

Journaling: Food - Who Cares?

Essential Question:

How do different food issues affect you?

At a Glance:

Learners write a first-person story about one of the food issues presented in this lesson (locally grown food, hunger, environmental degradation and agriculture, etc.).

Background:

Many hard issues have been discussed in Lesson 4 of the Food module - the distance food travels, locally grown farming, environmental degradation in agricultural practices, hunger, poverty, corrupt governments, and war. We are lucky that most of us do not feel the troubling impacts of these issues very often in the United States. It is important for people, including youth, to know what is going on in the world and to be empathetic to these problems. With empathy and knowledge, support and action can take place.

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 or demotivate 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. If desired, allow a few learners to share their stories.
5. 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.

Extension: Visit websites concerning issues discussed in this lesson. If time and funding permit, go visit a local farm or have a farmer come speak to the GEN club. Do a fundraiser to buy some chicks or honeybees for a family in Africa. Support local hunger by hosting a collection and donation of canned foods to a local food bank.

Location: classroom

Objectives: Learners will:

- 1) display empathy regarding issues related to global food distribution and hunger.
- 2) write a story from the perspective of a third world child.

Skills: creative writing, interpretation, empathy

Supplies:

1. journal or blank paper
2. pen, pencil
3. Optional: computer with internet access

Subjects: science, social studies, geography

Time: 20 min

<http://www.localharvest.org/> Find local farmers throughout the United States.
www.heifer.org Supplying people in developing countries with livestock and other animals to help fight against hunger and poverty.
<http://www.food-force.com/> A World Food Program video game that shows how humanitarian aid groups bring food to the imaginary country of Sheylan. Free to download and has lesson plans that go along with the game.

Discussion:

What are some issues surrounding the global food crisis?

What are some feelings you expressed in writing your story?

Can you imagine what your life would be like, if put in that situation?

What can we do to help fight global hunger, reduce the distance food travels, and help prevent environmental degradation?