuwiangvenator and experimenting with first-time Thai foods! He will use his Scientific Method for First-Time Foods.

Reference

The University of Bonn (May 28, 2019). Thai dinosaur is a cousin of t-Rex. Science Daily. Retrieved from https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/05/190528120437.htm