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Ending Food Insecurity in New Jersey and America

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Lesson Plan Overview

Unit Topic: Food Security

Lesson: Ending Food Insecurity in New Jersey and America

Rationale for the Lesson:

- One million New Jersey residents are food insecure, meaning they lack access to food, specifically *healthy* food. Many students in America are either unaware of food insecurity, or lack a deep understanding of its effect on our society. Teaching students about food insecurity will enable them to critically think about issues in our society threatening their health. Having a deeper awareness of food insecurity within the United States can help inspire students to make a difference in their school community, and local community.

Standards: (only select those standards and themes that will focused upon in this lesson)

- Social Studies: 1.12.D.14.b Assess the effectiveness of actions taken to address the causes of continuing urban tensions and violence.
- Social Studies: 1.12.D.14.d Evaluate the extent to which women, minorities, individuals with gender preferences, and individuals with disabilities have met their goals of equality in the workplace, politics, and society.
- Social Studies: 1.12.B.16.a Explain why natural resources (i.e., fossil fuels, food, and water) continue to be a source of conflict, and analyze how the United States and other nations have addressed issues concerning the distribution and sustainability of natural resources.

Essential Question/Guiding Question:

- What is Food Insecurity? What does it look like in America? In New Jersey? Why does it Matter? What can we do to help end Food Insecurity?

Objectives:

- SWBAT: Define Food Insecurity and Food Security
- SWBAT: Brainstorm ways to help end food insecurity in one's school, and in their community

Lesson Opener/Anticipatory Set/Lead-In/Do Now:

- Ask students to list the ingredients in the meal they recently ate, either for breakfast or dinner the night before. Ask students to write down where the food they ate came from.
 - Rating how nutritional it was
 - After 3 minutes, ask students to share what their most recent meal was, the ingredients list, and if they know where each ingredient came from.
 - *This activity will encourage students to start thinking about their relationship with food*

Step-By-Step Procedures:

- 10 minutes: Lesson Opener
- 5 minutes: What is Food Insecurity (on power point)

- Ask students if they know what food insecurity is before putting the definition on the screen
- 5 minutes: Food Insecurity in America (on power point)
 - Provide students with an overview from the Map of America of Food Insecurity in America, and put the interactive map on the screen to show students where hunger persists
 - Mention those effected by Food Insecurity
- 5 minutes: Food Insecurity in New Jersey (on power point)
 - Talk briefly about Food Insecurity in New Jersey
 - Briefly discuss food deserts, and impoverished places that exist in New Jersey (refer to power point)
- 15 Minutes: Whole Foods vs. Walmart Activity and Discussion (On attached power point)
 - Ask students: How can we make fresh food more affordable?
- 5 minutes: Health in America
 - Ask students “What do you know about our government’s role in providing nutritional guidelines/assistance?” before putting it on the screen
 - Discuss the Food Pyramid’s provided by the USDA and FDA
 - Discuss SNAP/WIC
- 10 minutes: Food Choices Activity (Attached to power point)
 - Separate the class into four groups
 - Have them discuss how these four factors effect their food choices:
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Media
 - Government/School
 - After the activity have them discuss what they said
 - Use discussion questions from power point
- 5 minutes: Supporting the community (on power point)
 - Discuss Food Justice
 - Discuss “Don’t Yuck Your Yum”
 - Ask students if they’ve ever had someone make fun of what they eat
 - Challenge students to not judge someone based off their food choices
 - Support students who receive free or reduced lunch
 - Volunteer at a local farm/community garden
 - Volunteer at a local food pantry, soup kitchen, or donate to said places

Lesson Closure/Closing Activity: 5 minutes

- As a closing, have students reflect on three things they learned, and three things they would like to learn more about regarding food insecurity
- Have them write down these 6 things in the notepaper provided in the folder
- Ask students if they’d like to share one thing they’ve learned and one thing they’ve liked to learn more about

Materials and Equipment Needed:

- Desktop computer for power point
- Folder with notepaper, labeling reference guide, Walmart vs. Whole Foods activity, and After-Lesson Assessment

- Poster/Markers
- White Board or Chalkboard

Assignment:

- Encourage students to look up local Food Banks in the area, participate in a community garden, and raise awareness for local and national food insecurity.

Assessment: I will have the students complete a small questionnaire at the end with the following questions:

- What message did you take away from today's lesson?
- Is there something you felt particularly connected to in today's lesson?
- What would you like to know more about?
- Write down their email if they would like more information, and what specific information on or questions they may have.

Modifications for diverse learners (how does this lesson make accommodations?)

- Instead of asking students what our government's role is, provide the definition right of the bat
- Instead of having students separate into groups for going shopping, as a group have the classroom compare Walmart vs. Whole Foods by going over the worksheet

A Quick Guide to SNAP Eligibility and Benefits. (2018, February 07). Retrieved March 12, 2018, from <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/a-quick-guide-to-snap-eligibility-and-benefits>

(Links to an external site.)

Links to an external site.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities provides a quick explanation for SNAP eligibility and Benefits. This explanation speaks about required income level in a household to receive SNAP benefits, and provides a rough estimate for how much each family is allowed to spend each month on food based on their income level. I plan to utilize this explanation for an activity where students will critically think about food insecurity, and how much is spent on food compared to how little families can think about how healthy their food is. This report explains immigrants who are unlawful and lawful are unable to receive government funding for food. As explained in Megan Carney's book, immigrants face extreme food insecurity in America. This will also challenge student's to critically think about change within the current structure set-up for those facing food insecurity in America.

Carney, Megan A. *The unending hunger: tracing women and food insecurity across borders*. University of California Press, 2015.

Megan Carney's book, *The unending hunger: tracing women and food insecurity across borders*, published in 2015, is about food insecurity in America. It is specifically about women who migrated from Latin America countries to America to meet their daily essential needs. This Ethnographic book is focused on Santa Barbara, California where Carney conducts research on immigrant families facing food insecurity. She interviews different women, and their experiences in relation to food insecurity. The author highlights the concept of intersectionality when addressing Food Insecurity, and how addressing food isn't going to address inequality. Food is a basic need of human existence, and it should be given to humans regardless of their ethnicity, race, gender, religion, or class. Yet, this book highlights that food insecurity exists as structural violence, and most individuals who suffer from food insecurity face other struggles in their day to day lives. I have specifically chosen to integrate this work into the lesson plan because of its focus on immigrants facing Food Insecurity. New Jersey is home to a large number of immigrants, who are more likely to face issues of food insecurity than non-immigrants. I hope to use this as part of my research for answering questions of what food insecurity is, and use examples of families

suffering from the structural violence mentioned in the book. My intention is to help students understand the struggles faced by those living without food.

Edin, Kathryn, and H. Luke Shaefer. *\$2.00 a day: living on almost nothing in America*. Mariner Books, 2016.

\$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America by Kathryn Edin and Luke Shaefer highlights poverty in America, and challenges Americans face who live on \$2.00 a day, or close to it. In this class, I will be focusing on the challenges individuals face when applying for governmental assistance for food, using programs, WIC (The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant, and Children) and SNAP (The Supplemental Nutrition Program). This book speaks about what types of food families eat, “a lot of macaroni, peanut butter, and jelly” (Edin and Shaefer 122) and the amount of hunger families face with little access to food. This book demonstrates how little regard they have for their health, because they don’t have the opportunity to. Some families living in extreme poverty will sell their food stamps for cash to pay for other bills, leaving with no food for the month. Some families don’t have the opportunity to receive governmental assistance because SNAP has a difficult process for individuals to receive governmental assistance and strict requirements when they do receive said benefits. This book provides specifics on Food Deserts, and Governmental Assistance in America which will help answer questions in the lesson plan on what the SNAP, and WIC requirements are.

“Interactive Map: NJ's Hungriest Counties, Tracking the Food Deserts.” *Interactive Map: NJ's Hungriest Counties, Tracking the Food Deserts - NJ Spotlight*, www.njspotlight.com/stories/16/06/16/interactive-map-nj-hungriest-counties-tracking-the-food-deserts/
(Links to an external site.)
[Links to an external site.](#)

This interactive map highlights counties in New Jersey that are food insecure, and demonstrates the intensity of food insecurity in New Jersey. The article speaks on behalf of the decreasing food insecurity issues within New Jersey, but makes the case that it’s still a prevalent issue within New Jersey. For example, it highlights how South Jersey, and areas surrounding and in Newark have the highest rates of Food Insecurity. Showing this map will provide students with a connection close to home of Food Insecurity in the United States, and even closer, in New Jersey. I intend to use the statistics in the article about how approximately “one million New Jerseyans are food insecure” (O’Dea), along with statistics demonstrating the decrease in food insecurity in New Jersey, and food insecurity among children. This article mentions *Map the Meal Gap* which is a report I’m using within this presentation speaking on behalf of America as a whole, created by Feeding America. By bridging the two tools, it provides an easy to understand and straight to the point example of food insecurity in New Jersey, and America.

Healthy Foods Here. (n.d.). SNAP and WIC Information. Retrieved March 12, 2018, from <https://catalyst.uw.edu/.../2e308cbfc3955b7f7570f9745ad754b3beb551d99c886908d>

This brochure highlights SNAP (The Supplemental Nutrition Program) and WIC (The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) benefits for individuals who receive assistance. Specifically, it talks about what individuals are allowed to purchase and not allowed to purchase who receive SNAP and WIC. SNAP benefits are provided in food stamps, and families are allowed to purchase foods that add up to how much assistance they are given. WIC participants are given a list of foods they’re allowed to purchase at a grocery store, for example, a gallon of milk, a dozen eggs, and bread. Individuals can’t buy any less or anymore, and they don’t provide a non-dairy option for participants. This information will challenge students to critically think about their own meals, and how they would feel with an inability to choose what they ate. Some students in the classroom may already be in a family who receive governmental assistance, and this may provide a more in depth explanation for students who are unaware about specific governmental assistance available.

“Map the Meal Gap.” *Feeding America*, map.feedingamerica.org/troubled-city/.

This interactive map of the United States shows food insecurity across the country by providing statistics of each state alongside the country as a whole. This website provides information on what food insecurity is, average income level for a family in America to be food insecure, and the difference between poverty and food insecurity. This map is important to utilize in the classroom because it provides an overview of Food Insecurity in America. The map illustrates how individuals who live above the poverty line in America still face food insecurity, which is an important part to include in the lesson plan to dismantle the assumption families need to be impoverished to have a lack of access to food. Other expenses are needed such as medical expenses or living in an area where there is a high cost of living which can be troublesome for a family of four with little income, and an unsteady job. New Jersey, for example, is a state with a high cost of living, where families suffer from food insecurity but not poverty. Bridging this tool with the map of New Jersey will provide a side by side and easy to understand picture of Food Insecurity in New Jersey and America.

Nestle, M. (2013). *Food politics: how the food industry influences nutrition and health*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Food Politics by Marion Nestle highlights many facets for nutrition in America. This book explains our current and past dietary advice provided by the FDA (the Food and Drug Administration) and the USDA (the United States Department of Agriculture). It talks about different marketing tools in place for consumers to choose unhealthy foods rather than healthier foods, and talks about why “unhealthy” foods are cheaper than fruits and vegetables. This book will provide other information on governmental assistance, a more specific understanding on politics involved in food insecurity, and how individuals suffer from obesity based on their diet in America. This book is exceptional in explaining the government’s role in manipulating American’s diets. This will show students how individuals who suffer from food insecurity live in food deserts, poverty, and face medical issues. This is at no fault of their because of their trust and dependency in the American government to provide accurate dietary guidelines, and assistance when desperately needed. This book is key to demonstrating corruption surrounding dietary guidelines, dietary advice, and dietary assistance in America.

Singer, P., & Mason, J. (2007). *The Ethics of What We Eat: why our food choices matter*. The United States: Rodale Inc.

The Ethics of What We Eat highlights three families living in America. The first family is one who lives off of a Standard American Diet, the second family is one who tries to eat ethically and organic, but falls short based on income, and the third is a fully vegan diet who eats local, organic, and whole-foods based. The author interviews each family, while examining their income level, and the neighborhood they live in. The first family, who lives off of Standard American Diet is a family who lives in Arkansas and is part of the culture where food needs to be cheap and couponing is normal. Having the choice to eat “ethically” or “healthy” is not in their budget. This book highlights an important issue in America, because consumers don’t have the choice to eat healthy, and when they do, aren’t empowered or supported to do so. Having the privilege to eat breakfast is not always acted upon. This book examines a grocery store like Walmart which does not treat their workers right, and where employees live on Food Stamps. Yet, their prices are cheap. On the other hand, the book examines Whole Foods which treats their workers humanely, buys organic, fair trade, and healthier options, but is expensive. Students are encouraged to critically think about what issues are at play when it comes to ethics and food choices in America, and what role they play in that equation in their communities.

Wells, J. (2017, September 25). Whole Foods fights for relevance in low-income Chicago neighborhood. Retrieved February 04, 2018, from <https://www.fooddive.com/news/grocery--whole-foods-fights-for-relevance-in-low-income-chicago-neighborhood/505719/>

Whole Foods is a courageous company seeking to provide organic, and health foods while trying to fit into low-income areas. This article shows Whole Foods is one of few grocery stores to do anything for food deserts by providing employment to individuals living in low-income areas like Newark, where the poverty level is extremely high compared to other areas in New Jersey. Eating healthy is expensive, which is why Whole Foods is considered “whole paycheck.” This article underscores the frustration with individuals living in Newark, because they can’t afford Whole Foods. Yet, Whole Foods is providing jobs that helps families earn a decent living compared to other grocery stores. This article demonstrates a desperate need to provide individuals with an opportunity to purchase healthy foods. This article will provide students a firsthand look at the complexity of food insecurity in New Jersey, and in America. Whereas it is important for individuals to have a job, it is also necessary for individuals to have food at their home. This article is a great way to begin brainstorming ways to lower prices on healthier foods in necessary in fight food insecurity in New Jersey, and America.

Food Labeling Reference Guide

Fair-Trade This is a global movement made up of a diverse network of producers, companies, shoppers, advocates, and organizations putting people and planet first. Fair-Trade is trade that empowers individuals, and creates sustainable livelihoods for a market that works for everyone. The certification means the product was made per rigorous social, environmental, and economic standards.

Most fair-trade companies you will see in stores are chocolate and coffee.



Gluten-Free Products that have less than 20 parts per million of gluten. It does not contain wheat, rye, barley, or cross-bred versions.



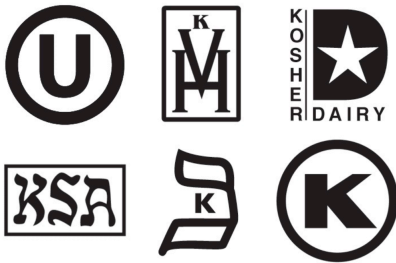
GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) the result of a laboratory process of taking genes from one species and inserting them to obtain a desired trait or characteristics. This different from traditional breeding, where you can mate different species of an animal, for example, breeding a horse with a donkey creating a mule. Genetic engineering breaches species barrier set up by nature.

GMO's have been used for herbicide tolerance and the ability for plants to produce their own pesticides. Very little research has been done on how GMO's effect on human health. The most common genetically modified crops are corn, soy, and wheat.

Halal foods are food products that meet Islamic Dietary Law making designation for which how food is processed. Halal allows specific types of animals: cattle, camels, sheep, goats, and seafood. Halal also forbids eating animals if they are not slaughtered according to Islamic rules.



Kosher foods which meet Jewish dietary laws. These dietary laws prohibit the consumption of certain foods, require that foods be processed in certain ways, and, most importantly for the food allergic, prohibit the mixing of dairy products and meat products



Organic products are grown and processed per federal guidelines addressing, among many factors, soil quality, animal raising practices, pest and weed control, and use of additives. Organic producers rely on natural substances and physical, mechanical, or biologically based farming methods to the fullest extent possible (USDA).



Vegan doesn't contain ingredients of animal origin, including milk, eggs, honey, and gelatin, and other animal byproducts



crueltyfree
andvegan

Walmart vs. Whole Foods

- 1. Half the class will be separated in a group to support shopping at Whole Foods and Half the class will be separated in a group to support shopping at Walmart*
- 2. Students will be given information about Whole Food and Walmart, along with two articles about both grocery stores*
- 3. In their groups, they will formulate an argument as to why their store is the best place to go grocery shopping.*
- 4. After ten minutes, each group will share with the class why shopping at their respective store is the best choice.*

Use the information below, along with personal information you already have, to make your case about your respective store.

Walmart:

- *World's largest grocer, world's largest retailer, world's largest corporation. It is the largest private employer in the United States and in Mexico and Canada*
- *Wal-Mart's CEO make 966 times the average salary of a full-time associate, at \$17.4 million dollars*
- *A full-time associate at Walmart makes 18,000 roughly annually*
- *Cheap to buy groceries, about 20 percent less than other grocery stores*
- *Built in areas of the country that are low-income, so individuals can afford to go shopping*

Whole Foods:

- *Nothing at Whole Foods has artificial sweeteners, colors, or preservatives*
- *All employees can see what any other employee is getting paid*
- *A full-time associate at Whole Foods makes \$29,000 a year roughly*
- *No employee is allowed to make over 14 time what the average employee gets, limiting the CEO's salary to \$400,00 a year*
- *Considered "Whole-Pay Check" because it so expensive*
- *Built in areas around the country where wealthy individuals can afford to go shopping, starting to be built in areas where there are food deserts*