

Hunger Study



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Objectives:

1. To know who is hungry in the world
2. To gain an understanding of what hunger is and its causes.
3. To understand what it means to be food-secure
4. To identify ways to get more information about hunger

This lesson was taught originally by a guest teacher, and due to time constraints it was split into 2 separate sessions. Depending on your schedule and classroom dynamic, the time frame could be much different. Included at the end of this lesson plan are reflections and a timeline that was used.

Session 1 with Children:

Objective 1: To know who is hungry in the world.

Objective 2: To gain an understanding of what hunger is and its causes.

Concept: Hunger is not getting enough of the right kinds of foods to meet our needs. All countries and regions have some people who are hungry.

Materials: 3 pieces of Chart paper, markers (a few different colors), drawing paper (at least one piece per child, have extra for drafts), a pencil for each student, coloring tools (markers, crayons, colored pencils), erasers.

- **What is hunger? Let's define it.**
 - Create two columns on a piece of chart paper. One is labeled "Looks Like" while the other is "Feels Like" Use this as tool to get children thinking about concrete examples to help define hunger.
 - Ask them to close their eyes and think about the word hunger and what it means to them. After they do this for a moment have them begin sharing their thoughts.

- These thoughts do not have to be long; they can use one or two words.
- Try to encourage children to be quick in their responses, keep the discussion moving so all children get a chance to share.
- Be open to all responses, this can help create a powerful look at what hunger is to a child and how they perceive it in their community.
- Examples
 - Looks Like
 - Empty fridge
 - No breakfast (missing meals)
 - Cheaper food (not as much or poor quality)
 - Food that isn't very good for you
 - Feels Like
 - Stomachaches
 - Can't concentrate
 - Anger/cranky
 - Sick/tired/no energy
- Encourage children to think about how hunger can affect health, social abilities, and learning. The important question is WHY.
- **EXTENSION:** Depending on the age group you can encourage children to consider metaphors that would describe how hunger feels. One example from a child is: "Hunger feels like your stomach has gone skydiving without a parachute". These are concepts you can really build on.
- Causes (Spend the most time on this discussion as well as with food security, children may benefit from visuals or group questions to break up the amount of direct instruction)
 - Begin the discussion with thinking questions. Do you think that where a child lives affects their ability to receive the food they need? Why? **Ask them to think about resources a child has, how does this connect with those who are hungry?**
 - Guiding Questions
 - Why would someone be hungry?
 - Accept answers like I didn't eat breakfast
 - I didn't eat a healthy snack
 - **OUR BODY NEEDS FOOD TO RUN** (Make this an underlying theme as you go about the lesson without making it a health lesson)
 - Can you still be hungry even if you eat breakfast, lunch and dinner?
 - Discuss that hunger also involves not getting healthy food

that is good for your body. (Food that helps your body run)

- Is just a simple bag of Cheetos a healthy lunch by itself?
Why or why not?
 - Your body needs more to function
 - Why would someone only have Cheetos?
 - Allow a question like this to flow into the the causes discussion.
- Be very sensitive in this discussion, guide the children to think deeply but be careful about diving into some really sensitive issues.
- Compare locations and how it relates to access.
 - Rural Idaho towns compared to larger communities like Boise.
 - Make sure to not imply a stigma...ask them that if you live in a small town does that mean you are always hungry? Discuss that the answer no.
- Write causes on chart paper as children discuss this
 - Weather for crops
 - Small Grocery store
 - Far away from fresh fruits and veggies.
- What do you know about communities in the world who are hungry?
 - Dialogue that hunger happens all over the world, why does it look different?
 - **ACCESS—you can reach something, it is available to you.**

Objective 3: To understand what it means to be food-secure

- **What is Food Security?**
 - To be food-secure means that we must always be able to get the food we need for an active and healthy life. - The three pillars of food security are: availability, accessibility and use of food.
 - Write definition on the board/chart paper for all to see. Help the children understand what each word means so they can fully understand the definition.
 - ASK: How does food security help solve the problem of hunger?
 - What you need is always there.
 - Would cars be able to drive if there wasn't always gas?
 - Programs—Introduce each one and talk about how it helps with food security or hunger. Make sure to discuss their differences.
 - School Meals
 - Food Stamps
 - Food Bank/Pantry
 - Community Gardens
- **Ask children to think about a world where all people have enough food to eat.**

- Ask them to create a picture in their minds of that world. This picture must depict somebody getting their food needs met. Brainstorm some direction with the children. Examples:
 - Cooking in a kitchen
 - Grocery shopping
 - Going on a picnic
 - Eating in a Restaurant
 - Working in a garden
 - Eating with friends in the cafeteria
 - Eating with your family
 - A full lunchbox
 - A full refrigerator
- **Have references (pictures) available.** This will assist children in their drawings and help fuel their creativity.

Session 2 with Children

Objective 4: To identify ways to get more information about hunger

- **Our Government**
 - Did you know that there are rules in the government that help hunger?
 - Talk about Food Stamp Act, School Lunch Act, and Child Nutrition Act.
 - Introduce the Child Nutrition Act, mention the reauthorization, and how our own Idaho legislators can help children from being hungry.
 - What can we do to learn more about hunger issues? Who can we ask? Who can help and how can we help them?
 - Facilitate a conversation that leads to an activity....maybe write a letter to an organization that works with hunger policy or an Idaho Legislator? Ask them to send information or even come into the class!!
- **What we LEARNED and what we would like to KNOW more about**
 - Have each child write a post it note that states one of each.
 - Post them on the board
 - They may write more than one
 - Do a gallery walk so each child may read what everyone else writes.
- **Lead the class in writing a letter together.**
 - Write a lawmaker to come in and discuss these programs in the

class. Also to show their pictures.

- Have a template letter ready for them to reference (parts of a letter)
- Have each child sign the letter.

Sample Timeline

- 1) Introduction **(1 min)**
 - a) My name, what I do
- 2) What is hunger? **(5 min)**
 - a) Have 2 pieces of chart paper ready.
 - i) Looks Like and Feels Like on 1 page (2 columns)
 - ii) Causes
- 3) Causes of Hunger **(10 mins)**
 - a) Begin discussion with:
 - i) Does where you live have anything do with this? WHY?
 - ii) Tell about other things you think can cause people or families to be hungry?
- 4) What is food security? **(10 mins)**
 - a) Have definition ready on piece of chart paper.
 - i) Use analogy...would cars be able to drive without gas? How do you get gas for your car? How does this relate to food security?
 - b) Talk about programs
 - i) Food Stamps
 - ii) School Lunch
 - iii) Food Banks
 - iv) Community Gardens
 - c) Build off of children's previous knowledge.
 - i) Ask what they know about each program
 - ii) Write responses on chart paper
- 5) Think about a world where food needs are met. **(10 mins)**
 - a) Cooking in a kitchen
 - b) Grocery shopping
 - c) Going on a picnic
 - d) Eating in a Restaurant
 - e) Working in a garden
 - f) Eating with friends in the cafeteria
 - g) Eating with your family
 - h) A full lunchbox
 - i) A full refrigerator
- 6) Activity **(20 mins)**

Reflection

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Hunger Definitions:

I was very pleased with how this part of the lesson went. Hands were shooting up all over the classroom, the children were very engaged in the conversation. I had to move on due to time constraints, we could have easily continued on with the conversation.

One child shared a very interesting metaphor, I realized that this lesson could easily be integrated into a writing lesson. The children could create a poem or include these thoughts into their drawings. This entirely depends comfort level and the age group. This is definitely something I would like to explore in my own classroom. I was very inspired by their thoughts so I believe that these thoughts could be used to inspire their own personal work and reflections on our discussion.

I did notice that they children wanted to focus on homelessness. While being homeless does to connect to hunger my purpose in this lesson is to help shatter that common stigma. The thought is to guide the conversation to talk about what this issue looks like in their own community, not in obvious situations. The idea is that you can be hungry and not be homeless....**why is that?**

What Causes Hunger:

I felt like I could have been a little more organized during this part of the lesson. The thoughts the children had were limited so I needed to be more prepared with guiding questions and concepts. This discussion can be very vast. There are many causes to hunger. I would have benefited from using a map and possibly some other visuals.

Maybe even provide groups (split them up) of children with a story and they have to gather what caused hunger in this particular situation. This could break up the lesson in a way that allows them to be more engaged in discussion with their peers. They could write their thoughts on sticky notes, then we could discuss these thoughts as a class.

I feel like I used too much direct instruction with this section. They began to tune out and get bored. I was hearing from the same 3 students and I do feel like I was beginning to lose them.

In order to help with this section I would possibly explore the idea of having them shout out ideas about causes during the “looks like” and “feels like” section. I could then allow that to flow into a discussion about what food security is and how we could possibly achieve it.

Food Security

When I approached this subject I sort of skimmed over the definition and I am not sure they fully understood the concept. I would like to explore ways to help children explore what this means.

What I ran into was that I was running out of time and they were clearly ready to move on.

I realize that we could talk about what this means and then have them draw their pictures. We could then take the time to talk about how these pictures illustrate food security, what do they represent?

One thing I should do is always come back to the definition of food security as we talk about child nutrition programs.

The children were very interested to hear about the different nutrition programs, they didn't know much about them. What would be helpful is to provide reading materials for them. So they can later explore more information about these programs at a different time. Many materials also provide great visuals for the children. Depending on the age level I would also take the time to read some of these materials during read aloud time.

Drawings

I was very pleased with the outcome of the many of the drawings. With more time I would have had them create a rough draft in pencil and then create a final draft that was filled with color and very little white space. As a guest teacher the time I could spend on the art aspect of the lesson was limited, I would have definitely expanded on this a bit.

I did provide references for them to use while they were drawing. I only had one copy of the each. For future reference I would make enough for each table to have one to make this easier for them. Also to help encourage originality it would be a good idea to provide generic references that they would need to build on. My purpose for references is that it helps inspire and motivate their artistic ideas. Some children are able to paint a picture in their minds very easily while others need something to draw from. It is important to meet each child where they are at. I also found that it was a very good idea to explore different scenes where children and families were getting their food needs met, this helped the children think outside of the box. They provided a variety of really neat pictures.

Identifying ways to learn more about hunger

For me this part of the lesson was the least successful. I revised my lesson plan after I went through this session. The children were very bored very quickly. I needed to frame this part differently, while emphasizing the role of our government in a way that was concrete for them.

I also decided that I wanted to have them provide sticky notes about what they learned and what they wanted to learn.

I would suggest compiling all of these notes and sending them to invite a law maker. Writing the letter as a group was hard for them to comprehend, so that might work better.