

# The Body Engine



Jeff and Cindy Jones' father took them to a baseball game last night. The trip there and back was so long that it made them very tired. Because they were so tired, they woke up late this morning and had to ride to school with their dad. When they were about half way to school, the car just stopped.

Why do you think the car stopped?

Mr. Jones got out of the car and lifted up the hood. Inside was the engine.

Jeff said, "I think that big engine is what makes the car go."

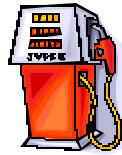
Cindy said, "If it makes the car go, then why aren't we going?"

Jeff said, "I don't know. Dad, why won't it go?"

Mr. Jones explained that an engine is not enough. The engine must be fed before the car can go.

What do you feed a car engine?

Mr. Jones also told Jeff and Cindy kinds of engines, but that they all can burn energy. Energy is what makes everything go!



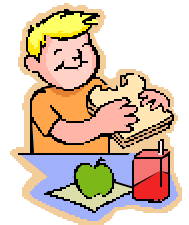
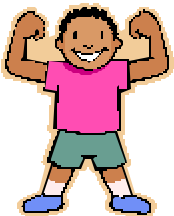
that there are many different their fuel to make heat and en-

Mr. Jones told Jeff and Cindy that people have engines too. Their engine is their body, and it has to be fed. He asked Cindy if she knew what the body engine's fuel is.

She thought for a minute and answered, "Food."

Jeff said, "But, Dad how does the food make me move?"

Mr. Jones said, "It burns like the fuel in a car, only much slower and without flames. It may seem hard to believe, but food does burn in your body even though we can't see the flames. Feel your cheek, or blow on your hand. It's warm. The heat comes from inside your body, where the food you eat burns and makes heat."



Jeff thought again and said, “Can I eat just once and have enough fuel for always, Dad?”



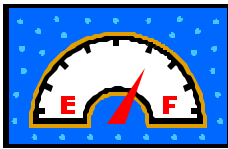
Mr. Jones replied, “Well, Son, the problem with the car right now is that the fuel supply is gone because we used all the gas for the trip to the ball game last night. You see, a car can hold only enough fuel for a short time. Your body is the same way. If it does not get enough fuel, it will eventually stop running, so you must supply it with fuel-like food every day.”

Jeff was happy because he now understood why he needed to eat every day.

Cindy looked at her watch and said, “Gosh Dad, we’re going to be late for school. Is there any way to get the car started?”

Jeff said, “Look Dad, there’s a gas station right down the street.”

And very soon the Jones’ car was filled with fuel.



This story is adapted from NET Nutrition Education, *Choose Well, Be Well: A Curriculum Guide for Preschool and Kindergarten*, California State Department of Education, 1982.



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