

# Activity 3:

## Who Is Food Insecure?

GRADES 3-12

GSE

GSE Standard Alignment:  
Social Studies/ELA



15 - 30 min.



This activity can be paired with *Food and Life, Defining Hunger, Food Security and Poverty and Family Budgets*

### Student Learning

Students will develop an understanding of who is affected by food insecurity and will explore prevailing myths and misconceptions of food insecurity in the United States.

### Objectives

Students will have increased awareness of the groups impacted by food insecurity.

Students will be able to understand the barriers to access that impact people's food security in the United States.

### Materials

- Who is Food Insecure Fact Sheet
- Statement - Opinion - Support (S-O-S) Summary Worksheet
- Pens/Pencils
- Flipchart Paper or Whiteboard
- Markers

### Performance Tasks

#### Part 1

Review definition of food insecurity from Activity 2- Defining Hunger, Food Insecurity and Poverty.

Have students brainstorm who they think might experience food insecurity in the United States.

Encourage them to think of as many different groups and causes as possible. *(Remember that children are one of the largest group in the U.S. struggling with food insecurity, so there might be students in the class who are food insecure or know someone who is.)*

Capture each idea on a flipchart or whiteboard as a master list.

#### Part 2

Provide students with Who is Food Insecure Fact Sheet and give them a few minutes to review.

Hand out the S-O-S Summary Worksheets.

Write one or both of the following statement(s) on the board for students to copy:

- The majority of people facing food insecurity are homeless.
- Some people have to make choices between buying food and paying for things like transportation and medicine.

Give students five minutes to respond on their S-O-S Summary Worksheets. Have them use their fact sheet data and facts held up during discussion to determine if they agree or disagree with the statement.

Collect S-O-S Summary Worksheets to assess student understanding.

Conclude activity by engaging students in a dialogue using the suggested discussion questions.

## Discussion Questions

- How were the hunger and poverty facts similar or different from your perceptions of who is hungry in the United States?
- Do you think that economic changes affect the way we view hunger in this country? If yes, how? If not, why?
- Whose responsibility is it to help people who are food insecure in this country?
- What are your ideas for how we can better address food insecurity? Do you think we can handle it with charity alone?

See Activity 5: Responses to Hunger and Poverty to help your student understand and explore both community and government responses to food insecurity.

We encourage you to stay tuned to Feeding America ([feedingamerica.org](https://www.feedingamerica.org)) and Food, Research and Action Center ([frac.org](https://www.frac.org)) regarding hunger and poverty policy decisions.

## Extension Ideas

### Map the Meal Gaps

In small groups or individually, use the Feeding America Map the Meal Gap tool - [map.feedingamerica.org](https://map.feedingamerica.org):

- Find the county in your state with the highest rate of food insecurity.
- Find the county with the lowest rate of food insecurity.

Questions to Explore:

- How does the county data compare to the national data?
- How do child food insecurity rates differ from overall food insecurity rates? Why might this be?
- What are some reasons for higher or lower food insecurity rates in different areas?
- Where in these counties can people go for help?
- Find the county where you live or where your school is located. What are the food insecurity rates? Where can people find help near you?

## Map Your Community

Research where people can find help near you.

- Using United Way's 211 program <https://www.unitedway.org/our-impact/featured-programs/2-1-1> to find out about services near you.
- Contact the closest regional food bank <https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank> and learn about their partner agency network.
- Discuss how you can ensure people in your community have access to this information.
- Is there a contact in your school or organization who might be able to share the information you research?

# FOOD INSECURITY FACT SHEET

## Food Insecurity in the United States

- 47 million (1 in 6) Americans faced food insecurity, including over 14 million (1 in 5) children in 2023.
- 13.5 percent (18 million) of U.S. households were food insecure at some time during 2023.

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us>

- Households that had higher rates of food insecurity than the national average included households with children (17.3%), especially households with children headed by single women (33.1%) or single men (21.2%), African American non-Hispanic households (22.4%) and Hispanic households (20.8%).
- 11.4% of senior citizens living alone were food insecure.  
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/107703/err-325.pdfv=481.8>
- 1 in every 14 seniors (age 60+) face hunger in the US. (Feeding America, 2023)
- Food insecurity exists in every state in the U.S., ranging from a low of 6.2% in New Hampshire to a high of 16.6% in Arkansas.  
<https://map.feedingamerica.org/>
- Veterans & active military members also deal with food insecurity. 1 in 9 working-age veterans are food insecure, & 24% of active-duty military members are food insecure. (Feeding America, 2020)
- 1.2 million veterans rely on SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) to put food on the table. (Feeding America, 2020)

- 39% of (167,000) surveyed college students were food insecure in the past 30 days. 46% had housing insecurity in the previous year. 17% reported being homeless at some point during the previous year.

<https://hope4college.com/realcollege-2020-five-years-of-evidence-on-basic-needs-insecurity/>

## Georgia Food Insecurity

- 1 in 8 Georgians struggled to put enough food on the table in 2023.
- Over 460,000 Georgia children don't have enough to eat- more than 1 in 5 children.
- 68% of food insecure Georgians live above 130% of poverty, which limits their eligibility for federal and state food assistance programs. (Feeding America's Annual Map the Meal Gap Study, 2023)
- 8.5% of Georgia Seniors are food insecure- more than 1 in 13 seniors. (Feeding America, 2023.)
- Each **month**, an estimated 250,000 households in metro Atlanta and north Georgia turn to the Atlanta Community Food Bank's network of 700 community based partner agencies for food. (Atlanta Community Food Bank, 2024)

*For more data about hunger and food insecurity in the United States or near you:*

<https://map.feedingamerica.org/>

*For more data about The Atlanta Community Food Bank and our work:*

<https://www.acfb.org/facts-and-stats/>

# S-O-S STUDENT SUMMARY WORKSHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write Statement Here

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What does it mean?

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What's your opinion?     I agree     I disagree

Support your opinion with evidence (facts, reasons, examples etc.)

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