



The Gross Factor

Ben Broccoli was heading to a home where a little boy named Eli lived. He was called there by Eli's parents who were tired of hearing one word over and over again. Ben didn't know how he could help a family with words but he knew there must be more to the story. When Ben got to Eli's house, they were about to sit down for dinner. They invited Ben to join them in a healthy meal of fish, rice, and green beans. Eli's mother put Eli's plate in front of him. Then his parents quietly said together, "Three, two, one," And then as if on command Eli shouted, "Gross!" Eli's parents shook their heads. Eli's dad explained, "Every time we put the food we're eating in front of Eli, the first word out of his mouth is gross. He hardly eats. It is so frustrating." Ben knew how frustrating it must be. He had met many families who had the same kind of problem. As the family ate their meal, Eli just continued to say, "Gross, gross, gross." Needless to say, Eli didn't eat a thing.

Ben spent the rest of the evening trying to think of a way to convince Eli that healthy food isn't gross. Then Ben had a great idea. He went to Eli's room where he was reading a book. Ben Broccoli asked Eli if he wanted to play a game. Eli loved games and agreed to play. Ben put a plate in front of Eli. Then he placed a piece of broccoli on the plate and a handful of potato chips. Then Ben asked Eli what food on the plate was gross. Eli spoke, "That's easy. The broccoli is gross. Gross, gross, gross." Then Ben spoke, "I'm sorry Eli but that's wrong. The chips are the ones that are gross. They are soaked in oil and then cooked which takes all of the good from the potato out of them. They are full of fat and don't give your body anything good. Broccoli on the other hand is not gross. It is full of vitamins and is good for your heart. Now let's try another one." This time Ben put a piece of chicken on the plate and a donut. Then he asked Eli again which food was gross. Eli spoke, "This is so easy. It's the chicken that's gross. Gross, gross, gross." Ben spoke, "Sorry Eli you are wrong again. It is the donut that is gross. Just like the chips. Doughnuts are dipped in oil and fried. They are full of fat and can leave you feeling tired if you eat too many. The chicken on the other hand is full of protein and gives your body lots of energy."

Ben Broccoli then told Eli, "Foods full of fat, sugar, or salt are what is gross for your body. They don't give you any nutrients your body needs to work right and could even get you sick if you eat too much." Eli didn't like getting sick. He always had to stay in bed when he was sick. Eli also never knew that the foods he liked were not very good for his body. Ben Broccoli asked Eli, "Remember foods that are good for you aren't gross because they help your body and the food that could hurt your body should be the foods you call gross." Eli agreed that good for you couldn't be gross. Soon Eli switched his favorite word 'gross' to one everyone liked much better...GREAT!

