



Understanding Food Advocacy

Grade Levels & Subjects: Grades 6–8 English Language Arts

Learning + Food Objectives:

Students will learn how we can advocate for food choices and changes that impact ourselves by researching a food issue and creating a social media post that creates awareness of the issue for peers.

Common Core Standards:

Common Core English Language Arts

Writing for a specific audience

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Whiteboard or Online Platform
- Student Worksheet (Attached below)

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION (10-15 minutes)

1. Tell students that today we will be brainstorming different food issues in our communities and working together to decide on one that we would like to raise awareness of to our fellow students.
2. Ask students what they think some examples of “food issues” are. If needed, you can share a few examples to get them thinking: food access, lead in water, food waste, nutrition labeling, etc.
3. Have at least 5 (or more – at teacher’s discretion) students share out food issues that they have seen in their community. Teacher can group similar issues together on a board or other online platform to show commonalities or linked food issues.
4. Ask students to observe the board and note any similarities or themes.
5. Have 2 - 3 students share out, and teacher then can use those themes to take a class poll (either with hands or virtually) on the food issue they would like to focus on. Be sure to remind students that even if

we don't focus on all issues today, there's always an opportunity to advocate outside of the classroom for things they care about! Teacher can choose for all students to research the same food issue or students can work independently or in groups on different issues.

INSTRUCTION (45-60 minutes)

1. Explain to students that today they will be researching the food issue they selected (in step 5 of the Introduction) in order to create a social media post to raise awareness about it to our school community (specifically their peers)!
2. For examples, teacher can show screenshots of a few recent and relevant social media posts from advocacy organizations either locally or nationally (such as Feeding America, National Resource Defense Council, or locally, like Chicago Food Policy Action Council in Chicago).
 - Note: Teacher should use discretion when showing posts to make sure they are age appropriate.
3. Ask students to reflect on what they like about each post and have students share if time allows.
4. Ask students to choose one social media platform to use for their post.
5. Have students research the food issue and answer the following questions (noting sources):
 - How is the food issue defined and who defines it that way?
 - What organizations are doing work to address and/or raise awareness of this food issue?
 - How are they addressing and/or raising awareness of this food issue?
 - Where are these organizations doing this work (in a specific community, within a whole state, across the country, internationally)? It's ok if it's hard to tell from research!
6. Have 4-5 students share research findings.
7. Have students continue to work independently to draw and write their social media post. Have students discuss and determine what information is most relevant to their peers and how to be present it visually. Remind students about the sample posts you looked at earlier as they decide (might be a quote pulled out, a short video, a picture, etc.)

CLOSING (teacher discretion)

Have students share out their posts to their peers or in another way as determined by their teacher.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- List of food justice organizations from *FoodTank*:
<https://foodtank.com/news/2020/02/24-organizations-finding-food-justice/>
- Examples of food issues
<https://foodedu.pilotlightchefs.org/community-advocacy/>
- Examples of videos around food issues created by previous Pilot Light High School students:
 - "Food Deserts & Food Access" by Students at Butler College Prep: <https://vimeo.com/453762558>
 - "Growing Gardens" by Students at Johnson College Prep: <https://vimeo.com/453765601>
- Tips for advocating for changes in school food:

- All information collected from the cafeteria/about school meals should be based on facts. For example, students should record *all* food offered in a meal, not just a few items to ensure a full picture of what is served.
- Students should work with adults to help guide advocacy in an appropriate and respectful way.
- Contact the school food manager to find out more about why certain items are served at school and to answer questions.
- Approach all topics related to advocacy with curiosity and respect. Point out to students how there are always many more viewpoints and facts to consider than those that they already know.

The student worksheet below can be printed or copied onto any online learning platform.



Understanding Food Advocacy

Today we will learn how we can advocate for food choices and changes that impact ourselves by researching a food issue and creating a social media post to share with your peers.

Pre-Writing Brainstorm

List examples of food issues in your community:

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-
-
-
-

Determine the food issue

Write down the food issue you will be researching:

Write down any information do you already know about this food issue:

Research

Answer the following questions as you research your food issues:

1. How is the food issue defined and who defines it that way?



2. What organizations are doing work to address and/or raise awareness of this food issue?

3. How are they addressing or raising awareness of this food issue?

4. Where are these organizations doing this work (in a specific community, within a whole state, across the country, or internationally?)

5. Draft your social media post below. Be sure to include both pictures and text in your post!