



Filling in the Gaps: Battling Food Insecurity

Grade Levels & Subjects: Grades 3 - 5 English Language Arts

Learning + Food Objectives:

Students will learn what food insecurity is and demonstrate their understanding by sharing food insecurity data from a local community.

Common Core Standards:

Common Core English Language Arts

Researching and summarizing

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4

Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Student Worksheet (Attached below)
- Headphones (per student)
- Laptops (per group or per student)
- “Illuminating Intersections: Hunger and Health” video by Feeding America - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBAly-xxo1g>
- “Understand Food Insecurity” article by Feeding America - <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/>

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION (5 - 7 minutes)

1. Ask students to respond to the following bell ringer prompts:
 - What were the last 3 things you ate? (You can list breakfast, dinner, lunch, or snacks).
 - Where does your family get your food? (List the grocery store or other store names).
2. Allow a few volunteers to share their responses before transitioning into the lesson.

INSTRUCTION (70 - 80 minutes)

1. Explain that over the next few classes, students will be exploring how people access food in their neighborhood, how some people experience food insecurity due to living in food deserts and how people are working to battle this community problem.
2. Show the "Illuminating Intersections: Hunger and Health" video (or other video from the Additional Resources section) to introduce the concept of food insecurity and as a lead-in to the whole class reading (article).
 - a. Teachers may consider showing the video more than once, turn on closed captioning and the transcript or even, slow down the speed to allow students the opportunity to hear vital details.
3. Engage students in a brief discussion of the video asking questions like: What is food insecurity? What did you hear that was surprising? What did you hear about the connection between food insecurity and health?
4. Help students access the student worksheet and direct their attention to the Resource Table.
 - a. Explain that the resource table has resources that they will also use during a paired activity and for a group project.
 - b. Point out the article note-catcher where they will document key ideas from sections of the article.
5. For now, tell them that the class will be reading and taking notes on the article titled, "Understand Food Insecurity" by Feeding America (or another article from the Additional Resources section). This article includes a video that teachers can opt to show during the reading, or it can be skipped.
 - a. Use the *wagon wheel* method to read the article aloud - the teacher reads, then a student volunteer reads, then the teacher again and so on, until the article is completed.
 - b. Pause after each section to allow time for students to fill in their note-catcher (table).
 - c. When the reading and table is complete, move students into small groups.
6. Once groups are seated, show the "Map the Meal Gap: Overview Video" from Feeding America that leads viewers through the Map the Gap tool.
7. After the video, direct students' attention to the *Mapping the Gap* Partner Activity. Read the directions aloud - making sure to explain that the group must use the *Map the Gap* site to complete the activity.
8. Assign each group a topic (either *Children* or *African Americans*) from the "Who does food insecurity affect?" section of the "Understand Food Insecurity" article.
 - a. Explain that they will be able to explore the other groups listed in this section later if they choose to.
 - b. Point out that the resource table includes more information on those groups.
9. Direct students' attention to the Food Insecurity Group Project section of the student worksheet and read through the directions, pausing to answer questions as needed.

- a. Remind students that they should only use the sources listed in the Resource Table.
 - b. Allow students time to work on their projects. Decide if you will allow more than one class period to conduct research/gather information.
 - c. Teachers should consider allowing at least 60 minutes for this step.
10. On presentation day allow groups to have a minimum of 10 minutes to prep before the presentations.
- a. Teachers may wish to split presentations over the course of 2 class periods.
 - b. Allow time for students to present their findings and advise other students (listeners) to make note of key details from their peers' presentations.

CLOSING (10 minutes)

1. Ask students to respond to the following:
 - a. What is the difference between hunger and food insecurity?
 - b. What's 1 thing we can do to battle food insecurity?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Articles:
 - "Hunger Health 101: What are the connections between Food Insecurity & Health?" by Feeding America - <https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/hunger-health-101/>
 - "Food Insecurity in Native American Communities" by Feeding America - <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/native-american>
 - "Rural Hunger Facts" by Feeding America - <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/rural-hunger-facts>
 - "Food Insecurity in Latino Communities" by Feeding America - <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/latino-hunger-facts>
 - "Food Insecurity in Native American Communities" by Feeding America - <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/native-american>
- Videos:
 - "Real Stories of Hunger: Brittany" by Feeding America - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOTNW2-GPF8>
 - "Illuminating Intersections: Hunger and Health" by Feeding America - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBAly-xxo1g>
 - "Real Stories of Hunger: Terri" by Feeding America - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSi7fPbNoLU>
 - "Real Stories of Hunger Playlist" by Feeding America - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrESfhJGEDSjXLwWlCuuycFx9SA91Sv11>

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



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Bell Ringer

Directions: Answer the following questions in the space provided. You have 4 minutes to complete the task.

What were the last 3 things you ate? You can list breakfast, dinner, lunch or snacks.	
Where does your family get your food? List the grocery store or other store names.	

Food Insecurity Resource Table		
Articles	Videos	Images/Interactives
"Understand Food Insecurity" article by Feeding America - https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/	"Real Stories of Hunger: Brittany" by Feeding America - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OOTNW2-GPF8	"State by State Resource: The Impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity" (interactive map from Feeding America, the darker the color the higher the overall rate of food insecurity) by Feeding America - https://feedingamericaaction.org/resources/state-by-state-resource-the-impact-of-coronavirus-on-food-insecurity/
Hunger Health 101: What are the connections between Food Insecurity & Health? by Feeding America - https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/hunger-health-101/	Map the Meal Gap: Overview Video (Feeding America)	"Let's Talk about Hunger" by OxFam - https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/emergencies/infographic-food-security-to-famine/
"Food Insecurity in Native American Communities" by Feeding America -	"Illuminating Intersections: Hunger and Health" by Feeding America -	"Struggling for Food: Our National Problem" by Duke -

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https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/native-american	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBAly-xxo1g	https://today.duke.edu/2018/06/achieve-food-security-all-build-trust-communities
“Food Insecurity in Latino Communities” by Feeding America - https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/latino-hunger-facts	“Real Stories of Hunger: Terri” by Feeding America - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSi7fPbNoLU	“10 Facts about Hunger in America” by LovewithFood.com - https://visual.ly/community/Infographics/lifestyle/10-facts-about-hunger-america
“Rural Hunger Facts” by Feeding America - https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/rural-hunger-facts	“Real Stories of Hunger Playlist” by Feeding America - https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrESfhJGEDSjXLwWLCUuycFx9SA91Sv1	“Most Food-Insecure States” by UnitedWay - https://unitedwaync.org/stories/food-insecurity-statistics/

Understand Food Insecurity Article Note-Catcher

Directions: Complete the sentence starters for each section of the article. Then, in the last row, reflect on what you learned.

Title of the Article: Understand Food Insecurity	
Section Title	Key Idea from Each Section
What is Food Insecurity?	Food security is _____. Food security is not the same as hunger. Hunger is _____.
Who does it Affect?	Food insecurity affects _____.
Ranges of Food Insecurity	There are ___ levels of food security. The difference between High Food Security & Very Low Security is _____.
Finish This Sentence: Based on what I just read, the most important thing to know about food insecurity is _____.	Based on what I just read, the most important thing to know about food insecurity is: _____.

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Mapping the Gap Group Activity

Directions: Using the Feeding America [“Map the Gap” webpage](#), complete the prompts below about your state. The steps to find the correct data are above the table. Your group can decide to work together or divide up the prompts, but each group member should answer the reflection prompt (last row) on their own.

Step 1: In the SEARCH box, select your state from the dropdown menu.

Step 2: In the DEMOGRAPHICS box, select “Child.”

Step 3: In the LOCATION box, select your state from the dropdown menu.

Step 4: For MAP TYPE, select “county.”

Step 5: Select the most recent year to start. Later, you’ll select the oldest year.

Step 6: Scroll down to the bottom of the page to view the data you need to answer the questions.

The state I live in is ____	
The number of children experiencing food insecurity in my state is: _____	
The percentage of children experiencing food insecurity (rate) in my state is: _____	
The average cost of a meal in my state is: _____	
The amount of money families would need to afford the food they need (“Annual Food Budget Shortfall”) is:	
___ % of children are <u>eligible</u> for federal government support because their family income is <u>below</u> the poverty level.	
___ % of children are <u>ineligible</u> for federal government support because their family income is <u>above</u> the poverty level.	
FINISH THIS SENTENCE: <i>Food insecurity occurs when families don’t have....</i>	<i>Food insecurity occurs when families don’t have _____.</i>

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Filling in the Gaps: Solving Food Insecurity Group Project

Directions: Then, read through the steps of the group project below. Determine how you want to divide the work. Each group will be assigned a topic from the “Who does food insecurity affect?” section of the article, [Understand Food Insecurity](#).

Step 1: Allow each group member 1-2 minutes to review the questions in **Part I and Part II** of the table and the article.

Step 2: Now, decide how group members will divide up the questions. Use the interactive map, articles, images and videos.

Step 3: Then, meet with your group to share notes and to plan for your group’s presentation.

<i>Filling in the Gaps: Solving Food Insecurity Project</i> Part I: Research Notes	
Who is the focus of your research on food insecurity? <i>Children or African Americans?</i>	<i>Our group focused on _____.</i>
What percentage or number of people in this group experience food insecurity?	<i>Choose 1:</i> <i>_____ percentage of people in this group experience food insecurity. OR</i> <i>_____ people in this group experience food insecurity.</i>
Write the name of the video & list 2 things you learned about food insecurity from the video. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Children- “Zoey”</i> • <i>African Americans - “Lamont”</i> 	<i>The video I watched was called: _____.</i> <i>Two things I learned about food insecurity from this video was _____ and _____.</i>
Using Google, search for a list of rural communities in your state. Cut/paste or write the 3 of them here.	<i>Example, if you type “list of rural communities in Illinois” into the Google search bar, Lee County is one of the counties/communities listed.</i> <i>One of the rural communities in my state is: _____.</i>
Part II: Rural Communities in Your State	
<p>Step 1: Go back to Map the Gap and enter the name of the town/county you chose in the SEARCH box. For the DEMOGRAPHICS box, select “overall.”</p> <p>Step 2: For all other boxes, select the same options you chose before (in the partner activity).</p>	

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<p>Step 3: Complete the sentences below using the new data. Some answers require the name of the town or county.</p>	
<p>Write the number of people experiencing food insecurity</p>	<p>_____ <i>people are experiencing food insecurity in</i> ____ .</p>
<p>Write the percentage of people experiencing food insecurity (rate) in ____ county is: _____</p>	<p><i>The percentage of people experiencing food insecurity (rate) in</i> ____ <i>is</i> _____.</p>
<p>The average cost of a meal in ____ is _____:</p>	<p><i>The average cost of a meal in</i> ____ <i>is</i> _____:</p>
<p>The amount of money people in ____ would need to afford the food they need (“Annual Food Budget Shortfall”) is:</p>	<p><i>People in</i> ____ <i>need</i> \$ _____ <i>to afford the food they need.</i></p>
<p>____ % of people in ____ are <u>eligible</u> for federal government support because their income is <u>below</u> the poverty level.</p>	<p>____% <i>of people in</i> _____ <i>are</i> <u>eligible</u> <i>for federal government support because their income is</i> <u>below</u> <i>the poverty level.</i></p>
<p>____ % of people in ____ are <u>ineligible</u> for federal government support because their income is <u>above</u> the poverty level.</p>	<p>____ % of people in ____ are <u>ineligible</u> for federal government support because their income is <u>above</u> the poverty level.</p>
<p>Now, as a group, decide how you want to share this information with your classmates. Allow time to decide who will present which ideas and to practice your presentation.</p>	

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Exit Activity

Directions: Based on what you read in the articles, watched in the videos, or saw in the images, answer the following questions.

What is the difference between <i>hunger</i> and <i>food insecurity</i> ?	<i>The difference between hunger and food insecurity is...</i>
What is one thing we can do to battle food insecurity?	<i>One thing we can do to battle food insecurity is...</i>