

Activity 3:

Who Is Food Insecure?

GRADES 3-12

CC

CC Standard Alignment:
Health/Reading Comprehension

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 access issues that impact people's food security in the United States.

Materials

- Who is Food Insecure Fact Sheet (p.14)
- Statement - Opinion - Support (S-O-S) Summary Worksheet (p.15)
- Pens/Pencils
- Flipchart Paper or Whiteboard
- Markers

Performance Tasks

Part One

Review definition of food insecurity from Activity 2- Defining Hunger, Food Insecurity and Poverty. (p. 8)

Have students brainstorm who they think is food insecure in the United States.

Encourage them to think of as many different groups and causes as possible. (Remember that children are 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 Two

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 statistics similar or different from your perceptions of who is hungry in the United States?
- Do you think that the most recent economic downturn has changed 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?

As our country wrestles with deficits and budget cuts, there will continue to be food insecurity in this country. 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) and Food, Research and Action Center (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:

- 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> 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

- 37.2 million Americans live in food insecure households, including 26.1 million adults and 11.2 million children.
- 11.1% of households (14.3 million households) are food insecure.
- 5.6 million households (4.3) experienced very low food security. (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/94849/err-270.pdf>)
- Households that had higher rates of food insecurity than the national average included households with children (13.9%), especially households with children headed by single women (27.8%) or single men (15.9%), African American non-Hispanic households (21.2%) and Hispanic households (16.2%).
- 8.9% of senior citizens living alone were food insecure. (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/94849/err-270.pdf>)
- 5.5 million seniors face hunger in the US. (Feeding America, 2018)
- Food insecurity exists in every county in the U.S., ranging from a low of 2.9% in Steele County, ND to a high of 36% in Jefferson County, MS. (<https://map.feedingamerica.org/>)
- One in five (20%) of households served by the Feeding America network has at least one member that has served in the military. (Feeding America, 2018)
- 1.5 million veterans live below the federal poverty line and an additional 2.4 million veterans live paycheck to paycheck. (US Department of Veteran's Affairs, 2019)
- 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

- 15% of Georgians struggle to put enough food on the table - 1 in 7 people.
- 22% of Georgia children (20% nationally) don't have enough to eat- more than 1 in 5 kids.
- 33% of food insecure Georgians live above 185% of poverty which makes them ineligible for federal food assistance. (Gundersen, C., A. Dewey, M. Kato, A. Crumbaugh & M. Strayer. *Map the Meal Gap 2019: A Report on County and Congressional District*)
- 8% of Georgia Seniors are food insecure- more than 1 in 13 seniors. (Ziliak, J., Gundersen, C. *The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2017. Feeding America, 2019.*)
- Each year an estimated 755,400 (1 in 7) people in metro Atlanta and north Georgia turned to the Atlanta Community Food Bank's network of 700 community based partner agencies for food. (Atlanta Community Food Bank, 2019)

For more data about hunger and food insecurity in the United States or near you: map.feedingamerica.org/

S-O-S STUDENT SUMMARY WORKSHEET

Name _____

Date _____

Write Statement Here

What does it mean?

What's your opinion? I agree I disagree

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

S-O-S STUDENT SUMMARY WORKSHEET

Name _____

Date _____

Write Statement Here

What does it mean?

What's your opinion? I agree I disagree

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

