



# Food Production Department

## Lesson 4 - Global Food Crisis (Grade 3-5)

### Essential Questions:

*Where does my food come from and how does it get to my table?*

*How does food shortage and overpopulation affect people?*

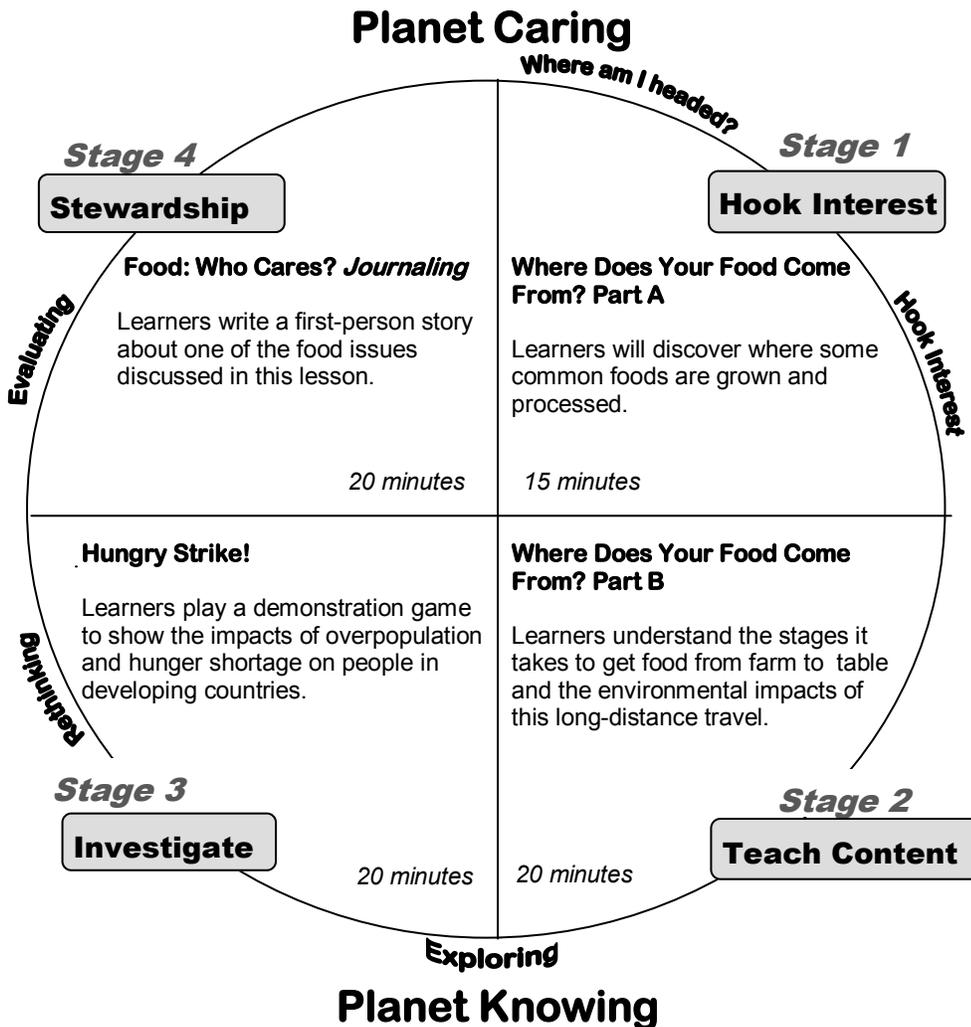
*How do different food issues affect you?*

### At a Glance:

Learners discover that their foods often travel long distances and are grown in the far parts of earth in this engaging lesson. Learners participate in a demonstration of the steps and processes food goes through from farm to table. *Hunger Strike!* shows how overpopulation and infrastructure growth contribute to hunger issues. The lesson is finished with a journaling activity about one of the food issues from a first-person perspective of a child dealing with such problems.

### Concepts:

- Agricultural, political, and lifestyle changes are needed to ensure enough food for all creatures on Earth.
- Produce is grown all around the world and often travels long distances to get to our grocery stores and plates.
- Overpopulation, corrupt government, conflict, environmental degradation, poor farming practices, and poverty all contribute to the world hunger crisis.



### Objectives

*Learners ...*

- 1) locate the origin of many commonly eaten foods.
- 2) discover the steps and processes food goes through from the farm to our table.
- 3) discuss negative impacts of food traveling long distances.
- 4) list 3 reasons why hunger occurs.
- 5) locate geographic regions where hunger is prevalent on a map.
- 6) understand how overpopulation contributes to hunger issues.
- 7) feel empathy towards issues surrounding global food distribution and hunger.
- 8) use creative writing skills to write a story from the perspective of a third world child.

## PROCEDURES IN BRIEF: Lesson 4—Global Food Distribution

### Stage 1. Where Does Your Food Come From? Part A

#### Procedure:

1. Ask learners what some of their favorite foods are. If only processed foods are mentioned, discuss some of the fresh ingredients that are used to make these products. For example, pizza – tomatoes, wheat, milk, etc.
2. “Where does our food come from?” Most likely, they will respond, the grocery store. Ask if they know where certain foods came from before the grocery store – their origin.
3. Place some selected produce and cans of food in front of the group. Allow learners to guess where the food came from. If they are unable to guess, have learners read the packaging or the stickers on the produce. Have a map or globe and sticky notes available for learners to write the names of the food on and then place the sticky notes on the map or globe.

#### Supplies

- food items
- world map or globe
- sticky notes or small paper squares with tape

### Stage 2. Where Does Your Food Come From? Part B

#### Procedure:

1. Watch the “Fresh from the World” introduction clip at <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/food>. Discuss the steps and procedures involved in getting food from farms to grocery stores and then to your kitchen table.
2. Tell learners that we are lucky to be able to get produce year-round from farms in other countries and hence, we are able to enjoy foods that do not grow in our climate zones. However, there are downfalls to the long distances food travels and large, industrial farms that grow commercial produce.
3. To demonstrate all the steps involved as food travels from farm to kitchen, ask for volunteers to represent each step as described below. Discuss all the needs for each stage.
  - Getting ready to grow food: land, seeds, fertilizer, water, equipment (plough, tiller, etc)
  - Growing food: sunshine, rain, pesticides and fertilizers (unless organic), labor, equipment (harvester)
  - Moving food from field to market: transportation (carts, trucks, boats, airplanes), pesticides
  - Processing or selling food: factory (equipment), preservatives, transportation, stores
  - Eating the food: money to buy food
4. As the process is being represented by learners, ask what are some negative impacts of international industrial farming (heavy pesticide use, poor labor practices, environmental destruction).
5. Ask learners if they can think of an alternative to this type of food production.

#### Supplies

- internet, computer, projector (optional)

### Stage 3. Hunger Strikes!

#### Procedure:

1. Ask learners what happens when people don't have access to a grocery store or restaurants to buy their food. (grow their own food). “What if there isn't viable land to grow food or if land is too expensive to buy for farming?”
2. Tell learners that they are going to play a game that represents overpopulation of people in a developing country and the struggles of food shortages.
3. Designate an area about 8' x 8'. Have 8 students stand in the space which represents their land in a developing country.
4. Provide a central site in the middle of this area for food distribution and place about 80 pieces of food. Ask learners what people in other countries eat. We are lucky to have access to a variety of foods; however people in many parts of the world eat staple foods such as rice, beans, cassava, and yucca. The food you place in the middle of the square area represents a staple food crop.
5. Tell the group that everyone needs 5 pieces of food to survive. Allow the group to obtain their food in given period of time.
6. Next, add 8 more people but don't increase the amount of food provided. Is there enough food for everyone now? Also mention that along with food, more people means more homes, roads, and other infrastructure. If inside, place chairs or boxes in the area to represent infrastructure and overcrowding. With more land needed for infrastructure, there is less viable land for growing food.
7. Next, add 8 more people (24 total). Is there enough food?
8. Allow learners to discuss their frustrations with so many people and lack of food in a small area. What would feel like if you were truly hungry, not just in need of a snack?
9. Review what contributes to hunger. How can we help?

#### Supplies

- rope or masking tape
- 80 food items

### Stage 4. *Journaling: Food—Who Cares?*

#### Procedure:

1. Ask learners what issues they have discussed so far in this lesson. Reflect on these issues, to educate and teach empathy rather than to depress your learners.
2. With this, ask learners if they can think of ways they might help with the global food crisis (buy locally grown food, plant a food garden, don't be wasteful, donate to local food banks and/or global hunger groups).
3. Tell learners that they are to write a story about one of the issues discussed from the perspective of a child in the area. For example, “My name is Zanub and I live in Congo. My country is at war. We don't have very much food and I am hungry. We are lucky that an aid group has come and is bringing us food.” Another example may be, “My name is Tom and we have a small farm in Wisconsin. We sell organic produce at a local market and to restaurants who support our farm.” Learners may journal a story about any of the topics discussed. Encourage them to put themselves in the place of those children and try to express what they might be feeling.
4. To end on a positive note, share what different movements and aid groups are doing to help fight the global food crisis. Also give suggestions on what they can do in their own lives and community to help.

#### Supplies

- journal or blank paper
- pencils/pen

Complete lesson write-ups are available in the GEN manuals.